Adele Nye
Jennifer Clark *Editors*

Teaching History for the Contemporary World

Tensions, Challenges and Classroom Experiences in Higher Education

Springer

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In these years of the COVID-19 pandemic, we dedicate this book to our colleagues in the history profession who have rapidly shifted their teaching practices to take account of dramatically changed circumstances and have done so with imagination, commitment and good humour. When we began this book we never imagined teaching history in the contemporary age could take such a turn.

For two students locked down on two continents, Andrew and Hannah.

For three children starting their education in a different world, Bryce, Riley and Spencer.

Foreword

History is vital to understanding the contemporary world. Recent crises and traumatic events have amplified the crucial importance of comprehending the past and how it has informed the present and will shed light on the future. More than ever, teaching history is needed to understand the complex, shifting, and ever-changing global world now and in the decades to come. An ethical future is based on historical expertise and knowledge and demands an historical understanding of our contemporary world.

Teaching history in context takes us to the very purpose and intent of *Teaching History for the Contemporary World—Tensions, Challenges and Classroom Experiences in Higher Education.* In this timely, indispensable and inspiring book, Adele Nye and Jennifer Clark have provided an outstanding and exceptionally illuminating intellectual framework from which to provoke, stimulate and energise debate and discussion about the purpose of teaching history in the world today. They pose the challenging question of 'what historians can do' to shape the future directions of our world. The debate about the role of educators in activism, challenging inequalities and positing options towards social justice in the future raises the fundamental question of the very purpose of historical pedagogy. Each of the contributors illuminate with great clarity, fluency and erudition the central questions which inform ethical history teaching: promoting understandings of compassion, challenging orthodoxies, exploring the humane, and creating a responsible citizenship.

The events of 2020 have inescapably thrown these questions into sharp relief. I identify three events and debates to amplify the fundamental importance of the challenges Nye and Clark identify and the themes of teaching history and social change which the essays in this compelling collection each address.

First, by February 2020, Australia had experienced an unprecedented bushfire season. The fires burnt an estimated 18 million hectares, destroyed over 5,000 buildings and killed 34 people. The devastation of the fires on wildlife has been extraordinary with over a billion mammals, birds and reptiles killed and over a third of all koalas in New South Wales believed to have perished. Debates about the cause of the intensity and scale of the fires involved discussions about climate change and the future of the planet, fire management practices, Indigenous knowledge about land use and the fossil fuel industry. In response, the Federal government established the

Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements or the Bushfires Royal Commission.

Historians have within Australia and internationally played a central role in identifying and charting the history of climate change and global warming across the planet. The deep history, experience and knowledge of First Nations people, Indigenous historians and knowledge custodians is fundamental to Australia's management of the environment and preservation of the natural landscape. Another history—that of climate change policy—is further needed to understand the historic responses by government and what has been effective, what has not and what is needed. Teaching this understanding is core to responsible citizenship, and essential for Australia to be a major leader of policies that effectively transform climate change.

Second, the Black Lives Matter movement rapidly swept the globe following the death of black man George Floyd in May 2020. His death at the hands of police brutality, ignited calls for more Indigenous history to be taught in schools. Within Australia, Indigenous leaders, scholars and intellectuals called for a greater exposure of racism in studies of Australia's past and present. The call for constitutional reform was also reignited. Social justice and self-determination for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities will remain unresolved until the demands for a voice in the Constitution are met through the Uluru Statement from the Heart. The Uluru Statement aims to achieve constitutional reform to empower First Nations People and to take their rightful place in their own country. It has yet to materialise and its vision has to date been unrealised. The recommendation of a truth and justice commission has been seen as a way for Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities to confront the violent history and give a voice to Indigenous Australians of that past. It is also a way of providing a powerful human face to the experience of Indigenous Australians. The Black Lives Matter protest in Australia raised again the question of Indigenous deaths in custody in Australia, and the need to confront institutional racism. History reminded us that there have been 439 deaths in custody in Australia since the 1991 Royal Commission, but with no convictions.

In tandem with the 'Black Lives Matter' movement has come the related protest advocating the removal of monuments of past slave owners around the world. This included the statue of slave trader Edward Colston thrown into the River Avon in Bristol, as well as the statue of slave owner Robert Milligan in London being removed. This movement continues as there are calls for other statues—most notably that of the slave owner Cecil Rhodes—to be removed at Oxford. Rhodes inspired a separate movement in 2015—the Rhodes Must Fall movement—which led to the removal of the statue of Rhodes at the University of Cape Town. The sentiments of these movements were also transposed to Australia with the monument of Captain James Cook defaced in Sydney's Hyde Park. The history teaching of empires, conquests, colonialism and racial violence across the world has been under the microscope with these recent events and there have been calls to widen the history curriculum within schools. A sophisticated and complex understanding of this history is required to move forward to create better futures. The teaching of history is at the core of understanding how racial injustices emerged in a settler-colonial society, how they have continued to prevail, and that knowledge of the past is essential to create a

future where such injustices are tolerated no longer. An ignorance and lack of awareness of this history will continue to perpetuate distortions, misunderstandings and misapprehension of the question of racial social justice.

Third, beyond the academy and the universities, history as a discipline, like other humanities subjects provides the core skills of preparedness for future employment. But this recognition has been lost in the Australian government's recent 'Job ready graduate's legislation', which proposes introducing a significant price differential in the fees between university science and humanities subjects, resulting in the cost of undertaking subjects under society and culture increasing by 113%. Underlying these reforms are questions such as which disciplines count as being in the national interest, and which are significant to shaping Australia's social and economic future and which graduates are indeed 'job ready'.

By making it considerably cheaper to take science subjects and so encouraging students to do so, it is clear that the humanities skill set of analysis, critical thinking, creativity, complex problem-solving and emotional intelligence are not deemed valuable, vital or essential to a workforce. Further, graduate outcome data clearly shows that humanities graduates have equalled or outperformed STEM graduates in full-time employment and labour force participation in the past 3 years, and that humanities graduates contribute significantly to the Australian economy in a range of industries. More significantly—and this gets to the question of the future—and post COVID-19—with automation and Artificial Intelligence upon us, it will be humanities-trained graduates that will bring capacities and capabilities that cannot be automated such as critical thinking, analytical understanding, communication and problem-solving. It will also make it more difficult for students from low SES backgrounds, including in the regions, to aspire to and succeed at university in subjects of social, economic, cultural and community value such as history, but also in cultural heritage, tourism, and archaeology. We can point to the gender inequities because it remains the case that STEM is a male-dominated field and the humanities and history are female dominated, so a heavier cost will be carried by women undertaking the humanities subjects such as history. The humanities also produce specific capabilities vital to Australia's future, including knowledge to smartly position Australia in rapidly shifting global order; to advise on matters that are unique to the Australian community, including our history and culture; and understanding how people have experienced and responded to major social or environmental change over time. The humanities and history support the cultural and creative industries, one of the fastest growing sectors of the economy. Such reforms cut to the heart of the need for a broadly educated and knowledgeable citizenship which a history education provides.[1]

Teaching History for the Contemporary World—Tensions, Challenges and Classroom Experiences in Higher Education focuses our attention on the urgent questions of our time regarding teaching history as we negotiate a new and constantly changing world. As we move through this uncertain century, educating our students in a broad and wide knowledge of history will be vital to understand Australia's place

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[1]Australian Academy of the Humanities, Policy Submission to Senate Inquiry into the Higher Education Support Amendment Bill, September 2020.

in this world. It will also remain essential to comprehend the specifics of Australia's history and culture—of Australia's First Nations Peoples—and to provide a human-centred response to the major social, cultural and environmental issues of our time. This education is essential as we face the unfolding of a challenging century, where understanding and teaching history will provide the necessary skill set of problem-solving, analysis and interrogating future questions, as well as remaining the bedrock of responsible citizenship.

Melbourne, Australia   Joy Damousi

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We acknowledge that we work on the traditional lands of the Kaurna people of the Adelaide Plains and the Anaiwan people of the New England Tablelands. We pay our respects to elders past, present and emerging and acknowledge the importance of Indigenous histories in our contemporary world.

When we began to think about compiling this book we had no idea how 2020 would play out. We did not know that Australia would be ravaged by bushfires that stole lives and destroyed livelihoods, decimated landscapes and took unique animals to the brink of extinction. After that came floods. Then the rumblings of disquiet about disease turned into a full-blown pandemic. As we finish writing and editing this book the global pandemic is getting worse, not better. The number of infections internationally continues to grow, the death toll rises in an unrelenting fashion, and even though we in Australia have fared comparatively well, the cases of COVID-19 continue to appear with a disappointing regularity. While the pandemic raged the #BlackLivesMatter movement took over the news bulletins, as protests reverberated around the world demanding justice for people of colour everywhere and an end to police brutality and racial prejudice. This is our contemporary world: dynamic, revolutionary, frightening, uncertain, dramatic and disturbing. When we began this project we could not have imagined how apposite it would be. Contemporary means now, and our 'now' keeps changing so rapidly that we scramble to keep up.

The book took shape on a research trip to Europe, first of all to attend a conference in Bergen, Norway, and then to interview historians in England. We want to thank all those people we spoke with who helped us realise the importance of adapting history teaching to the demands of the contemporary age. In particular, we very much valued talking with Peter D'Sena and Grant Bage. Over a great dinner at the 'Bryggen Tracteursted' in Bergen, we tossed around ideas and began to think about what we were facing as historians in our 'now'. For helping us to refine those ideas during research interviews we thank Anna McGuire, Onni Gust, Pippa Caterall, Lars Laaman, Angus Lockyer, and Justin Davis-Smith. In Nottingham, we met up with Alan and Jeanne Booth and Marcus Collins to take the conversations further. All of these people, and others, have helped explain to us what issues are important to them and how, as teachers of history, we should be agile, attuned and aware. We want to thank all of the contributors to the book who embraced the idea of

reflecting on how they approached teaching difficult histories, or how they dealt with vexing contemporary issues within the academy. We are privileged to work with such colleagues.

We have wandered on this project, intellectually and geographically. We have immersed ourselves in the complexity of places overlain with time-specific events, and experiences that bleed from one era into another. We have enjoyed conversations in historic places that have forced us to think, and then to think again, about our work as historians, our purpose as educators, and our positions within our profession as unique individuals who come to our tasks burdened and enraged, interested and questioning, affected and connected. This collection of essays has given us intellectual time and space to reflect on our role as historians and history teachers in the specific context of our challenging contemporary world. We hope you find it useful in a similar way.

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Chapter 1
Teaching History for the Contemporary World: An Introduction

Jennifer Clark and Adele Nye

Abstract History is constantly revised and re-envisioned. How should we teach history to take into account the concerns of our own era? Should history be more than just an interpretation of the past? Should it also be a positive force in the present to create understanding that leads to a better future? This chapter asks whether teaching history comes with added responsibilities, opportunities, difficulties, and challenges if we specifically focus on how we teach the discipline for the contemporary world.

1.1 Introduction

The past is not locked away from the present or the future as if in a hermetically sealed time capsule. The past is omnipresent and seeps through the cracks of time in memory and story, landscape and material culture, events and commemorations, and the interpretations we privilege over those we neglect. It is our job as historians to reach back into the past and to identify those connections that help us to explain what happened then, as well as to understand what is happening now. Historians who make sense of the past in the history they write must also make that meaning resonate in the classroom for students living in today's world and wrestling with today's issues. Teaching should not be seen as an added extra to the academic duty, rather it is the lived opportunity to make the history we write and the past that we study relevant to us all, especially to young people who are just beginning to find their way in the world. In reality, those links between past, present, and future only need to be teased out for us to see more clearly that we all exist on a continuum and in relation to each other. Perhaps more importantly, we must also ask if the pursuit of relevance goes far enough, in the same way as peace is more than simply an absence of war. Perhaps our teaching should not stop with relevance but rather be a clear, positive force in our

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students' lives for social justice, empathy, and intercultural understanding. Is that the real point of teaching history in the contemporary world?

1.2   The Past Within the Present

In March 2015, the then President of the United States, Barack Obama, delivered a speech about the importance of history in a contemporary context when he stood on the edge of Edmund Pettus Bridge in Alabama. Here, exactly 50 years earlier, protesters marching from Selma to Montgomery in support of Civil Rights were set upon by state troopers and forced back with clubs, whips, and tear gas. President Lyndon B. Johnson called Selma 'a turning point in man's unending search for freedom' along with Lexington and Concord where the first shots of the American Revolution were fired, and Appomattox, where Robert E. Lee surrendered to Ulysses S. Grant during the final stages of the American Civil War. Johnson connected Selma to the great moments in American history to spearhead the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (Johnson, 1965). Obama also drew the Selma protests into the broader story of America as an unfinished work in progress (Obama, 2015). He referenced Johnson, but also called up a range of other Americans from the past who pressed ahead for human rights and who worked to force the United States to honour its revolutionary founding promise that 'all men are created equal'. At Edmund Pettus Bridge he humanised Selma and added John Lewis, Diane Nash, Ralph Abernathy, and Dr Martin Luther King to Johnson's list.

Barack Obama spoke that day about the long past that led to Selma: 'The march on Selma', he said, 'was part of a broader campaign that spanned generations' because 'we cannot examine this moment in isolation'. He also talked about the impacted present: 'And the change these men and women wrought is visible here today in the presence of African Americans who run boardrooms, who sit on the bench, who serve in elected office from small towns to big cities; from the Congressional Black Caucus all the way to the Oval Office'. While simultaneously referencing King he also talked about the spiritual and temporal future, 'that blessed destination where we are judged, all of us, by the content of our character' (Obama, 2015).

Three months later, in June 2015, Obama reflected on his speech in a radio podcast with Marc Maron. He recognised that much had been achieved but much was still to be done around race relations. 'The legacy of slavery, Jim Crow, discrimination', he said, 'casts a long shadow…societies don't overnight completely erase everything that happened two to three hundred years prior'. More positively, he added: 'progress is real and we have to take hope from that progress but what is also real is that the march isn't over and the work is not yet completed and then our job is to try in very concrete ways to figure out what more can we do' (Maron, 2015; see also Epstein, 2018, p. 251). Obama's 'we' is surely intended to be inclusive of us all. We historians could ask ourselves the same question: 'what more can we do', referring of course to our peculiar discipline area which regularly charts and interprets the features of race relations as part of our daily work, our research investigations, and our teaching

conversations. We could also take this question out from race relations specifically into the broader reaches of social justice and the myriad demands to improve social futures. What Obama's speech and musing demonstrate is that the contemporary era in which any of us live, at any time, is impacted from all sides. We are buffeted in the present by the legacies of the past and the hopes and aspirations for the future. For historians, this has important professional implications.

1.3   The Lessons of Women's History

In 1970, Joseph Axelrod wrote in response to what he called 'the cry *Relevance*!', that 'the humanist is caught between the neutralism that his scholarship requires and the direct involvement in man's problems' (Axelrod, 1970, p. 39). Fifty years later we acknowledge and celebrate our particular positioning rather than try to deny it ever existed. That was not always the case, of course. Marilyn Lake (2003, p. 149) points out, for example, that when she critiqued history in the early 1970s as 'masculinist conceit' the response of one male colleague was to argue that there were 'no records of women's past lives with which historians could work.' In contrast, by 2016, Clare Wright can talk about Australian history as being 'remarkably feminised' (Wright, 2016). We know, of course, that all kinds of records exist, and depending on the questions asked, evidence can be found. We are also much better educated in the way in which 'neutrality' actually meant privileging. New historical pursuits in gender and race history, post-human history, or history of the emotions, for example, all point to the repositioning of historians as interpreters of a far more nuanced and complex past. This broad recognition has much to owe to the initial pursuit of women's history.

One of the most important aspects of early women's history was its oppositional stance to assumed power structures and accepted divisions. History as it was understood was very much based on the examination of male-dominated institutions and entrenched power relations (Perry, p. 251). Women's history raised questions about the legitimacy of current historical work, to the point where the idea of history itself was re-examined. In September 1970, Berenice A. Carroll wrote to the organisers of the American Historical Association conference to propose a panel on women's history. Her justification included the argument that the panel would discuss 'basic historiographical and philosophical questions: how the writing of history, and even what historians *conceive* as "history" has been affected by the devaluation and neglect of women and what they have done, written and thought; how the study of women's history *alters* the conception of what constitutes history' (Carroll, 1994, p. 83). The pioneers of women's history demolished the idea of history as set and conventional, as neutral and natural, and as understood and given. They spoke for the voiceless and the hidden, the downtrodden and the neglected and the overlooked and dispossessed. The philosophy they espoused and the methods they used, of course, did not stop with women's history. They opened our eyes to the potential of history as liberating and enlarging for all. No longer did history exist to support the privileged and the

established, or to perpetuate the myths of the state, the church, and the government—all bastions of male hegemony. Thanks to women's history we have permission to challenge the status quo or conventional wisdom and to look at all kinds of histories, many diverse and contradictory stories, and new collections of data. History as a discipline is more expansive, innovative, inclusive and dynamic than ever before (Borris & Chaudhuri, p. xi).

The emergence of women's history as a force was also due to women's activism. The two were inseparable. 'My mind did not check out while I marched', wrote Carroll (1999, p. 26). Five years earlier she explained the way in which what she did and what she wrote were almost inseparably intertwined:

> The line between "activism" and "scholarship", if there is such a line at all is difficult to discern … and perhaps it would be better to use instead an image favored by the women's peace movement, the web. Our activism and our scholarship were woven together to create the strength of both action and intellect that we brought to history (Carroll, p. 83).

Of course, Carroll was not the only one to think this way. Lerner (1999, p. 1) wrote that 'My commitment to women's history came out of my life, not out of my head'. We are, of course, reminded here of Paulo Freire and his 1968 *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Coming from a desire to promote literacy to increase access to the Brazilian electoral process, Freire's experience of poverty and the political neglect that followed, led him to see all education as a political act rather than a neutral one. His philosophy of education stretched across the globe to influence those who sought social justice and liberation of all kinds.

1.4   The Myth of Objectivity and the Reality of Positioning

Not everyone sees themselves as activists, or even oppositional historians, but they are all positioned, one way or another regardless. In *The Art of Time Travel: Historians and their Craft*, Tom Griffiths explores the professional lives of Australian historians by revealing and discussing the personal perspectives evident in their work. He demonstrates that each wrote about different subjects and in different ways because of the time in which they wrote, where they lived, who influenced them, their childhood experiences and family backgrounds, their education, and even their personalities. Their published work was a window into their lives. Such a revelation should not be surprising, but for those of us trained in the grand, but somewhat misguided pursuit of historical objectivity, it is a lesson to be learned.

At the same time as historians are recognising their own collective fallacious objectivity, we must also understand that students are similarly positioned. They come, for example, with the weight of their individual family circumstances and the wider history of their gender, class, ethnic, racial, or faith communities. These differences may be restrictive or enabling. They might include a privileged sense of entitlement based on traditional norms, or on the other hand, a crippling sense of being the outsider, born of systemic disadvantage. These experiences might include

generational trauma or intergenerational poverty (Doucet & Rovers, 2010; Farmer, 2004; Kellermann, 2013; Yehuda et al., 2016). Students might also enjoy unique linguistic and cultural knowledge that brings opportunities for a new perspective on history learning, research, and writing. Barack Obama's reference to the weight of the past 'two to three hundred years prior' was not an abstract illusion but palpably realistic. It impacts every student, for better or worse, every day, sometimes as strident, demonstrably visible perspectives, and equally so, in subtle unconscious ways of thinking or doing. Students do not divest themselves of this baggage on entering the classroom. Not only does the impact of history and hopes for the future influence who they are and who they will become, but in the classroom it influences the type of education they want to receive and how actively they engage with it.

Students also live within their own specific cultural, social, political, and economic environment that is simply an accident of birth. They exist with, and in, today's specific climate of unique advantages and disadvantages. Sometimes it is impossible to tell into which category the milieu of their existence should fall and be counted, for example, one of the most important influences for students is their technologically mediated world. They are the consumers of and participants in, willingly or otherwise, the 24-h news cycle, instant social media connections, 'fake news', and cyber insecurity all at once. Today's school-leaver students have never lived without the Internet, instant messaging, video calls, and personal communication and information retrieval devices. These were the subjects of science fiction for their parents. They are now the norm.

Not only do students have instant access to information but that same information is mediated and presented in unique ways. Donald Trump, for example, was the first American President to use Twitter as a primary form of communication, bypassing traditional information dissemination channels and at the same time calling into question the veracity of the American press. The Library of Congress has an archive of all tweets from 2006 to 2017 but will only collect selectively thereafter (Osterberg, 2017). The quantity of available material is simply enormous. That vast archive of tweets, posts, doorstop interviews, media grabs, and photo opportunities marks the modern media environment and the way information is gathered and shared. That demands a new vocabulary as well. Historically, dramatic and revolutionary change needed good lines of communication to succeed. This initially meant a high level of literacy, supported by improvements in transport and communication such as the spread of the printing press. By the 1960s it meant watching television. Now, it means access to Facebook and Twitter (Boulianne, 2019; Sturm & Amer, 2013).

Living in the digital world means that our current students are able to operate in different ways within the classroom and outside of it. They are no longer completely dependent on the information the teacher can provide. It means they have equal access to vast amounts of information and they have new digital tools to search, manipulate, and interpret it. As a result, the teacher is, at one and the same time, both more exposed and more liberated.

The digital environment not only impacts access to knowledge, but the embrace of the 5G network will mean that our students will be living in a world that is even more connected than ever before. What will connectivity look like for them? What

will it mean for the lived experience? How will it influence the next set of questions we ask and the next round of issues we struggle to understand? How will digital disruption alter the delicate balancing act that is public and private life? We are already seeing enormous changes to retail experiences, industrial production, the job market, how we spend our leisure time, and what we value. How will the digitally disrupted student use that existence to generate new historical questions and to create a twenty-first-century sense of relevance and importance?

1.5   Contemporary Concerns

Representative of young people worldwide, students are concerned about a range of pressing issues. In the 2016 World Economic Forum Survey of 26,000 young people aged 18–35, 45% were worried about climate change, 38% feared large-scale conflicts and war, 34% identified religious conflicts and 31% believed poverty was a major issue. They were particularly concerned about refugee policy and corruption and they were very much aware of the impact of technology in machine learning, Artificial Intelligence and the Internet of Things (World Economic Forum, 2016). Young people are more connected, and the university classroom is more diverse than ever before. Moreover, young people are aware of that diversity and are conscious of debates around inclusion, respect, and acknowledgement. In Australia, they live in a post-1967 referendum, post-native title, post-Mabo world, where acknowledgement of Country is expected, where the Uluru Statement from the Heart is driving new political conversations and relationships, and where constitutional recognition of Indigenous people is high on the public agenda.

They see the human tragedy of refugees across the world fleeing war and persecution. Images of children drowned at sea or packed into unseaworthy vessels on the open ocean are on the television and in their newsfeeds. They live in a time when governments around the world have legislated for gay marriage. In England, the face of mathematician and founder of modern computing Alan Turing, credited with saving millions of lives in World War II by breaking the Enigma Code and who, shortly afterward, was prosecuted for 'gross indecency', now graces the £50 note after receiving a Royal Pardon in 2013. Simultaneously, they see the rise of the Far Right within mainstream politics across the world and the costly impact of political and religious extremism. Students know they live in a world divided by ideological and religious differences as well as wealth inequality, and marked by class, race, and gender stereotypes that limit opportunity and underpin power relationships. At the same time as there is 'Me Too' there is also an epidemic of family violence with on average one woman killed by her current or former partner every week in Australia alone (Bryant & Bricknall, 2017, p. 20). Worldwide 35% of women have experienced sexual violence (World Health Organisation, 2017). Young people are also at the forefront of climate change advocacy. Greta Thunberg, 17-year-old Swedish climate activist, shot to international fame with her leadership of the 2018 school climate strike. Within a year she had become the recipient of the Rachel Carson

Prize, the International Children's Peace Prize and was named *Time* Person of the Year for 2019. BBC News reported on 'The Greta effect' (Nevett, 2019).

Contemporary issues are many and diverse, constantly evolving, relentlessly challenging, and then, something happens that throws our universe off its axis and heads us in a completely new direction. For our parents and grandparents, it was World War and Depression; for us it is the coronavirus pandemic. While this volume was in preparation, no-one imagined that COVID-19 would kill over two million people across the globe. We can't give the accurate statistics here because they are still rising daily as we battle a new wave. They are far away from peaking and the exact figure may never be known as people die without diagnosis. It was inconceivable that the international economy could shatter so quickly. Millions were thrown out of work, businesses entered receivership, schools and universities closed, airlines were grounded, and borders tightly shut. As the panic buying and hoarding subsided and people settled into a lockdown routine, a new conversation emerged that identified the age of COVID-19 as a watershed, an opportunity, and perhaps, to use Raymond William's phrase, the stimulus for 'a new structure of feeling' (Williams, 1977, p. 132). The response to the virus has led to a whole raft of new questions about the role of leadership, the usefulness of political ideology, the virtue of pragmatism and adaptability, the failure of economic systems, the importance of public messaging, the impact of technology, the nature of work, the significance of community, the fragility of mental health, the preparedness of government and public institutions to cope with disaster, the worth of expertise and our willingness to accept decisions based on science, and the ways in which local, national, and international differences contextualise unique responses to a crisis. The virus has exposed weaknesses. It has given rise to a new demand for, access to and reliance on useful software and technological competencies. New debates have arisen over the agility of industry to respond to new demands and retool quickly and the need to be more self-sufficient. The international lockdowns have had a huge impact on pollution. Rivers have run clear and skies have appeared blue for the first time in years. We have asked new questions about our society, its direction, values, and apparent past certainties and we have constantly been told that the situation is unprecedented. We expect to emerge from the lockdowns into a 'new normal'.

Before the pandemic could run its course, a new crisis emerged. We witnessed an outpouring of support for the #BlackLivesMatter movement, sparked by the death of African-American, George Floyd, under the knee of a Minneapolis police officer. Facilitated by our connectedness through social media, mass protests erupted against a history of unrelenting institutionalised racism focusing on police brutality in the United States, but also including protests against Indigenous deaths in custody in Australia. There have been at least 439 such deaths since the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody ended in 1991(First Nations Deaths in Custody, 2020). Commentators warned that one way to improve current conditions for the living was to revisit our tacit acceptance of the past and the symbols of racism embedded in its material remnants. As the #BlackLivesMatter movement continued to evolve, some eighteenth- and nineteenth-century statues of public figures became symbols of infamy rather than achievement as alternative histories took precedence.

Across the American South, statues of Confederate President Jefferson Davis were torn from their pedestals. A statue of Christopher Columbus was decapitated. The representations of past power—soldiers, politicians, and beneficiaries of slavery— were toppled and symbolically humiliated in the streets (Taylor, 2020). Moving forward includes how we interpret the past and reassess our cultural environment. Historians know that the contemporary era enables and shapes the questions we ask of the past and what issues we explore. Historians are currently presented with a unique opportunity to look at the past through the eyes of the COVID-19/#MeToo/#BlackLivesMatter/climate change generation, undoubtedly emboldened to ask questions we dared not ask before. We are licensed to wonder if we are at a turning point. Are our students also positioned differently because of these experiences?

If we genuinely understand the extent to which we are all positioned, as historians, as teachers, as students, and if we accept the force that comes with combining Gerder Lerner's idea of life over head, then how should history be taught if we are to heed Obama's plea for us all to do more. Is it even possible to abandon our positions as we enter the classroom? Should we try? Should we acknowledge the importance of the contextualised world in teaching as much as we recognise it in the writing of literature, the construction of history, the design of buildings, or the pursuit of science? Is it ever possible to divorce ourselves from our world without misleading ourselves and others?

1.6   Relevance or Activism?

Educators have long promoted relevance as a means to reach students, to encourage their interest, and to stimulate deep learning (Beineke, 2011). It is part of contextualised constructivist learning. Van Straaten, Wilschut, and Oostdam (2015, p. 484) argue that 'relevant history education addresses three objectives: building a personal identity, becoming a citizen and understanding the human condition'. A personal, community, and global focus for relevance is one way of linking the past, present, and future, in both a spatial as well as a chronological framework. Going further, others have seen relevance as a means to reach a deeper understanding of contemporary issues. This can be challenging as Eckmann (2010) and McCully (2012) have shown when teaching the holocaust and the troubles in Northern Ireland, respectively. Eckmann (2010, pp. 10–13) positions the teaching of the holocaust within three broad purposes: learning '*about* human rights', '*for* human rights', and '*within* a framework of human rights'. She aligns this with Pestalozzi's 'head, heart and hand' approach to education (Eckmann, 2010, p. 12). In so doing, advocacy for social justice, in this case, human rights, quite deliberately forms two-thirds of the teaching possibilities. McCully's (2012, p. 150) view is that a conflicted society is often supported by historical stories and perspectives, the collective memory, but that 'teacher activists' challenge the myths through inquiry-based learning. This approach encourages students to explore multi-perspectives on the recent past held

by historical characters. These teachers were seen as 'risk-takers' who used innovative pedagogy to elicit a questioning response in students often embittered and embroiled in generational hatreds. They also allow the students to 'feel' as well as to 'think' and to develop empathy with people in the past (McCully, 2012, p. 153). Both Eckmann and McCully see a positive active role for the history teacher to bring about change. This is a far cry from the pursuit of von Ranke's factual objectivity that so influenced generations of historians and history teachers.

Historians are not alone in debating the value and efficacy of joining professional practice with activism. Museum professionals have come to the same conclusion: 'There is increasing recognition that museums are not, and never have been, neutral' (Sandell & Janes, 2019, p. xxvii). The purpose of Janes and Sandell's 2019 (p. xxvii) book, *Museum Activism*, is clear; 'there is a growing and irresistible imperative to redefine the contemporary museum as an active agent in shaping the world around us and making it a better place for all'. Through the 34 essays in their book, a range of authors explore the moral and ethical imperative for museums to take a more proactive stance in telling our stories and conserving our material heritage. In particular, the essays ask questions about our human responsibility in an age of climate change and personal and collective inequality. They look at the reasons why museums must join forces with those who want to turn humanity around to reduce waste and embrace environmentalism, or to reject competition and celebrate collective action, or to expose homogenous narratives and reveal diversity. In particular, the authors discuss social justice as the epithet for the twenty-first century (Janes & Sandell, 2019, p. 7). Moreover, the book posits the view that museums are changing, moving away from being driven by their collections, to recognising the communities they serve, and the need to tell a range of stories that better suit the needs of twenty-first-century visitors. These needs are described as 'more nuanced, complex needs' (Coleman & Moore, 2019, p. 97). They are also more broadly called social justice needs and embrace inclusion, equity, and access. In each case, the authors reject the idea of professional neutrality as having ever existed and begin to reposition the museum as a potentially transformative institution in response to a new agenda. The idea of 'relevance' has moved with the times so that what was relevant when museums began—a Whiggish approach to history, defence of empire, the rationality of Enlightenment knowledge acquisition and display, and industrialisation—is far from contemporary thinking. In a post-colonial, post-modern world we are looking for our stories represented in all their diverse glory while recognising the old narratives for what they are, positioned in time when class, gender and race inequality were accepted norms (Heal, 2019, p. 212).

The issues explored most recently in Janes and Sandell's book, and by others who write about historical practices, are not unique. Those interested in secondary school history pedagogy have also begun to explore the same themes. How should teachers of history manage contemporary issues in the secondary school classroom, many of which could be described as 'difficult histories'? In 2018, Terry Epstein and Carla L. Peck published *Teaching and Learning Difficult Histories in International Contexts: A Critical Sociocultural Approach*. The essays in their volume examine how to teach by exploring the dynamic of history as a discipline translated into

classroom practice. At the centre of this exercise is a desire to unpack the notion of history being a 'culturally mediated framework' (Epstein & Peck, 2018, p. 4). The authors and editors advocate for a more personal approach to history, so that students can better negotiate stories, events, and developments from an emotionally connected place. Such a pedagogy invites disruption, critical investigation, challenge, and unknown consequences. It asks students to work with affect and it opens them to discomfort at least, and possibly even distress (Zembylas, 2018, pp. 191, 197). In the contemporary classroom, we demand courage from both teachers and students.

Teaching History for the Contemporary World provides an opportunity for tertiary teachers of history to join the discussion begun by Epstein and Peck, Janes and Sandell, and others, to explore not only what relevance in the classroom looks like today, but whether we can or should move beyond that to a state of activism for social justice, broadly defined. This includes not only what topics should be taught in the classroom, but how they should be taught and with what emphasis. It provides space for us to consider the role of the historian as a teacher equally with the role of the historian as public intellectual, activist, or pathbreaker. This book is intended to challenge us all to consider what students, teachers, and societies more widely want and need from history as a critically engaged discipline in the contemporary world.

1.7   The Contribution of this Collection

This volume is divided into three broad sections. The first section, *In the Academy*, looks at four major elements of our current practice: the institution, the teacher, the curriculum, and the students. Five authors have chosen similar themes to pursue but from different perspectives. The significance of their choices is clear, the contemporary classroom is concerned with matters of equity, fairness, inclusion, and positioning. It is no longer acceptable to assume that there is a hegemonic history that is neutral, objective, and based on a shared understanding of certain knowable facts.

Frank Bongiorno offers 'Some Thoughts on Western Civilisation' as he explores the obligations of the historian in the contemporary age. He begins with 'History is an ethical discipline'. He then goes on to open up the current debate over the teaching of Western Civilisation courses and how and where they should be taught. Bongiorno makes a clear distinction: 'It is one thing', he explains, 'for historians to avoid political partisanship, quite another to advocate a political neutrality that, on closer inspection, is actually an endorsement of past wrongs and their continuation into the present'. Bongiorno's historian as teacher is given great weight, responsibility, and importance as we collectively face existential threats. If we acknowledge history as an ethical discipline, then the historian as teacher can neither afford complacency nor unsubstantiated claims of neutrality.

In his chapter, Peter D'Sena also looks at our collective obligations and responsibilities, but this time through the lens of the curriculum. D'Sena acknowledges that although attempts to decolonise the curriculum are not new, there is currently a greater demand for change that is not simply asking for broadened topics or new

subjects for study, but rather an approach to curriculum that challenges the premises upon which we have for so long relied. This means looking at current methodologies, utilising non-Anglophone sources as we foreground genuine Indigenous, subaltern, or minority voices. This is far more than a nominal adjustment. It behoves us all to look deeply into the meaning of whiteness and privilege, and to explore the impact of these concepts on the teaching and learning of history by considering a 'compassion focussed pedagogy'. Like Bongiorno, D'Sena also encourages us to think of the changes as necessary ethical choices: 'Decolonising the curriculum is more than a set of pedagogic ideas, it is a movement which educators and those being educated might argue we are morally obliged to embrace'.

In the third chapter in this elemental section, Onni Gust takes up the case of students. Once again, issues of race, gender, inclusion, repositioning, sensitivity to difference, and compassionate pedagogy are explored, this time focusing on the value of trigger warnings in the classroom. In contrast to those who criticise trigger warnings as shrinking from challenge, Gust proposes the creation of safe spaces as places of empowerment where difficult ideas and the impact of prejudice, disadvantage, and marginalisation can be explored, interrogated, and reset. For Gust, a fair classroom for students, and staff, has to be safe, because 'Teaching students to think carefully about the impact of their own words, questions and assumptions can have on people whose experiences are different from their own is a valuable lesson, and one that is critical for historians whose work, ultimately, is all about engaging with difference across time and space'.

The next contribution to this section is written by a student, Tiana Blazevic. She focuses on the appropriation of history to serve the ends of the Far Right and the way in which history is 'weaponised' as a result. As a student in the digital age, she is very much aware of the way in which social media spreads history as a message. She argues that if scholarly blogs were used more freely and regularly in the classroom it might be possible to recapture history and provide a more balanced account of the past. The accessibility and immediacy of the blog format means that students who initially struggle with the slower, more formal academic literature might have an easier road into the contemporary discourse around historical narratives.

The last chapter of this section by Indigenous historian Jenni Caruso, discusses the issue of identity and the way in which this is an important factor in all aspects of her working life. She begins her chapter with an outline of her personal history as a member of the Stolen Generation and uses this to foreground the ways in which identity can neither be diluted nor denied, and instead should be seen as a positive force within the Academy and the classroom.

The next section, *How to Teach for the Contemporary World*, explores some current issues and different methods in history teaching. The first chapter in this section explores the digital divide. Adam Crymble and Maria José Afanador-Llach look at the promise of digital history and the way in which it still delivers inequity by comparing opportunities in the United Kingdom with those in Colombia. They describe the way in which digital history, although seemingly able to open doors to new questions and new directions, is still limited by its own past. Digital history is only revolutionary and revelationary if the data is there to mine. The process of

archival collection and retention in the UK that had much to do with foresight and serendipity has meant that students and historians there have a much better chance of producing new history based on the analysis of big data sets than elsewhere in the world where those early decisions were not taken. It is not the lack of computers or computing skills that has led to this inequity, but the history itself.

Adrian Jones continues to explore the ways we teach by examining the opportunities of the study tour, and the impact of 'being there' on perception, engagement, and understanding. Extending Vygotsky's theory of proximal development to theorise history teaching while abroad, Jones proposes that the focus for teaching should be on student experience, on broad and tall learning. Whilst abroad, the student is faced with a kind of learning that is not possible in the classroom, and difficult even to project from home. Study abroad becomes transformational for reasons that might not become understood for a long time after the experience has formally ended.

The section ends with a chapter on teaching positioning. It is difficult for students to understand the ways in which historians become part of the historical picture they draw. To this end, Adele Nye and Jennifer Clark have explored how overt teaching of this concept might be achieved using some of the post-qualitative theories commonly used in education. The aim of the chapter is to suggest a way of bringing positioning out of the shadows and to the forefront in a consciously constructed exercise that scaffolds the exploration of nomadic inquiry, affect theory, and diffraction as a means to self-awareness when writing history. The chapter explores the theories, proposes a method, and demonstrates how this might play out in practice by using their own example of encountering and thinking about the history of European foundling homes.

The next section, *What to Teach for the Contemporary World* explores some of the topics of particular relevance to today's student cohort. Anna Maguire looks at gender and intersectionality. She uses her own life experience to foreground how gendered history can be unpacked, how her feminism and understanding of history intertwine, and how that relationship can be productively harnessed in the classroom. She explores how the discussion of gendered history is manifest in a dynamic classroom through silence, disruption, performativity, inclusivity, politics, and emotional labour.

Vesna Drapac discusses war and genocide, two troubling and traumatic topics, yet a powerful way to explore humanity. She approaches these topics from an apparently traditional standpoint, the teaching-research nexus, but does so with a contemporary spin. She argues that only through the depth of knowledge gained in close research, can the history teacher provide the expert guidance for students trying to understand the past and the present and the connection between the two. She challenges her students to look at their contemporary experience in parallel with their study of the past so that historical practices learned in the classroom can equip students with 'the capacity to make their way in the world as ethical, active and engaged citizens'.

Andrea Gaynor explores the vexed question of how to teach environmental history in a time of climate change. When public debate explores global warming, rising sea levels, carbon emissions, and environmental disasters, what place does history have to help students understand these present challenges better? This topic is global and

oppressive in its importance. Gaynor says that environmental history has a 'heavy burden to bear'.

Alison Holland looks at citizenship and history at a time when public opinion is divided over the role of history in creating good citizens and how the knowledge of a pre-set history can prove citizenship. Using surveys, Holland explores how students see their history education as opening their eyes to the full responsibility of active citizenship and what that means today. She asks how students of history can be taught agency, ethical practice, and social responsibility as the features of the good citizen.

Katie Barclay addresses a topic of immediate and unexpected relevance—teaching pandemic during the pandemic. She asks how understanding the plagues and pestilence of the past can help us to understand the pandemic of the moment. She also suggests that the whole lockdown experience and the way in which so many historians have had to master online pedagogy has made learning about the pandemic through the pandemic even more real. She begins by recounting her personal experience of the pandemic, and therefore asks about how to manage the experience of the students which may have varied greatly from hardly touched to deeply felt. In this approach, the methodology of the history of the emotions can help.

The last section of the volume, *Beyond the Academy*, looks out from the classroom to the world. Both government and universities are seriously concerned about employability. A new Australian Federal Government pricing policy for university courses has approximately doubled the cost of humanities subjects, including history, in an attempt to shift the study body into what is seen as the more directly employment-focused areas of nursing, STEM, and teaching. Nathan Wise explores how the idea of employability can be helpful but also contentious within the history classroom. The push for employability skills has a narrow focus, but the skills of the history student are eminently useful in a vast array of employment options. For some students however, immediate employment is not their priority, rather it is knowledge, understanding, appreciation, and aptitude in analysis, synthesis, and argument. The study of history offers skills that can be transferable in a range of workplaces and life situations. In the last chapter, Alan Booth takes up the big question of the ultimate purpose of history and the way in which current drivers may belie its deeper value. He challenges us all to ask what really matters for students studying this most challenging and rewarding of disciplines.

1.8 Conclusion

The subject of this volume, teaching history in the contemporary age, could mean that it is out of date before it even is completely written, let alone, published, read, and pondered. That in itself is why we should consider our current positions as historians and teachers as a serious and important exercise. We need to awaken to the particular demands of our age, know the urgency and value of historical work, cultivate a professional agility to respond, understand the diversity of our students and their varied needs, acknowledge the potential of the classroom as a unique learning space

and the teacher as a key facilitator for intellectual growth and discernment. This volume is intended to identify some of the issues of our time, in terms of content to be taught, methods to be used and professional lives to reform, however, it is not an exclusive collection. If this volume teaches us anything at all, it must be to support the vitality and agility of the discipline and to appreciate the significant contribution of the individual positioning of the discipline's practitioners to its dynamism and expansion. If we value our professional research lives as responsive, ethical, and aware, then similarly, we must value those same characteristics when we are in the classroom.

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Part I
In the Academy

Chapter 2
The Profession: Some Thoughts on Western Civilisation

Frank Bongiorno

Abstract History is an ethical discipline, its teaching (and research) underpinned by judgments about right behaviour such as how we should best live with nature and one another. The call often heard from conservative critics that history teaching must 'stick to the facts' or, as in the push in Australia for the study of Western Civilisation, to 'great books', should be seen as an effort to insert approved political ideology into history teaching under the cover of spurious claims about 'common tradition' and 'common sense'. Judgments about curriculum and pedagogy are fundamentally 'ethical' and 'political', expressing ideas about what kind of historical knowledge is most relevant to the present day and what kind of history teaching will equip students both to understand the world and to act on it in ways that increase social justice and reduce suffering and oppression. It is one thing for historians to avoid political partisanship, quite another to advocate a political neutrality that, on closer inspection, is actually an endorsement of past wrongs and their continuation into the present. In an age when democracy is under attack and the future of the planet threatened by global warming, history teaching needs to find a space between narrow political and ideological partisanship, and a dangerous ethical neutrality.

At regular intervals in recent years, Dr. Bella d'Abrera, the Director of the Foundations of Western Civilisation Program at the Institute of Public Affairs (IPA), has appeared in the media to criticise the teaching of history in Australian universities. Her criticisms are usually advanced on the back of reports issued by the IPA under her authorship, which find that Australian university history departments have been overtaken by identity politics. The IPA, Australia's most influential right-wing think tank and a nursery for ambitious conservative politicians, has been producing reports bemoaning the takeover of history departments by identity politics on a fairly regular basis since 2015 (d'Abrera, 2017, 2018; Forrest, Berg & Pandel, 2015).

To take one of these reports, in October 2017, the IPA claimed to have undertaken a 'systematic review of all 746 history undergraduate subjects taught in 2017 at the

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35 Australian universities that offer programs of study in history'. The key finding of this survey—which appears to have been based mainly on the course descriptions available on the web—was that 244 of those subjects focussed on 'identity politics'. Identity politics, the report explains, are subjects that 'teach history from the perspective of class, race, gender and associated cultural theories'. The most common themes taught in Australian universities were Indigenous issues, Race, Gender, Environment and Identity. These five appear more frequently than 'Enlightenment' or 'Reformation', but d'Abrera still found that 241 subjects were offered in what she called the 'Essential Core Topics in the History of Western Civilisation' (d'Abrera, 2017, pp. 3–4).

On these 'findings' d'Abrera managed to hang the startling conclusion: 'The fact that there are more history subjects which focus on class, gender and race than there are that teach students about the history of Western Civilisation reveals the extent to which history as an academic discipline has become dominated by concepts of Identity Politics' (d'Abrera, 2017, p. 5). Yet even on her own definitions, figures and dubious methodology, this conclusion is untenable. Her research, such as it is, actually underlines the diversity of offerings, if course titles and descriptions are, as she assumes, a reliable guide to what is being studied (a matter that is debatable and taken up below). Nonetheless, the IPA report concludes: 'The teaching of history in Australian universities has become a bastion of the cultural theory of Identity Politics, whereby people are divided by their class, race, gender and their individuality is denied. Students studying history in Australia are at risk of finishing their degrees with a distorted view of the world in which the past is viewed as a contest between the oppressors and the oppressed' (d'Abrera, 2017, p. 11).

Less tendentious research by Martin Crotty and Paul Sendziuk on behalf of the Australian Historical Association[1] confirms a diverse range of offerings. But using quite different categories, and based on 2016 offerings in Australian universities, they found that while the most courses were offered in Australian history, students gravitated in the largest numbers to courses on war/conflict and society. Almost as many students were enrolled in medieval history subjects as in modern Europe. World history was immensely popular (Crotty & Sendziuk, 2018, p. 51). Presented in this way, it becomes rather difficult to see how the IPA could be alarmed by the state of history in Australian universities, concerned as it appears to be with representativeness (itself a debatable concept). It is true, however, that British history has declined, a common complaint among conservatives, and a phenomenon long noticed and surely reflecting the changing place of Australia in the world since the 1960s and likely also the changing interests of students. But Britain and its empire necessarily figure in other courses, such as in an introductory offering on empires in my own department at the Australian National University (British history is also taught in specialist courses on Tudor and Stuart Britain and the British Industrial Revolution). It would presumably figure in university courses on modern world history and war and society, given Britain's leading global role over several centuries, unless such courses were being very badly taught.

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[1] I am Vice-President of the Australian Historical Association.

That is a large part of the problem with the IPA's approach to these matters: it has no information on how courses are actually taught, what students want to study, and what is happening in the classroom itself. It is innocent of matters such as how university history departments are funded, or of the role of changing patterns of student demand in influencing curriculum (Burnard, 2017). It pays no attention to changing approaches to history. The idea that lecturers are essentially pushing on to students their own political enthusiasms and indoctrinating them in left-wing politics is simply allowed to hang about the discussion of formal course offerings as if the one largely determines the other. But the framing of the findings in the report itself discloses that its interest in history is as part of a larger argument about the domination of universities by a left-wing identity politics, which extends to claims of widespread censorship of unfashionable (conservative) opinions—an accusation overturned in a formal government enquiry led by former High Court Judge Robert French (French, 2019, 217).

The IPA's interventions also rest largely on an understanding of pedagogy that is common sense on the political right—and possibly to many of those to whom it appeals—but which has been rejected by most history practitioners for generations. For right-wing critics of the teaching of history in schools and universities, history forms a body of facts that have an existence that is independent of the historian, or the student of history. Teaching is understood as a process by which the student is inducted into the most significant of these facts. Significance is assessed by reference to a radical presentism: what matters is what makes our own society—in Australia's case, understood as part of a Western Civilisation with a strong Anglosphere flavour—unique, virtuous and free. We understand our modern democracy by studying the (positive) values nurtured in the unfolding of Western history from the classical era down to the present, with a large helping of the history of Britain and the United States along the way, with each seen to embody the best values nurtured in classical Greece and Rome, reinforced as well as leavened by the Judeo-Christian tradition.

Most approaches, skills and techniques that teachers and researchers of history see as distinguishing their discipline have only a shadowy presence in this conceptualisation of the nature of history education. Teachers of history—at least at the tertiary level—would expect students to be able to recognise that a concept such as Western Civilisation—or its close companion Judeo-Christian Civilisation—itself has a history, and that this history can only be understood by reference to the study, via original sources, of the actors, contexts and intentions that gave rise to the concept. Daniel Lord Smail has argued that the kinds of periodisation commonly deployed in school and university courses on Western Civilisation have depended on a process by which sacred stories, such as of the Garden of Eden, the Deluge and the Tower of Babel, have been secularised while retaining many of the essentials of their sacred origins. In the first place, they have rejected the 'deep time' that emerged out of the work of geology, biology and other disciplines from the 1860s. Instead of incorporating the discovery of the great length of history into their historical practice, academic historians mainly shored up their customary short chronology by adapting the sacred stories to a secular historiography. Secondly, the origins of humanity in Africa would be ignored in favour of an origin story that placed the

beginning of 'history' in the Near East, in ancient Mesopotamia. But for conservative pundits 'Western Civilisation' and 'Judeo-Christian civilisation'—with their histories of around 4000 years and their assumption of a break between neolithic and postlithic societies—remained the orthodoxy. These were to be studied—as well as admired and even sometimes emulated—for their achievements and their legacies (Smail, 2007).

The University of Wollongong's new Bachelor of Arts (Western Civilisation)—funded by the Ramsay Centre for Western Civilisation, the bequest of a Sydney healthcare billionaire and conservative Catholic, Paul Ramsay—announces that one of its 'Course Learning Outcomes' is to 'Critically examine the very idea of Western civilisation and the contribution Western ideas and ideals make to, and challenges they raise for, today's world' (University of Wollongong, 2019). But if this goal was taken seriously, much of the rest of the programme would melt into air; the ideological purposes that such constructions seek to advance, and the political and intellectual needs that they have met in the past and continue to meet for those with the power and money to promote their enthusiasms, would be thoroughly exposed.

The Wollongong programme is a 'transformative degree' that 'will take you on a unique philosophical adventure through which you will engage with a carefully curated selection of some of the greatest intellectual and artistic masterpieces ever produced' (University of Wollongong, 2019). This is, no doubt, a potentially pleasant exercise—and, to be fair, it does not call itself 'history'—but it is nonetheless important to make the distinction given the broadly chronological structure of the programme and its use of the secularised short chronology criticised by Smail. Its foundational assumption, moreover, is that we can best approach 'Western Civilisation' through its great works—and especially its great books—and that these 'intellectual and artistic masterpieces' will expose its fundamental features (University of Wollongong, 2019). It ignores other forms of evidence that have become integral to new knowledge about the origins and development of humanity—from the use of landscape by the Annales School and material culture by archaeologists, through to linguistics, genomics, zooarchaeology and palaeoecology.

So there is a course at Wollongong, 'Classics of the Modern Era', whose description has some of the features of a standard history course, referring to a 'modern era' that 'witnessed incredible artistic and intellectual movements connected to larger changes that swept through Europe and the United States in the 19th and 20th centuries. These changes were a response to the unsettling social, political, and cultural events of that period – including the first two World Wars'. Historians would recognise these sentences as a perfectly reasonable thumbnail description of a process of historical change. But how is an understanding of this transformation to be achieved? How, for instance, would these budding students of Western Civilisation approach one of the central events of this era—and of any era—the Holocaust? Why is it not explicitly mentioned in the course description? If the main purpose of study is to mine the past for its exemplary works and values which can then be 'analysed', the very intellectual organisation of the programme seems to have no place for consideration of this central event in the history of West—one that was a product of both a particular context and of a long history of Western anti-Semitism.

Inevitably, the emphasis on great books means that the study of this era of Western Civilisation will not apparently include Adolf Hitler's *Mein Kampf*—it is hardly an 'intellectual masterpiece'—but nor will they include *The Diary of a Young Girl (The Diary of Anne Frank)* or Primo Levi's *If This is a Man*. Is a student who had been allowed to wander for 3 years through almost 3000 years of the great works of Western Civilisation likely to be able to come to any worthwhile conclusions about the place of the Holocaust in that civilisation, that is, without the tools, techniques and texts of the critical historian?

More generally, what role does scholarship, including historical scholarship, play in this education? Do the discoveries of scholars who have turned their attention to the various great works to be considered by our young students of Western Civilisation have a role to play in moulding their understanding? No teacher of university history would try teaching the Holocaust without the help of the rich body of historical and theoretical writing on that topic that has emerged over recent decades. This is one way students learn how to construct questions about historical phenomena, by seeing how the experts working with original materials do it. Can a largely unmediated reading of the West's 'intellectual masterpieces' under the guidance of a tutor, but without a grounding in any particular disciplinary tradition, really perform this difficult role?

Like Bella d'Abrera in relation to the history courses to which she objects, I do not yet know how all of this will work in the classroom, and it may well be that historical interpretation will come to play its part and a periodisation that begins its study of 'Western Civilisation' roughly 3000 years ago will collapse under the weight of modern scientific and historical knowledge. But history, no less than the 'liberal arts education' celebrated by proponents of the Western Civilisation approach, is an ethical discipline, its practice underpinned by judgments about right behaviour such as how we should best live with nature and with one another. The call often heard from conservative critics that history teaching must 'stick to the facts' is not politically neutral because their own interventions indicate that they have an ideological preference for some facts over others. Judgments about curriculum and pedagogy are fundamentally ethical and political, expressing ideas about what kind of historical knowledge is most relevant to the present day and what kind of history teaching will equip students both to understand the world and to act on it as well-informed and capable citizens and professionals. It is one thing for historians to avoid political partisanship, but quite another to advocate a spurious political neutrality ('stick to the facts') that, on closer inspection, is actually an endorsement of past wrongs and their continuation into the present. In an age when democracy is under attack and the future of the planet threatened by global warming, history teaching needs to find a space between narrow political and ideological partisanship, and a dangerous ethical neutrality.

The IPA reports, mentioned above, function as texts by presenting a hierarchy of knowledge in which certain historical learning constitutes the 'Essential Core Topics in the History of Western Civilisation', and historical courses that fall outside the 'Core Topics' become instances of left-wing indoctrination. It has adapted its 20 Essential Core Topics from Niall Ferguson: they are Ancient Greece and Rome, any

period of British History, the Middle Ages, the history of Christianity, the Renaissance, Reformation, Enlightenment, American Revolution, United States Constitution, French Revolution, Industrial Revolution, Russian Revolution, World War I, Great Depression, history of Israel, Nazism, Fascism, Communism, World War II, Decolonisation and the Cold War (d'Abrera, 2017, 8). An earlier IPA report, published in 2015, had a wider remit than the history of Western Civilisation, and defined its historical 'canon'—as a test for comprehensiveness—as encompassing Ancient Greece and Rome, Medieval, Renaissance and Reformation Europe, courses in Early Modern and Modern British History, and in Early Modern and Later Modern Europe, United States History, Asian History, colonial Australia (1788–1901) and Twentieth-Century Australia, Twentieth-Century World History and then a series of thematic areas of study, Religious History, Intellectual History and Economic History. We can see in all of this Smail's secularised biblical chronology, with some ideological gloss from the elevation of the Anglosphere, narrowly defined—essentially Britain and the United States—and particular concern over the decline of British history given its foundational role for Australia (Forrest, Berg & Pandel, 2015, pp. 7–8, 13).

In each instance here, the IPA has little to say how such courses should be taught. Certainly courses (and, by implication, approaches) seen to epitomise identity politics are the 'other' to its canon. It values what it considers the teaching of clearly defined periods and places over thematic courses that are seen to lead to fragmentation and incoherence. For the IPA, identity politics is based on the assumption that 'individuals are defined by their "identity", the three primary identities being their class, their race and their gender'. It then apparently claims that the 'process of politics, history and, indeed, all interactions between individuals and groups can be primarily understood through the role played by those identities and the conflict those identities generate' (d'Abrera, 2017, p. 18).

The IPA's efforts to create a canon are remarkable in their omissions. The 2018 report thinks that Australian students need to study the history of Israel, but fails to mention Australia. The 2015 report includes Australia, but only post-1788 in its test of comprehensiveness: the previous 60,000 years or so of Indigenous history being ignored. There is no sense here of the ways the teaching and research of history are being transformed by deep history, with its emphasis on continuities across millennia and the artificiality of the distinction between prehistory and history. Smail has argued for a 'biological or cognitive turn' that would explore 'the continuous interplay between human culture, on the one hand, and the human brain, behavior, and biology, on the other'—an 'interdisciplinarity that joins the humanities and social sciences with the physical and life sciences' (Smail, 2007, pp. 7–9). Nor do the short chronologies of Western Civilisation Studies find a place for the even more ambitious Big History, with its bringing together of cosmology and history in a story beginning with the Big Bang and extending billions of years into the future.

These new ways of doing history, as the inventor of Big History, David Christian, has argued, also give rise to new ways of thinking about the ethics of history. In place of the national identities that modern history has so often sought to foster, Big History might give rise to a more elusive 'global identity … a sense of belonging to the global

community of humans that can inspire collective actions as powerfully as modern nationalisms' (Christian, 2004, p. 139). At a time when so many of the dangers that we face seem to call for global solutions—from anthropogenic climate change through to global pandemics—this way of imagining the past and our relationship to it is radically unsettling and, arguably, radically necessary. Big History reminds humans of their transitory place in the history of the Universe, of their origins in dust and stars, and even of the ultimate destruction of the universe itself. But it also invites us to consider history on a range of scales, and to consider what our management of the biosphere over the next century or even the next few years might mean for the future of the planet over the next couple of thousand years—roughly the length of time that Western Civilisation proponents seem comfortable with considering (Christian, 2018).

Inevitably, approaches to the past influenced by Deep History and Big History unsettle the criteria of significance that are so confidently announced by advocates of a historical canon who think that Magna Carta, the English Civil War, the Glorious Revolution and the United States Constitution should form the centrepiece of a history education. Indeed, the story can be taken back further. Since the work of the Annales School with their advocacy of the *longue durée* and of the need to consider the slow-moving underlying material forces that have shaped human history more than the 'events'—the tides underneath rather than the foam on the surface, as Fernand Braudel put it—there has been a revolution in historical understanding that no competent teacher of history can afford to ignore.

They also have ethical obligations as teachers of history that cannot but respond to the political circumstances of our present. This is not a matter of indoctrination, but of providing students with the tools and techniques to understand a world in which the past can, at a superficial glance, appear a poor guide to a present seemingly capable of delivering endless shocks. A country that had long prided itself on the strength of its democracy, the United States, is now asking hard questions about how it can protect itself against foreign interference in its elections and whether it is capable of imposing sufficient restraints on a president with little interest in negotiating the republic's long-standing system of checks and balances. The United Kingdom, which had become economically integrated with Europe and seemed, since the 1960s, to have been increasingly inclined to see its best hope of underwriting its prosperity and security through membership of the European Union, has now determined to make its own way in the world, but without the option of remaking itself as the empire of old. These shifts in the Anglo-world have occurred within a wider context in which democracy has seemed under increasing pressure, as populist and authoritarian governments and leaders entrench their power in several countries. The crudest forms of analysis might see in this an encroaching fascism. A more sophisticated understanding of the kind associated with successful history education might, as Geoff Eley has suggested, be more inclined to ask what it is about the present context that would lead people to make the comparison (Eley, 2018). The answers to that question might not be much more comforting.

The teaching of history in universities cannot afford to overlook these dangers to democracy and the future of the planet, any more than it should ignore rising

inequality and the resurgence of racism. We should certainly not claim more for our teaching than it can deliver. It does not, for instance, usually tell us precisely what is going to happen in the future. At best, it offers a guide—almost our only guide—to the likely course of events to come. Nor does an understanding of the past set out for us a political programme, or a clear pathway to the adoption of policies that will tackle our most serious problems. Historians who have sought to draw on the lessons of the past to articulate specific policy advice in the present have sometimes been found wanting because changing contexts generate a vast number of variables in any given situation. The false analogy between appeasement in the 1930s and the Vietnam War in the 1960s is well known partly because it seems to have so influenced the perceptions of the historically literate intellectuals in and around the Kennedy and Johnson Administrations, but political discourse to a great extent runs on misleading analogy—the uses and abuses of the past for the purposes of present politics (MacMillan, 2009).

More usefully, one of the most powerful tools that historians have available to them is the ability to think within different kinds of timespan. For instance, the work of a range of disciplines—all of them drawing to a greater or lesser extent on the techniques associated with history—has provided us with powerful insights into how past societies have been affected by rapid climate change. A willingness to experiment with periodisation has provided historians with a nimbleness, and history with an explanatory power, that those wedded to theories poorly informed by history cannot readily achieve. This has sometimes been a valid criticism of economics. With its models and concepts—often shaped by intricate mathematical calculation—it has sometimes struggled to explain political and business decisions or even the wider operation of the economy itself because it has paid too little attention to history, politics and psychology (Skidelsky, 2016). Why did a country such as Australia, whose comparative advantage lies so obviously—at least in the eyes of the classically trained economist—in digging up and exporting minerals, spend almost a century developing a car industry? Without some understanding of the contexts in which decision-making occurred, and of the role of path dependency in later limiting the range of choices available to decision-makers, one will not get very far in answering such a question; one that I pose to my own students in courses on Australian economic and political history. It is fundamentally an historical question.

To the extent that historians have become wedded to certain forms of periodisation by fashion or convention—the post-World War II era's taste for blocks of about 20 or 30 years is an example—the discipline has been impoverished in its capacity to provide students with tools that they are likely to be able to use in their lives as citizens and professionals (Guldi & Armitage, 2014). But we are currently passing through an era in which experimentation in this field by historians—very often informed by a rich array of other disciplines including the natural sciences—is opening up a remarkably wide set of possibilities. One notable trend has been increasingly ambitious timescales in historical publications, doctoral theses and undergraduate teaching. There has also been a shift to transnational, global and even planetary histories, a development I do not have the space to explore here. The political and intellectual imperatives of climate change, in particular, demand such versatility. The concept

of the Anthropocene—the notion that we have entered a new era or epoch in which humans themselves have for the first time in the history of the biosphere become its key driver—demands a planetary perspective, one that encompasses both human and other life on earth, and which recognises that humans are now changing the climate in ways that will affect life on the planet for millennia. Climate change, as Dipesh Chakrabarty has argued, also requires of us the capacity to think simultaneously in terms of a range of different timescales, from a conventional human chronology through to evolutionary and geological time (Chakrabarty, 2015, pp. 179–181).

Against the background of such existential challenges to the future of humanity, and dislocations of our own sense of selfhood as we seek to negotiate the novel experience of being shapers of future planetary life, the idea of a disinterested teaching of history cannot be maintained. In the context of challenges to democracy and to science from those with the power to undermine both, history must remain committed to evidentially based enquiry. Ethical practice also demands that historians communicate effectively in a context where there often seems to be an inverse relationship between the volume of the voice and the expertise sitting behind it. Students need to see how historical enquiry might connect with their own present, a challenging task when even in our universities, there are fields of study that largely eschew historical perspectives while ambitiously claiming relevance across a vast intellectual domain.

Most students in our classes will not become professional historians, but a history education needs to equip them with the capacity to bring historical perspectives—and the ethical standards integral to them—to their lives as citizens and professionals. In this task, the most powerful tool that we can offer them might be history's distinctive concern with time. There would be few forms of professional employment in which the capacity to operate flexibly on different timescales, according to purposes and circumstances, would not be a critical capacity. For the citizen seeking to achieve change, a well-grounded historical understanding of the relationship between structure and agency will likely be an antidote against both excessive ambition and excessive despair in the face of setbacks and obstacles.

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Chapter 3
Decolonising the Curriculum: Contexts and Strategies

Peter D'Sena

> Europe is no longer the center of gravity of the world.
> This is a significant event, the fundamental experience of our era.
> Achille Mbebe, *Critique of black reason* (2017).
> The truth is that when Britain was 'great' it was not 'white', but drew its strength from its colonial people. If society understood Britain as empire, millions would not be yearning for a version of Britannia that simply never existed.
> Kehinde Andrews, *Do we need to decolonise history? And if so, how?* (2019).

Abstract The call to decolonise the curriculum is being heard not only within universities but also increasingly, since the killing of George Floyd, on streets across the world from protesters in the Black Lives Matter demonstrations and other movements. But what exactly is it that they are demanding? What are its origins and objectives? Here, with specific reference to the UK, we explore the background and contexts for the growth of the decolonising the curriculum movement; reflect on its significance and potential for teaching, learning and educational outcomes; and finally consider some strategies for taking it forward in our discipline.

In 2015, students at the University of Cape Town called for the statue of Cecil Rhodes, the nineteenth-century British coloniser, to be removed from their campus. Their clarion call, in a quick-spreading #RhodesMustFall movement, was that for diversity, inclusion and social justice to become a lived reality in higher education (HE), the curriculum has to be 'decolonised' (Chantiluke, Kwoba, & Nkopo, 2019; Le Grange, 2016). This was to be done by challenging the longstanding, hegemonic Eurocentric production of knowledge and dominant values by accommodating alternative perspectives, epistemologies and content. Moreover, they also called for broader institutional changes: fees must fall, and the recruitment and retention of both students and staff should take better account of cultural diversity rather than

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working to socially reproduce 'white privilege' (Bhambra, Gebrial, & Nişancıoğlu, 2015). Concerns had long been voiced by both academics and students about curricula dominated by white, capitalist, heterosexual, western worldviews at the expense of the experiences and discourses of those not perceiving themselves as fitting into those mainstream categories (Asante, 1995; Hicks & Holden, 2007). The massification of HE across race and class lines in the past four decades has fuelled these debates; consequentially, the 'fitness' of curricula across disciplines is increasingly being questioned. Student representative bodies have also voiced the deeper concern that many pedagogic practices and assessment techniques in university systems serve to reproduce society's broader inequalities. Certainly, in the UK, recent in-depth research has indicated that the outcomes of inequity are both multifaceted and tangible, with, for example, graduating students in Historical and Philosophical Studies (H&PS) from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) backgrounds having an attainment gap (or, more properly, suffering from an awarding gap) only receiving half as many 'good' (first class and upper second) degree classifications as their white counterparts (Royal Historical Society, 2018).

As a consequence of such ideas and findings, the momentum for discussing the issues around diversifying and decolonising the university has gathered pace. Importantly, however, as the case and arguments have been expressed not only through peer-reviewed articles and reports published by learned societies but also in the popular press, the core issues have become more accessible than most academic debates and more readily discussed as both a pedagogic issue and a moral imperative by both teachers and learners (Arday and Mirza, 2018; RHS, 2018; History Extra, 2019). Hence, more recently, findings of the attainment/awarding gap have been taken seriously and given prominence by both Universities UK and the National Union of Students (NUS). Their shared conclusion is that radical, though yet to be determined, steps are needed if any movements or campaigns such as #closingthegap are to find any success (NUS, 2016; Shay, 2016; Universities UK, 2019).

The weight and welter of information gleaned from publications and polemics present a number of conundrums. First of all, there is no absolute agreement about definitions. The conceptual hybridity of 'decolonising the curriculum', the melange of two dominant conversations—curriculum (how taught, examined); and discrimination (how 'race', gender, class and sexuality can affect learning experiences)—carries different emphases to different people. While these conversations have long been acknowledged as related, (Freire, 2000) they might, in educational practice, be dealt with separately. As a consequence, interpretations about how theory might manifest itself in practice seem to be based on an array of principles, and a reasonable conclusion is that some practitioners will be less concerned about seeking 'authentic' culture (and even then, that might be contested) than about opening up spaces to facilitate knowledge informed by Indigenous thoughts and actions. At the other end of the spectrum, the challenge of decolonising the *content* of the curriculum has created a siege mentality for some academics whose epistemologies (and maybe livelihood) are nurtured by their conception of rigid, rather than malleable and permeable disciplinary boundaries (Bender, 2005) and this argument has been evident in the work of some scholars in the humanities. One position against ubiquitous change marshals

the view that local, regional, national histories and literatures should (obviously and of necessity) be a research and teaching strength of UK universities. *Ipso facto*, the appointment of staff and consequently and significantly the staff demographic in those areas should not fall on the sword of the decolonisation movement. This highlights one of the issues emerging from the literature and that is that making the curricular and structural developments required to carry decolonisation into practice is highly dependent on doing 'difficult' things, from having uncomfortable conversations and developing institutional spaces, to creating opportunities, strategies and effective policies for promoting cultural change. That is not to say that a need for cultural change has gone unacknowledged—it is now *de rigueur* in many UK universities for staff to undertake unconscious bias training and the like, though in terms of the decolonising the curriculum agenda, this is just scratching the surface.

Not surprisingly, then, even the contributors to one of the most celebrated books on *Decolonising the University* fail to agree on whether the objective suggested by its title can actually be achieved (Bhambra et al., 2015). While they agree that universities have developed as the tools of empire, they wonder whether alternative discourses can prosper within such well-established, colonially shaped spaces. Some recognise that a hard, radical stance is necessary, because the subversion and elimination of hegemonic structures require a degree of intellectual and cultural change that is unlikely to happen from within; whereas others see the possibilities of a soft approach, with change from within, so long as institutionally colonial elements can be effectively critiqued (Pimblott, 2020, p. 1). Our discipline has seen some successful examples of practice at various points of this hard–soft spectrum. In the UK, the supplementary school system has long taken the hard approach by separately providing children with perspectives and content more usually cloaked in invisibility by mainstream secondary education (Hall, Özerk, Zulfiqar, & Tan, 2002). By comparison, higher education has more recently seen a spate of initiatives taking the softer approach, with curricular developments deploying methodologies favouring pluriversal approaches to knowledge and its production such as the first BA in Black British History at the University of Birmingham. However, initiatives such as these have not gone unchallenged, with some student groups (and even some staff) vehement in their criticism through fear of the displacement of traditional discourses.

While some of the component parts of what is generally now understood to be decolonising the university and the curriculum have been seen before there seems, now, to be a greater appetite, expectation and momentum for change. As early as the 1930s, African students in Paris had looked to counter racism and white supremacy with the Négritude movement; while probably more familiar to most are the USA's black studies programmes, which emerged in the wake of Black Power and the civil rights movement in the 1960s (Pimblott, 2020, p. 2). What is distinctly different now is the speed with which the movements now challenging higher education's colonialist connections are spreading within and across national boundaries. In the USA, responses to experiences of racial inequality, under-representation, marginalisation and in some cases brutality saw the growth of movements promulgated by social media such as #BlackLivesMatter (2013) and #ITooAmHarvard (2014); and these were followed soon afterwards in the UK, at University College London (UCL) and

elsewhere, by the #WhyIsMyCurriculumWhite? and #WhyIsntMyProfessorBlack? campaigns (2014). Though before focusing on their ideas in relation to the teaching of history, it is worth taking a snapshot of the broader picture of ethnicity and attainment. In the UK, more people with a BAME heritage are entering higher education than ever before, but they are mostly to be found in the new, post-1992 universities, rather than the older, generally higher ranking, prestigious ones. The figures for black students (i.e. people of African heritage) are of particular concern. The Runnymede Trust's survey for 2015–16 indicated that as a group, they comprise 6% of the UK's HEI population, almost double the general demographic figure, however, collectively they suffer the worst degree 'awarding gap', with far fewer gaining 'good' degree outcomes or graduate prospects for employment than white students. The statistics for staffing were also poor, with only 1.54% of academics and 0.49% of the professoriate being of African heritage (Alexander & Arday, 2015; Office for Students, 2018). The Trust's conclusions that UK HEIs are seemingly content to skate around developing inclusive curricula and policies for hiring a more diverse group in the staff base justifiably echoed the core objectives of #RhodesMustFall. In Oxford that movement was about far more than the removal of statuary or an attack on iconography, the core aim was to heighten the awareness of the university's explicit and continuing connections with colonialism with a view to creating a base for curriculum development and institutional change. Within this context, their condemnation of institutionalised 'white supremacy', a term usually associated with far-right and extremist groups, was placing their university and others under scrutiny for being culpable for their historic and ongoing role in the production and reproduction of Eurocentric knowledge systems which 'privileged' white people and whiteness. In its quest for decolonisation, the movement's strategy of critiquing institutional histories, legacies, systems and practices was accompanied by a campaign to acknowledge the place of alternative, particularly non-western knowledge systems, values and personnel in an intellectual and structural reconfiguration of the academy. Since then, the movement has gained traction in other HEIs and particular prominence in London in Goldsmiths College, UCL, the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) and the University of the Arts. What, therefore, makes the decolonising the curriculum movement special by comparison with many others in higher education is the way in which student activism is helping to galvanise action and change. Additionally, a centralised impetus for these more localised campaigns has come from the UK's NUS in the form of publications, conferences and large data sets from surveys of its members. Even as early as 2011, they had found that a large percentage of black students were reporting their experience of discriminatory practices and that their taught curriculum was inadequate because of a lack of diversity and multi-perspectivity; and notably, among the principal culprits cited, was the teaching of history (NUS, 2011). This is certainly borne out by the statistics in the Royal Historical Society's recent and influential publication *Race, Ethnicity & Equality in UK History*: *A Report and Resource for Change* (2018). Their findings in everything from admissions and outcomes to staffing showed that it was amongst the whitest of subjects in academia. UK-domiciled students in H&PS are far more likely to be racialised as white (89%) compared with candidates in all the other subjects (77.3%);

first-class degrees are awarded disproportionately to white (22.8%) compared with BAME students (14.2%); while a staggering 93.7% of academic staff in history are white compared with 85% in all other subjects. Only 0.5% of history professors were black (RHS, 2018, pp. 29–44).

The problems besetting the discipline of history, certainly in the UK, are therefore multi-faceted. Clossey and Guyatt's succinct, yet eye-opening short study 'It's a small world after all: The wider world in historians' peripheral vision' (2013) gives a clear measure of academic introspection: we (those of us in the west) tend to teach the histories of ourselves, meaning British, European and North American. Moreover, because the majority of historians, certainly in the UK, is generally reliant on primary sources and secondary texts written in English or are completely reliant on works in translation, indigenous perspectives are mediated by the practices of publishing houses. However, scholars such as Bennett (2007) have warned us that because so much is literally and routinely lost in translation, those trying to decolonise historical research and enquiry are posed with fundamental problems. The ubiquity and legacy of the British Empire have enabled the English language to become and continue to remain the main vehicle for conveying and embedding its post-feudal, western, rationalist/scientific paradigm(s) around the world and also for understanding the colonial 'other'. The transmission and globalisation of knowledge and values through the 'prestige discourse of the Anglophone world' have, through its dominance of written expression, Bennett argues, spawned epistemicide, 'the systematic destruction of rival forms of knowledge' (Bennett, 2007, p. 154), or sculpted alien knowledge(s) to assimilate with imperial norms after the process of translation into English. Ndlovu-Gatshani, in an interesting position piece, advises that if we are to decolonise this centuries-old world system and confront epistemicide, 're-searchers' need to break free of colonially generated methodological straitjackets through epistemic disobedience. In essence, though, this can only take place when those who have been objectified by Europe begin to rebel, reposition and re-cast research by shifting their own gaze onto 'what Europe has done to humanity' (Ndlovu-Gatshani, 2017, p. 4). This is a salutary reminder that efforts to decolonise the curriculum should not rest merely on diversifying content. Decolonising methodologies, the quest for the authentic voice of extra-European and subaltern voices, and developing and capitalising on the multilingual abilities of our students are vital components in teaching, learning and assessment.

The Universities UK and NUS report, 'Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Student Attainment at UK Universities: #closing the gap' (2019) showed that there was still much to do, despite governmental initiatives and pressures on HEIs, to close the attainment/awarding gap. Amongst their many recommendations, they advocated the need to have meaningful (most likely tense and difficult) discussions about changing institutional cultures, to develop a more inclusive environment. Discussions, if carried out superficially, are likely to result in a conversation about including some new readings, holding a one-off staff training event, bringing in a guest speaker as a temporary panacea or a classic diversion, wrought sometimes in part from 'white guilt' (Shay, Shay 2016) abrogating responsibility and involvement by assuming leadership should or can only be taken by BAME staff and students. However, it is

the deeper discussions, those tackling the realisation that decolonisation is a process that can lead to structural changes and challenges to white entitlement, that may create or fuel racial tension, invoke defensiveness and denial, either in the face of acknowledging and yielding power, whether epistemological or hierarchical, or manifest a wave of postcolonial nostalgia and a colonial fantasy of the type fuelled by debates over Brexit (Tran, 2020; Giblin, Ramos, & Grout, 2019, p. 472; Dorling & Tomlinson, 2019, p. 81). Such discussions may also be deemed irrelevant, with some objectives of decolonising's component parts, such as equality and social justice, already being remits of institutional units and agendas working on inclusivity, access and widening participation.

Discussions are also likely to be difficult, because inherent in explorations about decolonising the academy is an invitation and a requirement, if done properly, for people of all backgrounds to unravel and reflect on their personal and institution-alised relationships with the concepts and manifestations of 'whiteness', and white privilege. Whiteness, in terms of epistemes and culture, is not the sole preserve of white people, but rather those who are racialised as white. The associated manifesta-tions of white privilege of access, entitlement and achievement in society may seem self-evident. However, it has also been very usefully described by Reni Eddo-Lodge, in the way it is practised, as acts of complacency towards privilege and as a set of absences: 'an absence of the negative consequences of racism … of structural discrimination … of your race being viewed as a problem'. Hence, she concludes, the witting and unwitting consequence of white privilege is racism and central to the decolonising argument is that universities in the UK have been and continue to be bastions of whiteness and 'spaces of elite white privilege' (Eddo-Lodge, 2018, pp. 85–116; Alexander & Arday, 2015, p. 8).

Hence, even though widening participation has led to a more diverse student body, higher education has not become much more inclusive or equitable with students spread unevenly across HEIs. In effect, the UK has a two-tier system of higher educa-tion. A more affluent and international elite (34%) are to be found in the older, more prestigious Russell Group universities, while the newer, less prestigious, post-1992 universities have a greater concentration of Black and White working-class students (a useful reminder that the normativity of whiteness is best understood in conjunc-tion with readings of other experiential intersectionalities such as gender and class) (Our Universities, 2020). Moreover, higher rates of BAME student participation in higher education over the past two decades have not generally led to increased rates of entry to the elite universities (Boliver, 2019, pp. 67–85). Arguably, the cultural capital and dispositions of applicants to the older, elite universities are more likely to be recognised and rewarded by the offer of a place to study there and then insti-tutionally validated through the award of a prestigious credential. Social, cultural and academic reproduction seemingly trump meritocracy and social mobility and conflate exclusivity with excellence. The paradoxical nature of higher education is summed up well by Reay (2019, p. 60):

> Widening access and the democratisation of higher education… has brought an intensifica-tion of class and racial inequalities between different levels of higher education. Growing

diversity within the field of HE rather than producing a more inclusive higher education, has resulted in a more segregated and increasingly polarised system.

Against this backdrop, many institutions are now asking themselves what practical steps can help to take the decolonising agenda forward. Exemplars and models of good practice are starting to emerge across the sector though, with some reason, there are questions about whether they represent the adoption of the discourses of decolonisation or are using decolonising the curriculum as a 'metaphor' (Tuck & Yang, 2012), in other words for initiatives already in train to change institutional practice; in a casual, fashionable way by saying that something—a school, university, a subject—should or will be decolonised; or strategically by some academics as a career stepping-stone (Sista Resista, 2018). It might be easy to take the moral high ground on this matter, but we should be mindful that other initiatives sharing some vital aspects of decolonising's objectives have created pedagogic tools worthy of use and assimilation by decolonisers. For example, in the past 3 years, Kingston University has led a small consortium of universities each with a large percentage of BAME students in developing an *Inclusive Curriculum Framework* (2019) and their work has gained attention and some traction in the UK. In common with the growing amount of online guidance, it encourages practitioners to reflect on the colonial and racialised privilege in their teaching, in order to recalculate their pedagogic strategies to allow students to see themselves and their identities reflected in a more accessible curriculum. Their framework's overriding objectives relate to addressing the awarding gap and the ability to succeed in the workplace. For some, this might represent a soft, instrumental approach to decolonising, a metaphor maybe, as it is institutionally contained, but with its potential for measurable outcomes relating to the student experience, it stands a greater likelihood of finding its way into strategic planning documents.

It may be the case that other practical steps, such as taking positive action with regards to dismantling disciplinary organisation completely or, say, increasing the percentage of the BAME personnel at professorial and very senior levels may be less easy to take forward either with any real pace or at all. Suffice (and obvious) to say, in taking practical steps, individuals, groups and departments would take pragmatic account of their own institution's politics and for that reason decisions about how to define what decolonising the curriculum means not only in theory but also in practice, are best taken locally. Thus, of necessity, decolonising in practice, initially at least, will look different and hence operate at different points on a hard–soft spectrum from one institution to another. With this in mind, online guidance for decolonising the curriculum has tended to take the form of toolkits designed to facilitate bespoke change. The SOAS 'programme and module' leaders toolkit has a lengthy checklist of considerations pointedly asking, at a basic level, 'what is the demographic profile of authors; is the profile of authors acknowledged?' (SOAS, 2018), while its other, more searching questions require critical reflection about assumptions concerning coloniality, the origins of the discipline and our own academic relationship (whatever our phenotype) with whiteness and white privilege. It is not the intention, here, to rehearse all such suggestions about deepening the quality of content; rather, the focus will be

given to practices, which place the spotlight on matrices of power (Quijano, 2007) and racialising behaviours, and how staff and students can be empowered to engage more critically and with increased confidence in their institutional environments (Giblin et al., 2019).

One of the common tropes emerging from toolkits, chapters and books about decolonising the curriculum is the importance for all students to have the ability to participate on equal terms in classroom discussions. However, a myriad of conditions can make this problematic, with impediments including (everyone's) unconscious biases, the expectation that BAME staff and students should naturally be the advocate or spokesperson for decolonisation or non-European topics, or, quite simply, blatant discrimination. In short, the classroom environment, composed of the interactions of staff and students, presents a number of communicative barriers. According to a survey of almost 1000 students carried out by the NUS in 2009, this is particularly true for BAME and international students for whom English is often a second language. Many of them believed their learning experiences were negative, cliquey (23%), isolating (17%) or hostile (8%) (Gilbert, 2016). To address this, higher education institutions have recently been paying greater attention to 'pedagogies of compassion', which demand that individuals and groups not only notice but also act on the feelings, circumstances and problems of others. This pedagogic approach places teachers in the role of facilitator and agent of transformative change by charging them with raising the critical consciousness of their learners to be more responsible and empathetic, so that they act with greater humanity in university settings towards each other. This idea is hardly new: Paulo Freire, in his *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970), focused his thoughts on teachers then working in a tense, oppressive Brazilian society, to involve students far more in their own learning by using respectful, dialogic relationships with each other (Vandeyar & Swart, 2016). By problematising knowledge and knowledge production in this way, in combination with a quest to address social and political problems, they would also reflect on and question the reproductive role of educational processes. The intended, if not a necessarily naturally occurring outcome of students having the space and confidence to voice their opinion and challenge traditionally held processes and epistemologies, would be empowerment.

Almost 50 years on from Freire's work, Gilbert's early conclusions about 'Compassion focused Pedagogy' (CfP) hint that this may not be such an unrealistic idea after all; and moreover, it has the potential to raise the achievement of BAME students who hitherto felt marginalised, dominated and alienated by traditional educational structures into relative under-achievement. Gilbert identified, in his observations of human exchanges within the classroom, that 'local' students had a tendency to pathologise the silences within group discussions that other students, including international students, said they needed if they were to find a way of participating at all (Gilbert, 2016; Gilbert et al., 2018). He has argued that one way forward is for CfP to be used as a strategy to improve engagement between students in group and seminar work. Students can be taught to become more compassionate towards each other by inculcating and rewarding demonstrable behaviours such as inclusive eye contact and vocalisation and interrupting over-talking individuals. Moreover, his

research suggests that after CfP training their motivation and confidence to deploy compassionate group management improved, while academic outcomes in critical thinking in seminars showed such a marked improvement in BAME participants that the awarding gap had almost been eliminated. Inevitably, we should treat the results of early, small-scale studies such as this with caution; and CfP is not being held up as a panacea. The point being made here is twofold. First, cross-culturally valued concepts, such as compassion, have to be worth exploring if they can help to underscore the production of more equitable, inclusive learning environments. Second, we should remain mindful that while rewriting curriculum content is, to many, a critical element of the decolonising agenda that should not distract us from also seeking to implement pedagogic practices that can reduce and remove experiences of negativity in the classroom. There is little point in introducing a twenty-first century curriculum, while clinging on to twentieth-century methods of teaching and learning and, for that matter, nineteenth-century forms of assessment.

The Royal Historical Society's Race Report (2018) and its more recent *Roadmap for Change Update* (RHS, 2019) are provoking the discipline to rethink not only teaching, learning and assessment but also institutional systems and practice from top to bottom. Its challenges through a set of useful recommendations and advice are:

- for and about staffing;
- for heads of department, senior managers and appointment panels;
- for teaching staff;
- for first-year tutors, personal tutors and directors of studies;
- teachers and supervisors of postgraduates;
- for conference and seminar organisers; and
- for authors and editors.

Here, it is only possible to give a very small flavour of the types of advice given in those sections, though from the following examples it should be clear how they aim to help support thinking and action related to the decolonising the curriculum agenda. It asks: what role can induction play in addressing racial discrimination? (RHS, 2018, p. 85); how can journal editors proactively encourage submissions from BAME authors? (p. 91); do you call out behaviours that are degrading to human dignity or illegal? (p. 77); how will you diversify the content and core methods and theory courses (p. 43). Diversity in the curriculum is not, however, seen as either a substitute or proxy for decolonising the curriculum; addressing the issue of low BAME numbers studying the discipline matters and is as significant, for some, as what is taught.

Decolonising the curriculum is more than a set of pedagogic ideas it is a movement in which educators and those being educated might argue we are morally obliged to embrace. Despite being in its early stages, it is still possible to reach some early conclusions about principles, strategies and mindsets, though first, we need to acknowledge that the discipline has a problem; and because we have a problem as a discipline, we need to 'own the problem' (Finn, 2019). Psychological studies suggest that is where the difficulties are likely to begin, because the matter of changing mindsets, in order to take ownership, is complex (Devine, Forscher, Austin, & Cox, 2012).

Recognising and countering stereotypes are not, in itself, sufficient; individuation, rather than generalisations, should, Devine says, be accompanied by perspective-taking/empathy and increased opportunities for engaging with marginalised groups in a positive manner. Otherwise, we are in danger of merely replacing or complementing histories written by and about one privileged group with those of another.

In practical terms, a start could be made by opening a debate and instigating research about the local issues in your own HEI and department. Ask staff and students:

1. what does decolonising the curriculum mean to and for them;
2. what is its relevance for equity and social justice; for there is a moral imperative for change;
3. what do we, as practitioners need to do to collect and use data (Brauer, Frings, Linsenmann, & Suchan, 2018) and 'to re-examine disciplines and their epistemological structure' and 'ways of thinking and practice' (Kreber, 2010; wa Thiong'o, 1986);
4. what are the local and personal barriers to its progress; and
5. what might a strategy, including a pedagogic strategy for change, look like?

The first two lines of enquiry should permit us to investigate what Habermas termed the 'emancipatory interest', though as stated previously this type of personal and professional unravelling and reflection might not come easily (Cohen, Mannion, & Morrison, 2017, p. 53; Flood & Romm, 1996). The latter questions, which should be taken more as challenges, will facilitate practice to decolonise the curriculum with a view to taking it 'from [old] academic knowledge to democratic knowledge' (Robinson and Katalushi, 2005, p. 51). At the very least, they will suggest to us what tools and institutional strategies are likely to help us literally to transform not only just the face of the discipline but also the composition of the people within it.

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Chapter 4
The Students: Foregrounding Difference

Onni Gust

> If the effort to respect and honor the social reality and
> experiences of groups in this society who are nonwhite is to be
> reflected in a pedagogical process, then as teachers – on all
> levels, from elementary to university settings – we must
> acknowledge that our styles of teaching may need to change.
> bell hooks, *Teaching to Transgress*, (1994).

Abstract This chapter discusses the ways of creating history classrooms and courses that are accessible to students who are minoritised by society, whether as a result of their heritage, gender, sexuality or class background as well as those who face physical, emotional and neurological barriers to normative learning environments. It argues that actively considering how to make a classroom a safe space in which to learn is part of a radical pedagogy that resists the neo-liberalisation of higher education. Although questions of access and 'safe spaces' apply to every discipline, this chapter highlights the ways in which they relate to history in particular.

4.1 Introduction

This chapter is situated within a wider context of on-going discussions by anti-racist, feminist educators about what we, as teachers, can do to make our classrooms and institutions inclusive and embracing of difference. It is motivated by bell hooks' insights into how to 'teach in a manner that respects and cares for the souls of our students' and takes as its starting point her acknowledgement that to teach a multicultural or diverse classroom is often harder and less comfortable than teaching a class that appears, or can be assumed to be, homogenous (hooks, 1994, p. 13). Drawing on the work of radical and critical pedagogues, I understand education as integral to the reclamation of humanity and to what Freire calls the 'practice of freedom' (Freire, 1970, p. 62). This chapter is also heavily informed by discussions of the

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whiteness of history as a discipline and a profession, debates which span the UK, USA, Australia and South Africa. Recent, grassroots campaigns—including 'Rhodes must fall' and 'Why is My curriculum so white?'—as well as wider moves to 'decolonise' curricula have brought questions of racism and exclusion to the forefront of academic teaching. These movements have been led primarily by students of colour and take the form of social media and street-based protests, occupations and teach-ins. They demand an end to canons that are solely white (and usually male), an end to racist and sexist behaviours on university campuses, and an acknowledgement of the historic role of universities in the trans-Atlantic slave trade, imperial exploitation and white supremacy. In the UK, these movements sit alongside, albeit often uncomfortably, more top-down initiatives to embed Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) into university structures and to penalise universities that fail to acknowledge and address EDI issues. The most influential of these initiatives has been the Athena Swan charter mark, which began as a reward scheme for encouraging women in science and has expanded to become the primary means by which universities illustrate their commitment to promote gender parity in higher education. Managed by Advance HE (formerly the Equality Challenge Unit), the Athena Swan charter mark has now been joined by the Race Equality charter mark, which addresses the institutional racism that has led to radical disparities in attainment, hiring and retention between Black and white staff and students. Together, albeit in very different ways, these different movements have had an important impact on the landscape of higher education, raising awareness of, and creating policies to address, systemic exclusion and marginalisation.

History as a discipline has been implicated in, and responsive to, these discussions of diversity and equality. A number of universities in the UK and USA are looking into their historical connections with trans-Atlantic slavery with the aim of reparative justice. This is important in the context of the hegemonic whiteness that dominates in higher education in general and in history in particular. In 2018, the Royal Historical Society surveyed historians, primarily those working or studying in higher education, in order to get a better sense of the experiences of BAME [Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic] historians and the extent to which BAME history was being taught. The report that came out of the survey, 'Race, Ethnicity, and Equality in UK History', documented the massive underrepresentation of BAME students and staff in History, as well as the constant racism that BAME historians faced in their places of work and study. Like the 'decolonise the curriculum' movement more broadly, the authors of the report recommended promoting work to diversify the curriculum by de-centring the history of metropolitan Europe and drawing on the work of more historians of colour. The report also addresses structural issues in higher education, advising further awareness training to counteract unconscious bias and improved recruitment practices, both of which complement the aims of the Equality Challenge Unit's charter marks (Atkinson et al., 2018). Further work coming out of the report has highlighted the need for careful consideration of curriculum form and content. Jason Todd's 'Thinking Beyond Boundaries' notes that it is not just a case of adding BAME figures to the curriculum, but that educators need to think carefully about 'students' affective needs and desires'; about *how* we teach as well as *what* we teach (Todd,

2019). This is an area that Meleisa Ono-George discusses in her appraisal of the RHS report. Ono-George notes that the report's emphasis on diversity and inclusion meant that it ignored 'how teaching method or classroom structure can reinforce inequality' (Ono-George, 2019).

Although the RHS, the Equality Challenge Unit, and the broader 'decolonise the curriculum' movement all aim (in different ways) to address sexism and racism in the academy, less work has been done on how thinking critically about difference relates to pedagogical practice in the classroom itself. This chapter discusses the challenges and possibilities for engaging with difference in the history classroom. It builds on Ono-George's argument in *Women's History Review* for the need to create a 'decolonised, anti-racist and engaged classroom' in which students are 'encouraged to be active participants in the classroom community' (Ono-George, 2019). Drawing on my own experiences of teaching histories of British imperialism and colonial violence, I discuss the ways in which I have tried—with varying degrees of success, often hampered by institutional structures—to foster classrooms that actively and intentionally assume and embrace difference. Since 2011, I have taught a range of courses in history departments and women and gender studies departments in different types of institutions in the UK and the USA. Almost all the courses I teach require students to engage with different aspects of colonial violence, from the outright massacre of Indigenous people and enslavement of Africans in the Americas to the epistemic violence of Enlightenment 'scientific' knowledge. My students' engagement with these courses has depended partly on the way I set up the classroom, managed discussion and group dynamics and engaged with my students' very different reactions to these topics, reactions that are borne of their own different, embodied relationships to these histories. Fundamental to my attempts to create a 'decolonised, anti-racist and engaged classroom' has been the idea, drawn from feminist pedagogy and activism, of 'safer spaces', including the use of 'content warnings' (referred to by a hyperbolic media as 'trigger warnings').

4.2 The Classroom as a 'Safe Space'?

At various intervals over the last few years, the idea of 'safe spaces' and particularly the relationship between higher education and safe spaces has been the subject of the US and UK media attention. In April 2016, the well-known English actor and author, Stephen Fry, appeared on the American talk show, *Rubin Report* to discuss questions of free speech and an open society. The 10-minute, wide-ranging discussion began with Fry stating that the 'advances of the Enlightenment' were being 'systematically and deliberately pushed back' by those who barely knew what the founding principles, let alone who the key thinkers, of the Enlightenment were. As the conversation rambled on, examples of this anti-Enlightenment sentiment included the 'Rhodes Must Fall' campaign, the demand for 'safe spaces' and the use of 'trigger warnings' on university syllabi. According to Fry, these provided examples of the 'infantilisation' of modern culture, the refusal to engage with complexity, and the descent

into self-pity (Fry, 2016). Fry's comments, and particularly his glib attitude towards survivors of childhood sexual assault, provoked outrage, especially given his position as president of the mental health charity Mind. Yet his comments were similar to those made a year earlier by the then-President of the USA, Barack Obama, who had raised concerns about 'trigger warnings' and 'censorship' on university campuses. University, according to Obama, was all about engaging with ideas that are 'difficult', that you may not necessarily agree with, rather than refusing to hear anything 'offensive' (Nelson, 2015). Similar critiques of 'no-platforming' and of 'trigger warnings' continue to resurface in the media, most recently around the right to express negative views and circulate pejorative stereotypes about transgender women.

Predictably, mainstream media coverage of the debate over 'safe spaces' amplifies the voices of those with the most power, rather than digging deeper into a much longer and more complex discussion that has been part of feminist and anti-racist pedagogy for decades. The academic debate over 'safe spaces' has taken place largely within feminist geography and educational philosophy and primarily, although not exclusively, by scholars based in North America. Many of these scholars have been critical of the idea of 'safe spaces'. In an essay that begins by focusing on the proposal to establish a school specifically for LGBT students in Chicago, Barbara Stengel questions the assumption that marginalised students will necessarily, and implicitly only, thrive in an educational environment in which their fears of harassment are diminished or eradicated. Instead, she asks whether the discourse of 'safe space' itself produces and reifies fear, which creates what she calls 'shrinkage' that is antithetical to learning (2010, p. 528). Some level of discomfort, she concludes, is necessary for intellectual and emotional growth. Stengel does not dismiss the idea of 'safe spaces', rather she sees the articulation of demand for safe space as a moment that requires interrogation (Stengel, 2010). Alongside colleagues in a collection of essays which she and Lisa Weems coedited and published in *Studies in the Philosophy of Education,* Stengel understands the concept of, and aspiration to, create a 'safe space' as ripe with pedagogical possibilities (Stengel & Weems, 2010). As the Roestone Collective argues, there is no one recipe for creating a safe space. Instead, safe spaces are produced through relationships to other people as well as objects in space and, as such, are always in a state of becoming. In this respect, 'safe spaces' are paradoxical: the process of articulating a vision of inclusivity, and in some cases setting the boundaries of inclusion, exposes differences and undoes binaries (Roestone Collective, 2014). It is therefore a process of generating 'safe spaces' that can be so productive of dialogue and engagement across differences.

My own understanding of the idea of 'safe spaces' developed less in the context of academia and more through being in community with, and learning from, queer of colour feminists in Britain in the late 2000s. Although marginalised in society by gender and sexuality, our LGBT community replicated many aspects of white supremacy and its intersections with class-based hierarchies. Critiquing the racial power dynamics within the community, queer of colour activists argued that in order to make the community safe and thereby accessible to non-white people it was necessary for white queer people to unlearn their own racialised privilege (Saeed, 2007). Unlike Stengel's analysis of safe space as driven by, and thus interpellating

fear, my understanding of the calls for 'safe space' by queer people of colour was that it was motivated by the courage and the desire for the emotional and material resources needed to effect wider change. 'Safe space', in this context, was not an attempt to move away from danger but an endeavour to gather the strength necessary to continue to engage with and across difference, often in the face of hostility and rejection. This idea of 'safe spaces' takes inspiration from the Combahee River Collective's seminal collection of essays by women of colour, *This Bridge Called My Back*. Published in 1983, the essays are as much about the authors' grappling with their alienation from themselves as they are with their alienation from a racist, sexist and homophobic society. The act of coming together—as writers and as women of colour—was itself a means of 'believing that we have the power to actually transform our experience, change our lives, save our lives' (Anzaldúa & Moraga, 1983). The 'safe space' of the Collective was not a space of refusal, but a site of possibility and empowerment as well as a space to draw breath and to move the conversation forward.

It is the concept of 'safe space' as a process towards self-knowledge and empowerment, rather than an act borne of fear and 'shrinkage' that I bring to the classroom. In 2012 and 2013, I was fortunate to be able to teach *This Bridge* to women, gender and sexuality studies students at the Universities of Massachusetts, Amherst and Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. We used this book, as well as many others, both as a means of engaging with the history of feminism and as a tool to think together about the possibilities and the problems of the desire to create 'safe spaces', even as we worked collectively to build a classroom community that embraced difference. At the centre of that process was the acknowledgement that all of us—teacher or student; white or of colour; wealthy or poor; able-bodied or disabled; cis- or trans- gender—were differently located in relationship to structures of power. Identifying those relationships and owning the ways that they inform our engagement with the class is, as bell hooks has argued, central to the process of unlearning privilege. This is not just a rote exercise in naming and fixing identities in space, which can lead to a form of 'Oppression Olympics' amongst students' eager not to be deemed 'privileged'. Rather, following Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed,* it is a process of honesty with oneself, one's students and classmates that is the necessary starting point for transforming both the student and the teacher's understanding of the world.

There is nothing at all 'safe' about this process, indeed it requires that we challenge assumptions, including the assumption of our own individual uniqueness and objectivity, which can be profoundly unsettling for students and teachers alike. Paradoxically, the ability to undergo this process is itself contingent upon the idea and aspiration of the classroom as a 'safe space'. As Sarah Lamble and Jennifer Fraser argue in their discussion of a 'queer pedagogy', learning is about desire and pleasure; with desire comes a risk of vulnerability and danger (Fraser & Lamble, 2014/15). In many respects, then, a 'queer' or 'critical' pedagogy is the opposite of a 'safe space'. In their introduction to *This Bridge We Call Home,* Cherie Moraga and Ana Louise Keating state that, 'To step across the threshold [of home] is to be stripped of the illusion of safety because it moves us into unfamiliar territory and does not grant safe passage' (Anzaldua & Keating, 2002, p. xviii). Learning is the epitome of a move

'into unfamiliar territory', it raises profound questions about our identities and challenges our assumptions about the world around us. And yet the very environment that we work in mitigates against that leap into the unknown. Over the last 15 years, the neo-liberalisation of higher education has transformed students into customers and their teachers as 'service providers'. As Joyce Canaan argues for the British context, university education is now reconceptualised as 'primarily a financial investment in one's future', which creates a ruthless individualism amongst students who are driven less by the desire to learn than the fear of not achieving a 2:1 degree or higher (Canaan, 2013, p. 26).

If critical pedagogy has the potential to reframe the educational experience and the world that it is part of, it cannot do so effectively without first creating the conditions that enable the expression of fears and desires. It is this process of building trust, respect and honesty in the classroom that I refer to as creating a 'safe space'. Despite the connotations of 'coddling' and 'stifling' that have been loaded onto this term, in the current climate of higher education, I prefer 'safe space' to the alternative, which bell hooks employs, of 'a feeling of community' that derives from the common desire to learn (hooks, 1994). This is because, although many of my ideas and practices are indebted to bell hooks' *Teaching to Transgress*, the reality is that many of our students are motivated less by the desire 'to receive actively knowledge that enhances our intellectual development and our capacity to live more fully in the world', and more by the need to gain a strong-enough degree classification and thereby to find employment (hooks, 1994, p. 40). However much we, as committed educators and historians, may wish our students to see beyond their grades, we cannot deny that a practical and instrumentalist mentality is often what they have been schooled in since childhood and is an inevitable outcome of the current socio-economic climate. Whereas I used to talk to my students about 'community' and 'intellectual endeavour', I now think that simply discussing 'safe spaces' as a means of ensuring that everybody has access to learning speaks more realistically and in many ways more authoritatively to all students, regardless of their reasons for attending my course. This is also partly a subject-specific choice. When I taught women and gender studies classes, my students had already thought outside-the-box in the process of electing to take my class; the very titles of my classes spoke to questions of oppression and of reclaiming humanity. Although many of my history students are equally invested in these questions, probably the majority are relatively conventional, if not conservative, and by studying history have followed the path of least resistance. History, at least in the UK, is generally regarded by 'A' level students, their parents and teachers, as a 'respectable' discipline; a safe choice for a career in law, policy or entry onto a graduate training scheme. I, therefore, conceptualise the process of building the classroom as a 'safe space' as the first step in engaging students with each other, with the aspiration to create a 'feeling of community' and a desire, not only for good grades but also to 'live more fully in the world'.

4.3 'Safe Space' and the History Classroom

The same principles of inclusion, self-awareness and anti-oppression that underpin feminist pedagogy also inform and animate the pedagogical approaches of historians. In *History Teaching at its Best,* Alan Booth notes that excellent history teaching does not only require intellectual engagement but also an 'emotional and deeply human connection' with the past and with others. Booth states that 'the best lecturers acknowledge that emotions are always present in the history classroom, and create a climate in which students can connect their lives to the topics covered and experience the learning not merely in transactional terms but as a personal journey of self that involves mind, emotion and body' (Booth, 2014, p. 125). Whilst this aspiration is commendable, navigating the emotional connection that students have with the past is not easy, especially when the past is full of instances of violence, prejudice and oppression. The traditional disciplinary norms of history, especially the ambition towards 'objectivity', also make it difficult for students (and teachers) to deal with different emotional responses towards, and relationships with, the ideas and actions of the past. Whilst most professional historians will acknowledge that there is always a subjective element to historical research, the emphasis that historians place on argument, balance, and on reading the past 'on its own terms', can also send somewhat contradictory messages to students. This is exacerbated by the fact that the majority of our students who have studied history at school come to university with a strong sense that history is about argumentation rather than exploration. This attitude, which they have been taught in a formulaic manner often in order to pass exams, leads them to think in terms of 'sides' in a debate.

As students soon find out when they study history at university, most aspects of the past cannot be reduced to 'sides', not least because many of the 'sides' one might take are today considered to be morally repugnant. Yet many students (and some staff) persist in demanding that we view the past with a sense of distance and relativism in a manner that can be profoundly alienating, if not re-traumatising, for minoritised students. The demand for 'objectivity' and 'neutrality' can be experienced as a form of violence for those who feel a strong sense of kinship across generations. As the Aboriginal Australian historian Frances Peters-Little argues, dispassionate history is a 'luxury' that not everybody is afforded (Peters-Little et al., 2010, p. 2). Indeed, for many of us, our connection to the past and to past atrocities and injustices is precisely what animates our historical inquiries; history, for many of us, is a search for identity and legitimacy. Passion, in this sense, is an imperative, and yet not all students come to, or emerge from, the classroom with minds, emotions, and bodies that can be easily shared with either their teacher or their fellow students. A transgender student, for example, who has an interest in the history of gender non-conformity may not necessarily feel able to actively engage with that history if they fear that their classmates or lecturer might be transphobic. In a very different way, a Black student who may be drawn to histories of anti-Black racism in Britain might find it difficult to connect with white teachers and peers who do not share the deeply-felt sense of anger and trauma that arises from the subject matter. History, as Booth argues, is

deeply personal; it is this that necessitates a careful construction of the classroom as a 'safe space'.

Envisaging the classroom as a 'safe space' is an active and on-going process, not an end result, which requires a conscious effort on the part of teachers, as well as students. Because our classrooms are part of a much wider institution, rather than atoms in empty space, we will never fully escape the wider structural inequalities that beset higher education and society at large. As academic teachers, we often only meet those students who have already managed to overcome, or have never needed to worry about, significant barriers to accessing higher education. For many students with huge potential, barriers to learning have been such a struggle that they never take their studies beyond secondary education. Young people from lower socio-economic backgrounds are often put off higher education by the high levels of debt that students in the USA and now also in the UK are expected to accept as the price of a degree. In the UK, the 2010 scrapping of the Education Maintenance Allowance has added another barrier to those already identified that impede young people from economically disadvantaged families accessing higher education, a large percentage of whom are from non-white backgrounds (Bolton, 2011, pp. 2–6). Disabled students are also prevented from entering or succeeding in higher education because of a lack of flexibility around teaching and learning and the hostile attitudes of lecturers (Fuller et al., 2007). Because of the higher rates of family rejection, often leading to homelessness, LGBT young people are also less likely to access university financially and emotionally. Racism and cultural alienation also play a role in discouraging young people from minority groups from applying to, or continuing in, higher education (Burke, 2012). The structures and environment of the university also contribute more immediately to making our classrooms inaccessible. Timetabling issues and classroom locations; the shape, size and lighting in a classroom; the availability and functioning of technology; access to counsellors and doctors—there is little that we, as teachers, can do to mitigate these problems, indeed we often also struggle with them at a personal level ourselves.

Yet what we can do for those who manage to take our courses and enter our classrooms is to make it clear that we recognise the difficulties that they may face in accessing the classroom and that we are willing to make an effort to address those barriers in areas in which we do have agency. This can begin in the syllabus and other forms of communication prior to the beginning of the course. Before the start of the semester, I email my students to send them the syllabus and to invite them to tell me about themselves and what I can do to assist their learning (regardless of whether they have a registered disability). Generally, fewer than half of my students write back to me, but those that do tell me about anxiety or dyslexia and what I can do to help reduce it, request that I use a specific pronoun or a different name from the one on the register, or just tell me about their interests. The first email helps me to connect to some of my students; I use the syllabus itself to state my own name and pronouns and to explain my interest and investment in the subject. These gestures may seem small but I use them in the hope that they set the stage for acknowledging that we do not all learn in the same way and that we all come to the classroom with different anxieties, hopes, fears and access needs. Indeed, I understand the process of

constructing a safe space as an access issue. As disability activists have long argued, whilst physical and neurological differences are very real, it is society's expectations and the physical barriers that society puts in place that are disabling (Oliver, 2013). Working with students to think about how we can best create the classroom as a 'safe space' opens up discussions of those barriers. This is important not only for students whose bodies and identities do not conform to normative assumptions of society but also to those students who do. To start from the assumption that the class is full of different identities, experiences, needs and ways of learning is to make difference, rather than sameness, the norm.

What the media hyperbolically calls 'trigger warnings', but which are better referred to as 'content notes', have helped me to embed an acknowledgement of difference into my syllabus and classroom. As with 'safe spaces', the media debate over 'trigger warnings' has been deeply reductive and largely hostile. It conjures a picture of syllabi peppered with 'trigger warnings' and of students skipping lectures and avoiding topics that they find slightly uncomfortable or challenging. Personally, if I have any concerns about 'trigger warnings', it is that they become top-down, tokenistic attempts to avoid litigation rather than offering any meaningful dialogue about the relationship between the content of our classes and trauma, difference, and embodiment. What I think is more likely than students walking out of lectures, is the awkward and unexamined use of a 'trigger warning' that does not really give students any time or scope to think about how to navigate the content. As with most pedagogical techniques, for 'trigger warnings' to have any positive effect, they need to be used as part of a wider discussion about the ways in which the content of our classes intersects with our differently lived experiences. As a recent study argued, 'trigger warnings' do little to help survivors of trauma and actually generate greater anxiety and promote avoidance, which is itself counter-productive to healing (Bellet, Jones, & McNally, 2018). Indeed, it is hardly a surprise that PTSD is too complex to be mitigated or solved by a quick reference to violent content. Yet I think that 'trigger warnings' can help us, as teachers, to think carefully about how, why and when to use violent content in our classes. They also signal to our students that we have thought about this and ask them to think carefully about their own responses to different forms of violent imagery (whether textual or visual). By explicitly noting that a text or image conveys transphobic, sexist, racist, classist or ableist violence, we position ourselves in alliance with students who may be personally and emotionally impacted by those images. We also remind other students who do not have the same proximity to those images that their own experiences are not necessarily the norm.

It is a matter of urgency that the history discipline reads, incorporates into the curriculum and hires people and perspectives that have been historically excluded or marginalised from the discipline. Yet it is not only what we teach but how we teach that determines whether a course and a classroom include and values difference. One does not need to teach the specifics of *hijra* or two-spirit history to acknowledge the historical existence of people whose lives and embodiments fell outside of Western binary norms of sex and gender. It is perfectly possible to teach the French Revolution whilst explicitly noting the comparative historiographical silences that were afforded to the Haitian Revolution. Even when it feels like we are stating the obvious, it is

important to note and reiterate that the 'great' philosophers of the Enlightenment were almost all white, male and elite. When we read extracts from Foucault's *History of Sexuality*, for example, we are reading about the construction of European sexual norms, other cultures had very different understandings of sex, gender and sexuality. Students need to know that the historical record is partial and incomplete and that our own research trajectories have often been shaped by historiographical debates that act as centripetal forces concealing as much as they reveal. To acknowledge the limits of our own knowledge may be daunting, especially in a world dominated by student evaluations and metrics and especially for those who are ourselves minorities in our fields. Yet doing so can open up a world of possibility and offer a gesture of recognition that is especially valuable for those students who have felt their own histories and heritages erased or disavowed. We cannot always anticipate who those students will be and unless we build classrooms that leave space for valuing and acknowledging difference we will probably never know.

The process of signalling openness to discovery begins, I suggest, with active and overt allyship from teachers, even when that appears to get in the way of our students' expectations of 'objectivity'. If we do not think carefully about how students from different backgrounds and with different identities might relate to certain topics then we end up replicating established structures of power. The crudest example of this was in 2018, when pupils at a secondary school were asked to list the 'pros and cons' of the trans-Atlantic slave trade (White, 2018). Yet such instances are not always so overt. In my final-year course, 'Imperial Eyes', we spend a full semester looking at Enlightenment ideas of 'race'. At the heart of the course is the question, which we return to repeatedly throughout the semester, 'was the Enlightenment racist'? As I make clear from the outset, the aim is not to discuss whether Enlightenment philosophers' pejorative thinking about non-white people had any validity, rather we are asking whether 'racism' as the combination of prejudice and power is the right concept with which to describe the intellectual and cultural phenomenon known as 'the Enlightenment'. Yet during the first year, I taught the course, I made the mistake of asking each of my students to read an extract from an eighteenth-century philosopher and to imagine themselves in the Royal Society meeting discussing why skin came in different colours. The exercise was intended to get them to really think about, understand and then summarise some difficult philosophical extracts, but the format made them very uncomfortable because it asked them to rehearse (rather than discuss) eighteenth-century racism. In a similar vein, a teacher who asks their students to stage the trial of Oscar Wilde as part of a lesson on late nineteenth-century homosexuality may have excellent and creative pedagogic intent but could easily alienate gay students.

I am not suggesting that all creative engagements with the past be rejected for fear of 'upsetting' students. Indeed, I think there is a place for such activities, but only if we have already established a confidence, respect and openness in each other as part of the class. In the cases cited above, this begins by modelling trans-inclusive and anti-racist language, by taking an active position against the homophobia, abelism and classism of the past, in order for minoritised students to feel confident enough to engage. Many LGBT+ students, as well as students of colour and/or working class

students, experience 'minority stress', the result of consistent exposure to prejudice, lack of recognition and stigma (Andrews et al., 2020). The result can be poor mental health and isolation, which in the classroom often translates into disengagement and poor performance. Actively acknowledging difference and different positions in relationship to power, both in the present and the past, opens up a dialogue and can also reassure students that it is not their individual 'fault'. There is an assumption that universities are already 'liberal' and 'inclusive' environments by virtue of the fact that they engage in intellectual activity. This is undoubtedly not the case and, especially when we, as teachers, are in some way or other part of the dominant majority—white, able-bodied, male, cisgender, middle or upper class—we cannot assume that students must already know of our inner open-mindedness and acceptance of difference. By making anti-oppressive statements in our syllabi and to our students in our classrooms, we convey that position clearly.

4.4   Conclusion

For our classrooms to be truly accessible to traditionally minoritised and underrepresented students (and staff!), we need radically different structures of education. Ever-increasing tuition fees, spiralling student debt and the corporatisation of higher education all mitigate against our attempts to promote education as the 'practice of freedom'. Even within the constraints of a toxic system, we need free and well-funded counselling services, a better awareness of mental health, and campus (and wider) cultures that actively resist, rather than promote, racist and sexist behaviours. We, as teachers, need more time away from endless administrative duties and top-down managerialism to get to know and forge connections with our students, to learn from them as much as they learn from us. Furthermore, we need smaller class sizes, accessible classrooms, we need students who can fully engage with our classes without the massive burden of debt and job insecurity. Yet even within these constraints, we can act to make our classrooms more open, generous, engaging, accessible or 'safe' for minoritised students. Aspiring towards classrooms that are 'safe' is not 'mollycoddling' or infantilising, it is simply acknowledging that we live in a society that is shaped by long and violent histories of racism and other forms of prejudice and exploitation and that those structures will inevitably inform classroom dynamics. By stating our intentions to attempt to undo, as far as we are able, those structures of oppression, we open up a space for discussion and the embrace of difference. Teaching students to think carefully about the impact that their own words, questions and assumptions can have on people whose experiences are different from their own is a valuable lesson, and one that is critical for historians whose work, ultimately, is all about engaging with a difference across time and space.

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Chapter 5
Student Voice: Weaponised History: How the Far-Right Uses the Participatory Web to Appropriate History

Tiana Blazevic

Abstract The digital rise of the far-right on the participatory web (social media, blogs, YouTube) poses a new threat to history educators. Technology has enabled the far-right to have a greater reach than in previous years. This problem has not been discussed, at least not in depth, at the higher education level. Rather than ignore the digital rise of the far-right as just racist musings on the internet, academics must be aware of how prominent and advanced our search algorithms have let the far-right become. This chapter focuses on the online far-right community and the potential impact that their misuse of history, specifically ancient history, can have on students and in particular, the far-right's view that Ancient Greece and Rome were, in the majority, white societies. This chapter argues that one of the ways this issue can be combated is by including academic blogs in the classroom in order to generate a discussion regarding far-right appropriation. This chapter will examine two scholarly blogs that provide relevant and easily accessible information regarding this issue and may therefore be a faster and better alternative than peer-reviewed scholarship.

5.1 Introduction

On 15 March 2019, a 28-year-old man from Australia killed 51 people and injured 49 at the Al Noor Mosque and the Linwood Islamic Centre in New Zealand. Using social media, he live-streamed his heinous act to Facebook, which was viewed more than 4000 times before being removed. He had written on his AR-15 rifle and cartridges several historical references to the past:

– The 1683 siege of Vienna by the Ottoman Empire
– The battle of Lepanto in 1571, which marked the end of Ottoman dominance in the Mediterranean by Crusaders
– A reference to Hungarian general and governor Volvode of Transylvania who defeated the Ottomans in 1441 and 1442 and stalled their progress into Europe.

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– The Battle of Tours in 732 where the Franks defeated the Al-Andalus Arabs in central France.

There was also a litany of references to other invasions by the Ottoman Empire, a salute to Charles Martel, and a reference to the 'Fourteen Words', a slogan derived from Adolf Hitler's *Mein Kampf*. These historical references were not random. These references to history were deliberate and researched; history was weaponised. Moreover, these historical references represented the view of the gunman, and many others on the far-right, who believed that the west is currently being invaded by the east, specifically Muslims. Ten minutes before he committed this massacre the gunman emailed his 74-page manifesto titled *The Great Replacement*, a reference to 'white genocide'. The manifesto was forwarded to several media outlets, the Prime Minister of Australia as well as published on Twitter and 4chan. The gunman pleaded guilty and faced trial in June 2020. His vicious act has been linked to a global increase in white supremacy and 'alt-right' extremism. ASIO Director General Mike Burgess, in a recent and exceptional public address at ASIO's Canberra headquarters, stated 'In Australia, the extreme ring-wing threat is real and it is growing' (Greene, 2020). Burgess also emphasised that extreme right-wing online forums have been attracting international memberships, including Australians, and that the extreme right-wing groups remain an enduring threat because of the use of online propaganda to spread their message of hate (Greene, 2020). So, what does that mean for history education?

Unlike in the past, the far-right (white supremacists, Neo-Nazis and white nationalists) now has a greater weapon than print media, the participatory web. The participatory web (social media, blogs, videos, Twitter, etc.) is openly and readily available to manipulate students and the general public. The spread of inaccurate history is becoming harder to contain given the speed and access of the participatory web. The traditional peer-reviewed scholarship does not have the same accessibility or impact as the participatory web. More importantly, the digital rise of the far-right and their use of the participatory web to spread false historical information has become a prominent concern in recent years (Daniels, 2018). This problem has not received enough attention within the higher education sector (Daniels, 2018). This chapter will argue that rather than ignoring the digital rise of the far-right academics ought to expose students to the historical inaccuracies they perpetuate through their online blogs and social media. The way that students interact with history and learn how to 'do history' is no longer restricted to the classroom and or textbooks. Students can now 'do history' in the palm of their hands, on their phone (Wineburg, 2018). The reading and or discussion of recent controversial political topics that involve the misuse of history by the far-right is currently being written predominantly in scholarly blogs, not peer-reviewed scholarship. These blogs are *Eidolon* and *Pharos*. This chapter will also show that scholarly blogs, such as *Eidolon* and *Pharos*, can complement already existing pedagogical frameworks for the teaching of history. This includes analyses of historical material and how it is used or misused by the writer; assessment of ideology and bias; and evaluation of secondary and primary material (Davies & Merchant, 2007, p. 171). Unlike peer-reviewed scholarship,

scholarly blogs have the capacity to provide relevant, rapid and accessible information in non-scholarly language/format on current political events. This chapter may come across as providing more examples of a problem than solutions. This is for two reasons: first, how the far-right appropriates the ancient world and how this is supported by algorithms is an important issue, which is not often discussed in higher education. Therefore, examples of this problem are necessary to help bring awareness to the issue. Second, there are many ways that educators can address the lack of digital literacy in students. Scholarly blogs are one of the many media in which students can become aware of far-right simplistic narratives to help improve their historical and digital literacy.

5.2   Computational Propaganda, Search Algorithms and Bad History: How the Far-Right Uses the Participatory Web to Their Advantage

Traditionally, younger people have learned history from professional historians and educators, however, the participatory web is now playing a greater role in how students learn and receive historical information (Haydn & Ribbens, 2017, p. 736). Students now have increased access to popular history websites, blogs and history-themed content via social media. Consequently, the participatory web has a far greater reach than even the most eminent and popular academic publications (Haydn & Ribbens, 2017). What is worrying about this is that the use of the participatory web is growing while digital literacy skills are falling (McGrew, Breakstone, Ortega, Smith, & Wineburg, 2018, pp. 183–184). A survey in the UK found, for example, that 32% of 12–15 year olds in the UK believed that if a search engine listed a result, then it must be truthful (Haydn & Ribbens, 2017, p. 741). Within that statistic, 23% did not consider issues of historical accuracy, such as the source of the evidence provided, and/or the historical background in which the source was created (Haydn & Ribbens, 2017, p. 741). Wineburg (2018) has also argued that the digital literacy of students (and educators) is bleak. In his work, Wineburg discusses that in the age of manipulative digital history we should encourage students to master new ways of reading that are suited to the digital world (Wineburg, 2018, p. 150). Considering this evidence, history educators are then presented with the following problems:

1. The prevalence of misinformation and manipulative commentary by the far-right;
2. The potential inability of students to assess historical inaccuracies appropriately within the participatory web; and
3. The lack of filtering systems on the participatory web.

The far-right uses the participatory web to comment on and weaponise history. Finally, as it stands, it is very difficult for internet and social media providers to filter or discern between what is factual and what is dubious history that supports

particular political ideologies. To make matters worse, the introduction of search algorithms has made it easier for those who seek to confirm their historically racist theories (Daniels, 2018, p. 60), thereby, increasing the likelihood of students coming across far-right material online.

The introduction of search algorithms has helped to speed up how white supremacist ideology filters through into our mainstream political and academic discourse (Aral, 2020, pp. 56–94; Daniels, 2018, p. 62). Woolley and Howard have termed this 'Computational propaganda'. Computational propaganda is an online form of political manipulation through an assemblage of social media platforms, autonomous agents, algorithms and big data, which is tasked with manipulating public opinion (Woolley & Howard, 2019). For example, 'Pepe the Frog' was once a relatively simple cartoon character turned meme. However, the Anti-Defamation League has now added 'Pepe the Frog' to its database of online hate symbols because it was transformed into a symbol for the white nationalist movement online (Daniels, 2018, p. 62). The transformation began on 4chan, Reddit and 8chan, moved to Twitter and eventually made it into Hilary Clinton's 2016 presidential candidate speech (Daniels, 2018, p. 62). In a similar vein, Sinan Aral's research has demonstrated how social media can distort our political reality, for example, the use of social media when Russia implemented a hostile takeover of Ukraine in 2014 (Aral, 2020, p. 10). Social media platforms are now struggling to come to terms with how their creations can be used for political purposes (Woolley & Howard, 2019, p. 3). The participatory web, whether we like it or not, now plays an important role in the circulation of ideas and conversations about politics, race and gender (Woolley & Howard, 2019, p. 5). An example of how algorithms and the far-right community can spread historical inaccuracies is the controversy that surrounded a short BBC video of *Life in Roman Britain*.

In December 2017, the BBC ran a short video titled *Life in Roman Britain*, which ignited a Twitter debate. This debate was between Roman Historian Mary Beard and Paul Joseph Watson, a far-right Youtuber and editor for far-right media publication Info-Wars. The video displayed a high-ranking black Roman general in Roman Britain with his mixed-race family. The video received an intense backlash with many commentators citing political correctness over historical accuracy (Raff, 2017). However, Beard and other academics pointed out that Roman Britain was always ethnically diverse (Beard, 2017). The Roman general could have been loosely based on Quintus Lollius Urbicus who came from what is now Algeria. The Roman army acted as a particular medium for change and immigration patterns during the Roman Empire (Nicholls, 2017). For example, garrisons stationed along Hadrian's Wall were a mix of Tungrian, Batavian, Belgian and Syrian Roman citizens (Nicholls, 2017). Indeed, the first thing that I learnt as a Classicist is that our depiction of Ancient Greece and Rome as a majority white society is simply not true (Leach et al., 2009). Yet, this is not something that is known by the general public because of a lack of representation and accuracy in movies, which incorrectly depicts the real evidence of the Ancient World. My passion for Egyptology first blossomed from the 1999 film *The Mummy* and many of my students cited a love for the Percy Jackson film franchise as their first introduction to Greek Mythology. Nevertheless, far-right commentators

such as Watson used the BBC video to prove that history educators and the left have an 'unhinged political agenda' (Watson, 2017).

Watson later tweeted a video of himself 'debunking' the claims of Beard and others who tweeted that ethnic diversity in Roman Britain was in fact common. At 5:15 of the video, Watson shares various images from old textbooks of Roman Britain that display only white people (Zuckerberg, 2017). Watson wrote on the site: 'few things are more insidious than attempting to rewrite history to achieve your unhinged political agenda. Resist all attempts to historically normalise politically correct myths. Who controls the past controls the future' (Zuckerberg, 2018). Watson then continued to state that his version of Ancient Roman Britain was apolitical and factually accurate based on his evidence from the textbook. Watson continued to tweet about the video and Beard's statement saying that 'Britain experienced no mass migration until the later part of the twentieth century, fact, and look at me. Look at me. I am the historian now' (Watson, 2017). The tweet received 1.4 thousand likes and 260 retweets. Beard later posted on her blog that many commentators referred to a map of the Roman Empire as not reaching Sub-Saharan Africa as proof of her historical incompetency. These commentators also cited a lack of hard figures, on the part of Beard, for ethnically diverse populations in Roman Britain (Beard, 2017). Beard, later stated on her blog that these commentators (including Watson) did not take into account that:

> we have really no clue how many people lived in Britain then anyway, or that typicality is pretty meaningless when there would be such huge discrepancies between urban and rural communities, militarised and no militarised zones. The BBC video did not claim that the family it presented was 'typical' (but to be fair the blurb on the website did suggest that it was a typical family, which may have misled). Overall among most tweeters and commenters there was far too great a desire for certainty in the face of the diversity of the past (and when people suggested that certainty was unattainable, that was turned into a 'you historians don't know anything then'). One thing is for sure, the Roman empire—Britain included—was cultural and ethnically diverse, from the Syrians in Bath, to Quintus Lollius Urbicus, to the Ethiopian who met Septimius Severus on Hadrian's Wall (Beard, 2017).

The lack of trust in Beard, the Roman expert, who has dedicated her life to studying the Ancient World is representative of the rising anti-intellectualism and distrust of higher education. Far-right commentators such as Watson play into this distrust and help to reinforce the idea that there is a widespread leftist agenda amongst academics. Watson's Twitter account and YouTube following amount to just over 2.1 million people and as a result of his following Watson's response to Beard and the BBC video became a trending topic. As a result, our search algorithms still allow the controversy around this BBC video as well as Watson's videos to be found easily. Retweets, subscribers, views and links are some of the ways in which computational propaganda work to help spread historically inaccurate information and bolster the authority of the far-right (Fig. 5.1).

I decided to test this theory of computational propaganda using the controversy of the BBC video. I Googled 'BBC life in Roman Britain video with black man', which provided me with 13 million results in 0.65 s, and two videos appeared in my search. The first was the original BBC video and the second was a video entitled 'Why is

Fig. 5.1 Paul Joseph Watson (2017)

the BBC blackwashing British History' by a Youtuber with the Roman pseudonym *Cassius*. The video is a 25-min 'commentary/analysis' of the historical inaccuracies of the original BBC video. The description uploaded by Cassius is listed below along with the following hashtags, which allow users to then engage with similar content:

> The BBC seems to be as much interested in pushing a multicultural and feminist agenda as it is in accurately teaching history. Paul Joseph Watson. Roman Britain. Social justice propaganda. SJW propaganda. Diversity. Nassim Nicholas Taleb. The Story of Britain. Ancient Romans black. BBC Teach. Mary Beard. Roman Britain. Typical family. Roman Britain. Hadrian's Wall. Paul Joseph Watson. J.K. Rowling. Roman Legion. Black-washing. Blackwash. Black-wash (Cassius, 2017).

Cassius' video, which associates itself with Watson's post, has over 5000 comments, most of which are racially charged and agree with Cassius' viewpoint. My point in this experiment is that of the 13 million results which Google provided, this video appears as the second result. As of October 2019, this video was viewed 210,290 times, liked by 6.7 thousand people and disliked by 1.1 thousand people. Cassius' video as of 27 February 2020 has now reached 216,326 views and still remains on the top of the search results in Google. The more likes, views, clicks and shares the video has, the more likely particular sources will come up in search
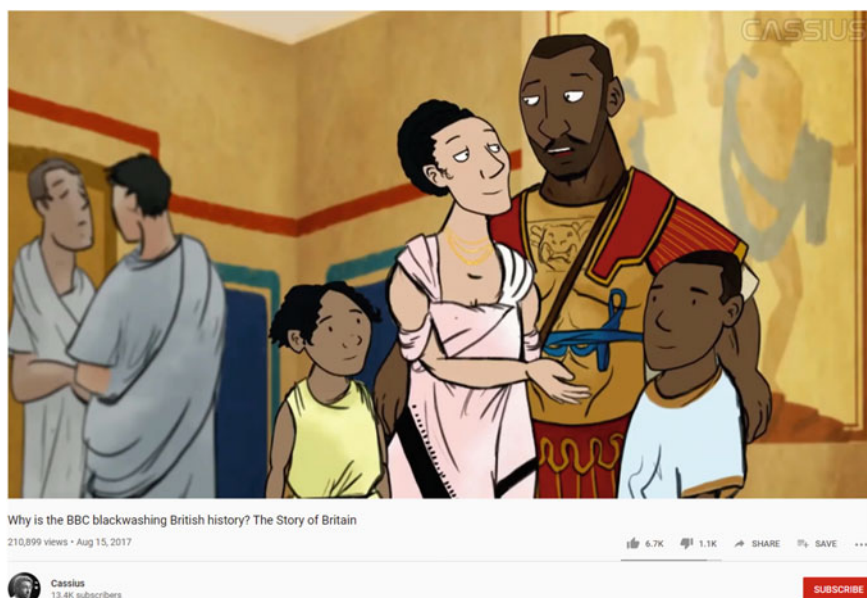
Fig. 5.2 Cassius (2017)

engine results and stay there for longer allowing users to access this type of material long after the controversy has ended. Computational propaganda, search algorithms and rising anti-intellectualism in conjunction with the participatory web have far-reaching implications for our political discourse regarding race in the Ancient World and in history more generally (Fig. 5.2).

Along with social media sites such as Twitter and YouTube, the far-right also uses blog posts on various web platforms to articulate some of their more complex and hateful ideas in a more 'scholarly' format. For example, far-right run websites such as *American Renaissance*, *National Vanguard* and the *Occidental Observer* have posted long and detailed blog posts that praise Ancient Spartan ideals of race superiority and eugenics. In 2010, John Harrison Sims wrote a blog post called *'What race were the Greeks and Romans'* (Sims, 2016). The article was recently reposted on *American Renaissance* in October 2016. Sims, using academic sources, writes that the Ancient Greeks were originally descendants of the blonde-haired blue-eyed white Nordic tribes who colonised Greece, hence why we find literature describing Greeks with blonde hair and blue eyes (Sims, 2016). Sims justifies how the films *300*, *Troy* and *Gladiator* depict Ancient Romans and Greeks as mostly white. The scholarly evidence he provides for this argument is the 1911 *Encyclopaedia Britannica* and Bertrand Russel's 1946 publication *History of Western Philosophy* that discuss the idea of a Nordic origin for the Mediterranean. Sims also uses archaeological evidence of statues, mythology and ancient texts from the *Iliad* to the fourth-century physician Adamantius to demonstrate that Ancient Greece and Rome were always

white by making explicit references to Greeks who had blonde hair and blue eyes (Sims, 2016). Sims attributes the decline of both Ancient Greece and Rome and their racial purity to immigration, freed slaves and intermarriage. He then ends the article with the following question: 'will we be able to resist the forces that brought down the ancients?' In comparison with Sim's blog posts, a writer named 'Dissident Millennial' also wrote a 10 part series on a similar topic on the *National Vanguard* ('Dissident Millennial', 2017). 'Dissident Millennial' cites the theories of the white supremacist William L. Pierce on the origins of the human race as well as spouting similar theories and evidence as Sims' blog post ('Dissident Millennial', 2017). However, the rhetoric in the piece is far more disturbing. In this blog post, intermarriage and 'darkening of the Hellenes of Athens' is cited as the reason for the fall of Athens. 'Dissident Millennial' compares this 'darkening of the Hellenes' to the potential fall of modern America.

Sims and 'Dissident Millennial' use outdated and dubious historical evidence. This is a small part of a much larger problem. Their writing, which is not based on historical evidence, is available on the participatory web for anyone to view and there is no filtering system to prevent this historically inaccurate and weaponised history from being taken off the internet. The impact of the far-right on the participatory web is far-reaching and constantly present. This is in large part thanks to algorithms, computational propaganda and the rapid development and outreach of our digital world through the participatory web. The increasing sophistication of technology means that our information can be manipulated and distorted for political purposes, as we saw through Cassius' YouTube channel and Watson's Twitter. In *The Fear of the Barbarian*, Tzvetan Todorov concludes that dialogues on the foreign 'other', i.e. the East and West must satisfy a twofold requirement. We must be able to recognise the different voices of exchange, question our own certainties of self-evident beliefs and not presuppose that one idea constitutes the norm (Todorov, 2010, p. 196). However, this dialogue is difficult to achieve in our digital world. The participatory web now provides us with content curated algorithms, and this enables less access to ideological diverse views. The overarching aim and business model of the participatory web are to provide content that reinforces our notions of culture, society and history (Aral, 2020, pp. 244–245). A study of 10 million US Facebook users found that there was a narrowing of content at every level; curation by newsfeed algorithm, curation by friend's sharing decisions and curation by our own personal reading preferences (Bakshy, Messing & Adamic, 2015). So how can we participate in this dialogue if the main medium we now use to communicate (the participatory web) is purposely designed to reinforce our worldview? The creators of these algorithms are still coming to terms with this problem. Therefore, access to historical information, both good and bad, provided by the participatory web makes it more important than ever for educators, especially historians, to act as a filter for students. Just as the far-right uses the participatory web, so too should history educators bring the participatory web into the classroom and demonstrate how history is weaponised in this technological age. The inclusion of scholarly blogs that focus on topics such as white supremacy, eurocentrism and far-right appropriation may help both to generate

discussion regarding the far-right's appropriation of history and to strengthen digital literacy.

5.3 The Power of Scholarly Blogs: *Eidolon* and *Pharos*

Throughout my undergraduate and honours degrees, scholarly blogs were rarely if ever included in the course readings or assessment structures or even discussed in class. Traditionally, undergraduates have always been taught that 'popular' sources such as blogs should not be cited in academic work. I felt that there was always a general reluctance and sometimes downright snobbery to the idea of including a blog in the reading list or analysing a blogger's work, examining Twitter feeds or using discussions from the comments section on social media. I believe the reluctance of my educators to assign blogs or create assessments around blogs and other forms of social media may be in part because of a lack of knowledge or increasing workload. Yet, my educators were also noticing the reluctance of students to engage with the readings and assessments. I noticed over my undergraduate degree that my reading lists were becoming less dense but I also noticed the evident frustration of my tutors when they were still finding that most students were not completing the readings. The reason that was given by students in my class was that the density of peer-reviewed scholarship and its language was intimidating and confusing. Instead, they would turn to Wikipedia, videos, blogs and podcasts first before reviewing the set reading. As a student with a mild form of dyslexia, I would often find myself re-reading peer-reviewed scholarship because of the academic language and struggling with the rigid format of essay writing. Like my peers, I would also turn to the participatory web, that is, Wikipedia, videos, podcasts and blogs in order to get a better grasp of the topic before attempting the peer-reviewed scholarship.

You can teach a student to find and review traditional scholarship but that does not mean they will learn how that peer-reviewed publication represents a different type of scholarly knowledge. Likewise, a student can find a blog or watch a video on the participatory web without thinking of the possible political or personal ideologies it represents. When students are asked to find and use a peer-reviewed source they are essentially being asked to learn something about their topic and analyse what they are learning from it; however, that does not mean that students are being asked to reflect on how peer-reviewed sources are produced and the ways that they represent a different way of thinking about knowledge (Deitering & Gronemyer, 2011, p. 492). Another problem arises when students are given the reason for including peer-reviewed sources in their essays because they are simply 'better' than other types of written knowledge. Peer-reviewed articles are produced within a particular knowledge community and are intended for other members of that community or discipline. For those that are not part of that community (students), there are layers of assumptions to sift through. These layers comprise revisions, collaboration, synthesis and argument hidden under the static, polished surface of the published journal article (Deitering & Gronemyer, 2011, p. 493). However, if students are more exposed to

how the production of knowledge operates and how the process of knowledge is acquired by academics, such as we find in research log blogs or public intellectual blogs we may better prepare them to deal with historical appropriation and politicisation of history. Scholarly blogs, in particular research log blogs, may help to peel back some of these layers before students are expected to tackle peer-reviewed scholarship. Public intellectual blogs produced by academics can show students the 'real-time' opinions of academics as the events unfold rather than waiting for peer-reviewed scholarship to appear years or months after the event. Scholarly blogs or 'academic blogs' as a new literary genre and form of media present an opportunity to history educators to provide students with evidence-based information in an accessible, current and free format during classroom discussions (Powell, Jacob, & Chapman, 2012, p. 273).

The academic blog is a hybrid genre that has emerged over the last twenty years with the rise of the participatory web (Zou & Hyland, 2019, p. 714). Since the 1990s blogs have diverged into a multitude of different arenas with 'scholarly' blogging or academic blogs included in this new digital world of writing (Kjellberg, 2014, p. 37). Scholarly blogs are an online genre used by academics to post their work (both published and unpublished), to discuss discipline-specific topics, and communicate to the general public as well as other scholars. Jill Walker has identified three types of scholarly blogs run by academics: public intellectual blogs, research logs and pseudonymous blogs about life in academia (Walker, 2006, p. 130). Public intellectual blogs are political blogs written by academics and revolve around theories of political science, feminism and the current analysis of political events and discourse, for example, *Eidolon* and *Pharos.* A research log blog is predominantly written by humanists to discuss their research in a more open manner as well as the process of their research (notes, ideas, quotations, etc.). These types of scholarly blogs (research log and public intellectual blog) facilitate a unique and different form of academic publishing in comparison to traditional channels of scholarship. For the purpose of this chapter and the problem of the far-right on the participatory web, it would be better to use public intellectual blogs such as *Eidolon* and *Pharos* in the classroom.

A well-designed scholarly blog can provide rapid, relevant and evidence-based information framed in the context of current political events. Traditional scholarship channels can take years to publish but scholarly blogs written by academics provide faster publications that are written for a general audience (Powell et al., 2012, p. 272). *Eidolon* is a scholarly public intellectual blog, which features current politically progressive articles on the interaction between the modern and ancient world. The meta-scholarship and reception sections of the blog are particularly useful for discussions surrounding far-right appropriation of antiquity and diversity in the field. Some of the recent titles include:

> *Latin Unmoored: White Supremacy and Trauma in NASA's Use of Classics*
>
> *Rape or Romance Bad Feminism in Mythical Retellings*
>
> *Reclaiming the Ancient World: Towards a Decolonized Classics.*

Comparatively, *Pharos*, much like *Eidolon*, is a collaborative political blog, which frequently engages with the appropriation of the classics by the far-right. *Pharos*'

mission as a blog is to demonstrate how the public and academics can respond to appropriations of Greco-Roman antiquity by hate groups. *Pharos'* blog posts centre on exposing the errors, omissions and distortions that underpin the far-right's interpretations of ancient material (*Pharos,* 2019). Once they have documented the appropriations, the contributors of *Pharos* invite specialists to critique the version of antiquity posted online by these far-right groups under the 'scholars respond' tab (*Pharos*, 2019). Another purpose of *Pharos* is to articulate politically progressive approaches to the study of Greco-Roman antiquity. This is achieved through their 'response essay' tab, which is not intended to change of the minds of those who use antiquity to support hateful ideologies, rather, to ensure that if someone turns to the web for answers regarding antiquity they find something other than the appropriations that *Pharos* is documenting (*Pharos*, 2019). The site also has a helpful list of classical pseudonyms and avatars from the ancient world that are used by online far-right commentators and figures, and this is regularly updated. The description states:

> The *Onomasticon* primarily includes those who produce their own content, but we have listed some who comment on articles on hate sites using classically-inspired pseudonyms and images at the bottom of this page (*Pharos*, 2019).

The authors listed on the *Onomasticon* use predominantly Roman pseudonyms. For example, the second name listed is a contributor to *Stoic.School.org* who writes under the name Boethius, the sixth-century Roman senator and philosopher who was imprisoned and executed on charges of conspiracy against the emperor. This far-right author believes that western feminism is responsible for the downfall of western civilisation and only men who are trained in 'virtue' will be able to stop this. *Pharos* describes this writer as:

> attracted to this name because he believes his worldview is similarly persecuted. It is a strange choice for a misogynist, however, since Boethius' most famous work, the Consolation of Philosophy, describes how Philosophy itself, in the form of a woman 'whose eyes shone as with fire and in power of insight surpassed the eyes of men,' visited Boethius in prison and instructed him in how to endure his misfortune (*Pharos,* 2019).

Both *Eidolon* and *Pharos* would provide some support for history educators (both from classics and history more generally) who wish to discuss the issue of far-right appropriation. The *Onomasticon* and the documentation of far-right use of the Ancient World, such as the example explained above, would provide a long and fruitful classroom discussion in an easy to read format of the appropriation of the Ancient World. In addition, this list can also be useful for history educators wishing to increase their knowledge about this topic and what sites their students might possibly come across. *Eidolon's* easy to read and politically relevant format has already started to make its way into the undergraduate classroom in the form of course packets (Zuckerberg, 2018). These course packets are selected articles from the site, which generate productive discussion in the classroom. History educators were reporting back to Zuckerberg that their students found *Eidolon* articles much more accessible than peer-reviewed scholarship and found the content to be more engaging and thought-provoking; therefore, creating more classroom discussion on issues of race and gender in history (Zuckerberg, 2018). This feedback to Zuckerberg reiterates

what much of the scholarship is already telling us about blogs and students; that is, that their informal language, accessibility and design helps students to understand the content better before approaching peer-reviewed scholarship (Kjellberg, 2014, p. 57).

Recent educational research has given a long list of reasons as to why blogs are useful for students alongside traditional peer-reviewed scholarship (Kirkup, 2010, p.75). First, scholarly blogs that discuss research and current events (such as *Eidolon* and *Pharos*) allow for the rapid dissemination of knowledge in comparison with traditional channels of print publishing (Powell et al., 2012, p. 272). Scholarly blogs also have helped researchers to engage in peer debate, public debate and share the results of their publications or seek help with discipline-specific issues (Powell et al., 2012, p. 273). In addition, scholarly blogs allow for the promotion of new knowledge by letting viewers of the blog participate in instant and rapid communication with the researcher (Kjellberg, 2014, pp. 65–66). The inclusion of hyperlinks in scholarly blogs has also allowed users to access relevant primary or secondary material such as photos, books, articles, podcasts and videos with the click of a button (Ifinedo, 2017, p.189). By including these hyperlinks, a scholarly blog provides more choice to find extra information on the related topic, issue or event. This essentially enables a rich diversity of voices beyond the initial blogger/academic (Davies & Merchant, 2007, p. 185).

Eidolon and *Pharos* are two very specific scholarly blogs that focus on the Ancient World but not necessarily helpful for other disciplines. In addition, this issue of far-right appropriation is only relevant if the educator wishes to focus on this problem. Also, proper pedagogical scaffolding needs to be put in place by the educator: only using scholarly blogs within classroom discussion can lead to an erosion of broader academic historical analysis. Therefore, traditional peer-reviewed scholarship must remain part of pedagogical practice. Educators ought to provide scholarly blogs as an additional teaching or discussion tool alongside traditional scholarship because of its accessibility, currency, and diversity. However, considering the popularity of far-right appropriation of historical periods and subjects to support the idea of a homogenous and primarily white western civilisation, I believe that historians have a civic and professional responsibility to push back. This begins in the classroom by highlighting how the participatory web can be used for political appropriation.

5.4 Conclusion

The participatory web, and the lack of regulation within it, has enabled the far-right to appropriate classical antiquity and manipulate history and ideas of race in the ancient world for their political purposes. We see this in the writings of Sims, 'Dissident Millennial', the tweets of Paul Joseph Watson and the videos of Cassius, although, these examples are but a few from a very large data set, which grows every day. History, in the contemporary digital age, can be weaponised to perpetuate false

and inaccurate histories by those on the far-right. Unlike print media, the participatory web combined with computational propaganda allows for the rapid spread of historically inaccurate information that serves a political purpose. One of the ways in which this problem can be addressed in higher education is through the use of politically progressive and accessible scholarly blogs such as *Eidolon* and *Pharos.* These blogs have the ability to generate thought-provoking class discussion and increase awareness of how history can be appropriated and misused.

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Chapter 6
Identity: Being Aboriginal in the Academy: 'It's an Identity Thing'

Jenni Caruso

> I acknowledge that the land that I live on are the traditional lands of the Kaurna people and that I respect Kaurna spiritual relationship with Country. I also acknowledge the Kaurna people as the traditional custodians of the Adelaide region and that their cultural and heritage beliefs are still as important to the living Kaurna people today.
> *Anyente arrpenhe* (respect) to my Eastern Arrernte and Waanyi ancestors and Elders.

Abstract Being Aboriginal and an academic in an Australian university carries with it a myriad of professional, personal and cultural characteristics. While these elements bring their own discrete conditions, none can be interrogated as a standalone classification. Collectively they exert a symbiotic relationship demonstrating the 'three dimensions' of Nancy Fraser's 'theory of justice', which are 'redistribution in the economic sphere, recognition in the socio-cultural sphere and representation in the political sphere' (Avendano, 2009, p. 1). For Aboriginal academics, each of these constituent parts is framed by our individual and collective identities as Aboriginal Australians and is intrinsic to every interaction we have in higher education institutions. Our teaching is driven by the imperative to actively pursue the redistribution of wealth (breaking cycles of poverty through education), recognition of our knowledge authority as First Nations People (even if we were not 'raised on county') and representation(s) (of Aboriginality in learning, teaching and research) that benefit(s) our communities. This chapter presents a number of vignettes both personal and empirical, which showcase some of the impediments we face, and underscores the intangible merits that Aboriginal academics bring to our universities.

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6.1   Introduction

The year is 2020 and the world is in the grip of the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19). All nations are scrambling—some more successfully than others—to prevent the spread, reduce the impacts and apply strategies to minimise both the economic and human costs of the pandemic. It is also the time when the world is experiencing the rise of global protests for justice and equity for Black and Brown skinned people— including Indigenous—and for an end to systemic racism. Following the murder of George Floyd at the hands of police in the USA, there have been unprecedented levels of protest elevating the demands for recognition that Black and Brown lives are, and have been, more expendable in societies whose ideological principle foundations are touted as being those of equity and equality—including Australia. There are clear and unambiguous statements that deep systemic change can no longer be sidelined. Now, even more so it is crucial that universities as sites of research, education and re-education remain vigilant in maintaining focus on our core business of teaching and learning for every cohort and collective in our campus communities, especially those who are identified as 'disadvantaged'. Universities as advocates for social justice 'can provoke a new situation in which the hegemony of the dominant interpretation is destabilised; in this case, the 'subordinated' interpretations erupt once more into the public sphere and manage to get themselves debated' (Avendano, 2009, p. 2). Through adherence to our heritage, our identity and being, the physical, and intellectual and cultural presence of Aboriginal academics in universities deconstructs discourses of the hegemonic dominant: therein lies our inestimable value to the academy.

This chapter aims to prompt a 'rethinking' around the place, roles and cultural knowledge of Aboriginal academics. It may lead to a re-evaluation of some institutional practices, which inadvertently contribute to the perception that our universities 'have done enough' or are 'doing what they can'. It may lead some colleagues to examine their own research and teaching practices. Or (hopefully), it may just make for interesting reading.

I am an Eastern Arrernte-Afghan/Waanyi woman who is also an academic in an Australian higher education institution, where I particularly focus on education for Aboriginal people; Aboriginal history education for non-Aboriginal people, university staff and students: contribute to a range of university governance committees relating to Aboriginal education, equity and diversity. My university career spans 20 years; however, my current classification is that of early-career researcher.

Positioned in the discourse of decolonising the academy, this chapter incorporates personal history and experience in the university, aligning those with primary and secondary sources written by both Indigenous and non-Indigenous academics. It is written through what I have termed an 'applied reciprocal methodology of duality', where Aboriginal auto-history speaks back into non-Indigenous spaces and systems and positions Aboriginal voices and experiences in the ascendant. This chapter presents a study on the context of '*being* Aboriginal in the academy': as Wiradjuri author and poet, Anita Heiss writes: 'I was socialised, employed and educated through

non-Aboriginal systems, but I have always been an Aboriginal person' (Heiss, 2012, p. 191).

Some 25 years ago or so, by happenstance, I experienced the soul-fulfilling, heart-mending attainment of reconnecting with my mother, and my brothers and sisters. I had been able to have contact neither with my mother since I was 3.5 nor with my siblings from the age of 5. As I was seen to have relatively 'light skin' and from non-'full blood' Aboriginal bloodlines, at that very young age I was deemed a suitable candidate for resocialisation and reculturalisation and I was flung into the maelstrom of twentieth-century assimilation. My mother Gladys Helen Sultan was an Afghan/Eastern Arrernte woman, my father Jock Ellis/Cassidy (originally Duke Ellis) was from Borroloola in Waanyi country. The political motivating factor for the removal and internment of half-caste children was that Aboriginality was a deficit model of humanness and that the introduction of non-Aboriginal heritage (miscegenation) had mitigated those deficiencies. Based on the mistaken judgement that my father was 'white', it was determined that the percentage success of my assimilation would be higher as I was already on an upward evolutionary trajectory.

By the early twentieth century, being 'half-caste' was considered to be an undesirable form of existence, 'a problem' in the Australian demographic landscape. Comments by F.C Urquhart show that there were many discussions on how to address this 'problem':

> The solution [to the half-caste problem] depends to some extent on the general policy to be adopted towards them whether they are to be allowed to remain at the developmental stage of their coloured parentage . . . . or whether an attempt is to be made to raise them to the status of their white parents with the view to their eventual absorption in the white population (McGregor, 1997, p. 144).

The framework applied by the government protectors of Aborigines, missionaries and anthropologists for the classification of 'full-blood' and 'half-caste' was the J. W. Bleakley (Queensland Chief Protector of Aboriginals) 1928 Report *The Aboriginals and half-castes of Central Australia and North Australia* (Bleakley, 1929). The Report also held considerable weight at the 1937 conference, *Aboriginal Welfare: Initial Conference of Commonwealth and State Aboriginal Authorities,* the determination of which was that:

> the destiny of the natives of Aboriginal origin, but not of the full-blood, lies in their ultimate absorption . . . and therefore recommends that all efforts be directed towards that end (Bailey, 1937).

So the campaign for the removal of half-caste children began in earnest. Justification for removals is found in archives across the country with file after welfare file using terms such as 'deplorable conditions', 'unfit living conditions', 'malnourishment', 'gambling', 'drunkenness', 'parental inability' and 'neglect'. All those terms appear regularly in my personal documents, which one could say presented valid reasons for our removal, except they were also followed by the words: 'The children of the marriage are fair skinned . . . and all these children could be accepted as European children' (N.A.A., 1957). This begs the question that if our removal was based on supposed degenerate living conditions why was skin colour a factor? The

answer, of course, is that at its core, the removal of half-caste children was the policy of assimilation and the application of methods to separate 'half-caste' children from their Aboriginality, physically and cognitively.

Between being removed and then singled out for fostering, the terminology changed from being 'half-caste' to that of 'part-European', effectively beginning the re-construction of my identity. Dropping the 'half-caste' label rendered my Aboriginality as either non-existent or not worth acknowledging. The result was that over the next nearly four decades, this 'half-caste', 'part-European' identity, reinforced by the society and family I was now living in/with, was all I knew. It defined who I thought I was.

After 38 years of living in the assimilation mode, I began working in Aboriginal education—my first contact with Aboriginal people and Aboriginal Australia. This was my return to the community and my greatest fears were those of rejection. Not long after a young Aboriginal woman said to me that she knew who my family was. This comment led to my being reconnected to my mother, brothers and sisters.

The day I was to meet my mum, I was sick, too sick to get out of bed let alone leave the house. I was sick with fear. This was my return to family and my greatest fears were those of rejection. What if she did not really want to see me, what if she had deliberately given me up, what if there was no connection and worst of all—what if she thought I was too white or, worse still, not black enough? How then do I identify or redefine myself?

On reflection, I can view those anxieties through the lens of time, and they are now memories. Since then, I have returned unquestioned into my family and I have gained full acceptance from Aboriginal communities Australia wide. I have spent many years being reintroduced to who I am as an Aboriginal person without being quantified by blood, or by culture. But there continue to be situations such as applying for benefits or positions where the requirement to 'prove' identity and Aboriginality remains. The difference now is that such identification is decided by Aboriginal people and Aboriginal communities.

My entry into academia, both as a student and as staff did not follow a traditional path—a common pattern for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women. Fredericks and White (2018, p. 3) write:

> As with many of those who came before us, Indigenous women still frequently come to study later in life and the first in their families to undertake a university education.

While it might be said that this also applies to non-Indigenous women, their experiences are not embodied within and constructed around 'Aboriginality'. Fredericks and White (2018, p. 2) also state that 'we did not enter university with the same prior attainment compared to non-Indigenous students, we were more likely to be a mature age student, to study in external mode and to undertake a bridging or enabling course and complete our degrees over an extended period'.

A pre-requisite to enrolling in dedicated programs is establishing our Aboriginal heritage and identity through the submission of a Confirmation of Aboriginality. This was also a condition attached to my appointment to the university where 'In Australia. Indigenous outcomes are now linked to federal funding for each university' (Asmar

& Page, 2018). Being a member of the Stolen Generations, without identity for many decades, I value my confirmation, it provides me with a blanket of cultural and community safety. The Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) states that the criteria to be met are:

- being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent
- identifying as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person
- being accepted as such by the community in which you live, or formerly lived.

and that 'All of these things must apply' (AIATSIS). These standards were drawn up in the 1980s *Report on a Review of the Administration of the Working Definition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders* (Canberra, 1981), meaning that until that time, classifications of 'half-caste' and 'full-blood' were still applied to Aboriginal people (Gardiner-Garden, 2003). While the AIATSIS criteria state that 'The way you look or how you live are not requirements' a regular comment or question that is posed is 'but you are only part-Aboriginal' or 'you don't look Aboriginal' or 'I'd never have picked you as Aboriginal', showing that the narratives of classification and casting still play a role in how we are 'seen' (AIATSIS). Many, if not all, of my colleagues tell tales around how they have had to on-the-spot address this point. Generally speaking, we seek to inform people in a gentle manner that Aboriginality is not measured by quanta anymore, and then when we are together we commiserate with each other that this happened yet again, and then we laugh and laugh and make a joke of it because that helps to reduce the distress around people whiting out our heritage and identity based on their observations.

Oh! I have to tell this story here—it illustrates that non-Aboriginal academics are not exempt from referring to out-of-date beliefs about Aboriginal people and our abilities. This was in the 2000s; the course was about power dynamics, Gramsci and other western theorists. As part of the assessment, I gave an oral presentation and submitted the required written essay. The essay feedback from the Course Coordinator said that 'it was obvious that I was more culturally suited to oral presentation and learning than to the written form'. The writer had no idea of the racial violence embedded in those comments—to me it said that as an Aboriginal person I was out of my 'place' in attempting to do the same as every other student in the course. People may consider that my reaction was overly sensitive, when in fact it was 'a critique based on [my] lived experience [and] many conversations [I] have had with . . . fellow community members about structural issues that affect us' (Sentance, 2018, p. 2). An oft-repeated trope is that as an Aboriginal person I was never going to attain the levels of education that non-Aboriginal people would. This belief was applied particularly to half-castes across the mid to late twentieth century when 'the common view about the childlike Aborigine of limited intelligence found a place in (general) attitudes' (Austin, 1993, p. 35) and that 'It was widely held that mixed bloods would find their best level in non-academic education' (Mathieson, 1955). This belief was not just academic; it became a 'truth' that was reinforced throughout my schooling. A vocational testing report in my teens recorded that 'Jennifer was

considered a bright student and it was expected that she would proceed to University' but the testing report stated:

> [Jennifer's] performance indicates the capacity for skilled to highly skilled practical work and training. From these results Jennifer would seem to have potential for Matriculation level studies. However, her achievement at school so far and her lack of motivation would seem to make it unlikely that she could ever reach that scholastic level (N.A.A., 1969).

When I read the lecturer's comments, I was on one hand not surprised but on the other, I was shocked that this was presented as a supposedly informed and valid argument by an academic in an institution that was committed to social justice and equity. It is an example of the ways in which the identity constructs of Aboriginal people have permeated our society, and that the academy is not immune to perpetuating such fiction. Horrified, I showed the comments to a colleague—our disbelief that this was the lecturer's perception of the work of an Aboriginal student (and staff member) was profound. Then, after unpacking the shock, we laughed and laughed—after all, I received a credit which is what mattered, and then I filed the paper appropriately, straight into the rubbish bin.

This vignette shows how our identity as construed by non-Aboriginal people impacts our learning experiences and outcomes, and our roles as academics. Kathryn Gilbey and Tracey Bunda write:

> [it's] about a complex history of denial and subjugation that doesn't sit only at the site of the student's body in the classroom (deficit model) but is being played out at a bigger broader national and cultural level that, in turn, returns the students' critical gaze onto the institution of education itself (2017, p. 188).

I and my fellow Aboriginal academics are mostly able to work our way through these instances and move past them. Our Aboriginal student populations often are not able to, and when faced with similar situations seek the support of Aboriginal academics because the institution can sometimes be unresponsive to the student and Aboriginal staff concerns around such issues, again deeming our disquietude as 'over reacting'.

As Gilbey and Bunda (2017, p. 187) write: 'There is a fundamental discrepancy between the white and black lived experience in this country and when our education and learning environments deny or refuse to acknowledge this then there is a fundamental denial of self and family and community felt by First Nations people' and that for the Aboriginal group or individual 'Strategic thinking needs to occur and critical questions need to be asked: is this detrimental to my sense of self? Do I deny my family and my history by engaging in this arena?'

They also identify that there are 'socio-political complexities that work to position the teaching Aboriginal academic on a continuum riding through experiences of pleasure and pain' (2017, p. 187). For Aboriginal academics, an identifiable 'point of pain' is the need to assert our rights under university agreed standards of equity when seeking promotion, or in applying for schemes or programs that will furnish us the time to undertake research and writing, thereby increasing our publications output and providing the foundations for career advancement.

While all universities have a number of protocols applied as guides when submissions are made by Aboriginal academics for considerations of equity by line managers in their determinations, it is problematic because there are no metrics for 'equity'. Nevertheless, all universities have Reconciliation Statements, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategies, and Reconciliation Action plans, which provide the principle foundations for the implementation of equity. These are not 'special measures' aimed at granting Aboriginal people advantage over or above their counterparts, these principles are grounded in the need to address the indicators of disadvantage around levels of health, housing and education equality for Aboriginal people. The intention of the measure of 'equity' set out in university commitments is the articulation of those principles into practice in ways which recognise the validity of the academic's Aboriginal identity status (National Tertiary Education Union Indigenous Policy Unit 2011). There is no question that as a means of actively participating in reducing the levels of disadvantage for Aboriginal Australia and providing learning and teaching from non-Western centred knowledge, that 'Australian universities want to improve performance by employing more Indigenous staff; delivering equity, diversity management benefits, and reconciliation' (Bourke, 2019, p. 48). Such equity measures also recognise that Aboriginal staff bring social, political and cultural value to the university, and that the vehicle for those 'assets' is our identity, which is deeply rooted in an immeasurable heritage.

Laurajane Smith argues that 'Heritage is not just a pretty place; it is a political resource' (Smith, 2010, p. 60). The Behrendt Report (2012, p. 132) states: 'Indigenous people do not come empty-handed to Australia's higher education system but bring significant strengths, both in knowledge capital and human capital that enriches higher education in Australia' and that:

> At an institutional level, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff members enrich the content of their universities, exposing all students to different perspectives and modelling the forms of cultural competency needed by our graduates in contemporary Australia (submission no. 73, Indigenous Higher Education Advisory Council, p. 9).

Aboriginal academics navigate the cultural interface of being 'Aboriginal' in 'the academy' and being Aboriginal within our communities (Nakata, 2007, p. 198). A complexity is that when we leave the university at the end of the day we do not take 'the university' with us as a marker of identity, but every day that we enter the university, we bring the community with us as a marker of our identity. It is in the community that our identity is forged and formed, where our knowledge systems have been developed and refined. Martin Nakata writes 'Underpinning Indigenous academic involvement in Indigenous [education] is a definitive commitment to Indigenous people first and foremost, not to the intellectual or academic issues alone' (2007, p. 198). Aboriginal academics apply those forms and systems of knowledge to our teaching and research practices, which are framed by our identity. The outcome is that universities are the beneficiaries of Aboriginal knowledge. While equity might be considered an immeasurable, the balance to the scale is the palpable value that Aboriginal people bring to the academy. Bond (2014, p.1) says that 'there is a general consensus that Indigenous academics are critical to increasing Indigenous student

participation and success, as well as enriching the cultural competency of Australian universities'. Aboriginal academics speak and teach from our heritage and identity base, and in doing so we are aware that we are a 'political resource' for our institutions. What we also bring is an unarticulated 'intangible merit' factor.

I am an Aboriginal woman and a historian—I can choose to be one of those, but cannot choose to be the other. Along with my academic knowledge, my teaching pedagogy is informed by identity. As Nakata (2004, p. 1) notes:

> To speak broadly about scholarly and intellectual practice … from the Indigenous perspective is to speak about it quite differently from non-Indigenous academics who speak from within the disciplinary intersections where their knowledge production and practice takes up issues about us, our historical experience and our contemporary position.

This became evident to me as a researcher. While undertaking research for my doctoral thesis, the greatest intellectual struggle was to locate academic resources, which reflected the most culturally appropriate methodologies through which to frame my writing. After several years of reading and analysing various theoretical frameworks, I came to the realisation that I was looking in the wrong place and that, for my work, the ideological positions of white, mostly European (often dead) males were not going to meet my needs as an Aboriginal researcher. The academy does not often recognise that representations of Aboriginal people by non-Aboriginal people and the writings about Aboriginal peoples by Aboriginal peoples are based in two differing world views and power-based positions (Arbon, 2008) and as a result, we risk a lack of understanding, and therefore possibly rejection by the academy, of the methodological positions of our writing. Inspiration and validation for trusting my instincts to write from the only position I could, the Aboriginal and non-'conventional', came when I read *This bridge called my back: Writings by radical women of color* (Moraga, & Anzaldúa, 1983). This text allowed me to overcome the angst about failing and to grant myself permission not to write within conventional white frameworks. This also applies to my teaching pedagogy.

In the first lecture or tutorial of every course I teach, I identify my heritage to the students and make the statement that as an Aboriginal woman, I can only teach and engage in the topic from that position. Student feedback shows that working from my identity position has enriched the learning experience of my students. Comments such as '*I really enjoyed the course and now feel more comfortable exploring Aboriginal issues in Australia, there's always been that tendency to ignore or look away, but now I want to look and understand*': '*Jennifer's ability to use her own story to illustrate to us that the victims of the Stolen Generation are real people and not 'intellectual curiosities' was profound. She gave a superb perspective of Aboriginal life in the 20th Century and changed my life*' and '*the opportunity to learn about indigenous culture from an indigenous woman. Jenni was able to give insight into subjects that any other person wouldn't have experienced*' not only clearly demonstrate that Aboriginal academics are core to educating non-Aboriginal students in Aboriginal histories, but they also give weight to the argument that Aboriginal academics teach to challenge dominant discourses.

The above comments are from my own courses on Aboriginal history across the twentieth century, so while it is very pleasing that I have achieved what I set out to do, I have to admit to a little extra *frisson* when reading the feedback from students from other history courses. Some comments are: '*She is very understanding of cultures and nationalities not of her own. Very inclusive and passionate when it comes to racial diversity*'. Belonging to a racialised cohort provides me with the tools and knowledge to ensure the cultural safety of my students. Jennifer '*offers a deep perspective into Aboriginal culture and it was so interesting hearing her opinions in regards to Empires as she comes from the colonised perspective*' and '*I really liked the indigenous perspective that Jenni brought to her tutorials, it gave us an opportunity to further understand the topic of empires deeper as there was another experience of imperialism that we could learn about*'.

Other ways that our Aboriginality facilitates change in our universities is that we bring perspectives that create a paradigm shift in discussions. In 2019 South Australia marked the 125th anniversary of Women's Suffrage and I was involved in early discussions around how the university might celebrate this milestone. After listening to the tentative planning, I offered the observation that Aboriginal women were not granted suffrage at that time and that in fact, the federation of the nation resulted in the revocation of voting rights for those few Aboriginal women in South Australia who had previously had some form of franchise. There was a palpable thought pause in the room and the realisation from around the table that this perspective needed to be incorporated into the university's commemorations. There was no deliberate form of exclusion taking place; it was simply that the thought had never occurred. The result was a truly inclusive event—I was supported in curating a photographic exhibition of strong South Australian Aboriginal women titled 'Aboriginal Women's Suffrage' which was publicly displayed at the same time and in the same physical space as the broader university's 125 years gathering. The photographs were also centrally displayed for International Women's Day in 2020 and are currently hung in the Barr Smith Library.

Not only was this a highlight of my time at the university but it was also an indicator that there are shifts and changes in the institution, which go beyond lip-service. I have been aware of the gradual forward movement in the university toward actuating Reconciliation and core to this movement are the people of the institution. There are some I know who are not cognisant of the principles and ideologies underpinning addressing the disadvantage of Aboriginal Australia, and then there are those whose actions underpin the forward acceleration towards inclusivity as framed within the university's commitment to equity. As Gilbey and Bunda (2017, p. 187) say 'The pleasure of our positions within the university sector comes from knowing that we are doing "some good", making change, chipping away at the behemoth that is the University and western academia'.

The end of this chapter is the beginning and the beginning is the end. Every single Aboriginal person in our universities, including Aboriginal academics, has experienced aspects of my life story in some way and 'The past reverberates inside our bodies like a second heartbeat' (Shiosaki, 2016). This also stands true for our calls around the recognition that Black and Aboriginal Lives Matter. It is those histories

that inform our learning, teaching, studying and negotiating our paths as academics in our universities. We are political, social and cultural powerhouses in our institutions and the fuel that fires us is our Aboriginality—our identity.

Always was: Always will be.

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Part II
How to Teach for the Contemporary World

Chapter 7
Digital History: The Globally Unequal Promise of Digital Tools for History: UK and Colombia's Case Study

Adam Crymble and Maria José Afanador-Llach

Abstract This chapter examines the opportunities presented by new 'digital' history tools. It argues that data wrangling and data crunching allow historians to ask new questions that we have never been able to ask before, because we can now make sense of data that was previously inaccessible. The promise of big data and new digital tools has been one of the key conversations of the past decade. However, it is not a globally equal promise. It has come on the back of nearly two decades of mass digitization that privileged the historical sources of the West, and of Anglophone countries in particular. Those data were created predominantly through the cultural perspectives and technical infrastructures of those same privileged nations. The original records themselves were produced as the result of an advanced bureaucracy designed to administer a global empire. Thus, many of these new techniques are inaccessible to scholars studying or living in countries that today some people call the 'Global South'. Not only are the data not digitized, but sometimes the sources simply do not exist because of the historic nature of the archive: what was recorded, and what has survived. These deep digital divides are made worse by a lack of technical infrastructures in many countries. Even in the wealthy countries of the West, social barriers and the expectations of humanities students to be able to avoid mathematics and computers raise difficulties for educators attempting to help students make the most of the digital age. This chapter, therefore, takes a West/South look at the promises of the 'digital' age for history, through the different challenges faced in the UK and Colombia, respectively, to show not only what the future might hold, but also where we still need to focus our energy in pursuit of a more equitable learning environment of the future.

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7.1 Introduction

Every few years a new tech buzz phrase bursts onto the scene in historical studies, promising (for five to seven years) to revolutionize scholarship and teaching. Recently 'Big Data' and 'Machine Learning' have added to generations of technical promises made by early-adopting historians eager to play with some new toys with their students. Both of these new phrases are a collective shift of attention onwards from the buzzwords of yesteryear: Web 2.0, the Internet, CD-ROMs, new media, databases, word processors, statistical packages, calculators, overhead projectors. Historians invented none of these, but as each appeared, scholars of the past found productive (and counterproductive) ways to apply them to the classroom and the research landscape. This was Silicon Valley influencing the most traditional of lecture theatres. Simultaneously and often more substantially, those theatres were also being influenced by other buzz phrases, including those coming from educational theorists: student centred learning, decolonizing the curriculum, and blended learning, for example (Beichner et al., 2007; King, 1993; Purvis, 1983; Risam, 2018). The history classroom was constantly evolving as a result.

The current promise is one of new possibilities for historical insights through digitally enabled analysis of large sets of historical sources, and of students as researchers rather than consumers of other people's ideas. By wrangling data and crunching numbers, our students can find never-before-seen patterns in the historical record and generate new knowledge. Some may resist a view of historical studies as a predictive science, Peter Turchin amongst them (Turchin, 2015), but we hope readers may be more open to what Dominique Vinck calls a 'useful detour for qualitative approaches' that sees quantitative approaches as a helpful complement to the more literary forms of historical method (Vinck, 2018). Writing from experience, this detour can be productively travelled with the right data, the right mentorship, and the right students.

7.2 The Example of *Alumni Oxonienses*

In 2017, at the University of Hertfordshire in England, some of Crymble's undergraduate digital history students came up with some outstanding insights into early modern migration by studying the origins of University of Oxford students in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (Chowcat, Colbron, & Crymble, 2016). Using data management and geospatial analysis skills learned in the class, and armed with a reasonably clean set of historical data provided by their teacher, a number of students were able to identify clear changes in the places of origin of Oxford students in the years before and after the English Civil War, 1642–1651 (Colson, 2017; Crymble, 2015). These patterns have never been identified previously by historians. The most creative essays even managed to put forth compelling arguments for why those changes occurred and how we might interpret the different patterns in various parts

of the country. From a teaching perspective, it was heartening to see such depth to the student's work, and it was interesting to read such unique insights in undergraduate essays.

This small group of British students of history were up to something quite remarkable. Yet, it is no accident that this learning opportunity took place in Britain and not Colombia, for example. Not for reasons that British policymakers might like to suggest. It is not because Britain is more advanced, or that it has a better education system, or even greater computer literacy. The quality of the work coming out of Colombia challenges all of those assertions (Borja, n.d.). Some of the wealthier Colombian universities have facilities that would make many British institutions look impoverished by comparison. Instead, it is because history education around the world is still overwhelmingly nationalist in its approach, meaning that British history students still study a lot of British history. This is significant because it means British students study the relics of British culture, and British culture, as part of a Western Christian tradition, has for two millennia been obsessed with writing things down and keeping the results of that work. They are, as the Islamic scholars say, the people of the book. For centuries, they were frequently also the authors of those books.

The digital or digitized resources that form the basis of 'digital' analyses in the twenty-first century are a product of that written tradition of the previous half-millennium in the west. The huge global museum and archival collections, that exist in Britain today at institutions such as the British Library or the National Archives, are the product of a culture of collecting and organizing in the nineteenth century, which evolved into microfilming, microfiching, and digitizing over the course of the twentieth century. Without those earlier stages, the latter ones may not have followed, and we may not today be talking about 'digital analyses' in history.

Those data that Crymble's students analyzed are a perfect example of this centuries-long process. The records had been written down hundreds of years ago by an army of porters fulfilling their daily duties at the front desks of more than a dozen historic Oxford colleges and halls. As good clerks, they patiently recorded what are now mini-biographies of more than 60,000 students who came past those desks on their way to a higher education. Five hundred years later, we are fortunate to still have the fruits of their labour, and the little nuggets of information that range from the student's name, to where he came from, who his father was, to when and where he studied, and sometimes even to what he went on to become. For example, famous philosopher and author of *Leviathan,* Thomas Hobbes' entry reads thus (expanded for readability):

> Son of Thomas, cleric; born at Westport, Wiltshire, 5 April, 1588; Bachelor of Arts from Magdalen Hall 5 February, 1607-8, incorporated at Cambridge 1608, "the famous philosopher and mathematician of Malmsbury"; died at Hardwick, county Derby, 4 December, 1679, aged 91 (Hieron-Horridge, in *Alumni Oxonienses,* pp. 706–747).

From 60,000 entries like this, students were able to create maps that showed changes in the place of origin of Oxford students over time which went far beyond anything we knew about early modern migration in Britain. But the number of things

that had to happen for that to be possible is, quite frankly, remarkable. Not only did the porters need to be part of a tradition whereby their internal management structures required them to keep such written records, but we are fortunate enough that they worked at an institution that, for whatever reason, thought it would be a good idea to keep and preserve their work for five hundred years, with the costs associated with that preservation absorbed despite no obvious economic benefit of doing so either then or at any time in the future.

Then, in the nineteenth century, a man named Joseph Foster had to devote years of his life, again with little obvious economic benefit on the horizon, to verify, collate, alphabetize, transcribe, and publish those scribbles in the porter's ledgers into a six volume reference work known as the *Alumni Oxonienses.* It is Foster's work that gave us the mini-biography of Thomas Hobbes above. Foster knew with hindsight that Hobbes would become a 'famous philosopher and mathematician'; the porter likely had no such inkling (Foster, 1891a, b).

More than a century after that, just shortly after the new millennium, the team behind the newly created *British History Online* digital library identified the *Alumni Oxonienses* as an important enough work to raise money to include it in their collection. As a new digital memory institution, *British History Online's* team played a crucial role in the process that led to converting these written records into machine-readable data for historians to begin to explore computationally. They spent considerable time retyping the six volumes out in full (twice to ensure accuracy), rather than rely upon mechanised processes that they worried would not produce as good a result. They then made those records available online as machine-readable text, and gave it away for free. This particular digitization project was funded by the American Friends of the Institute of Historical Research (where *British History Online* is based), raised by donations. The digital library itself was funded principally by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, an American philanthropic organization committed to the arts and humanities, and it was one of dozens of similar digitization projects supported by the Foundation in the late 1990s and early 2000s. The decisions about what to digitize were made largely at the whim of these and similar funding bodies, with their representatives sitting in cities such as New York or London, many of whom had Western upbringings that fed their sense of purpose or urgency when deciding whether to fund one project or another. The decisions they made around those board tables have sculpted historical studies a generation later by deciding what would be available as digital data, and what would not.

Thus, for the students to conduct their research on Oxford students in the sixteenth century, various people had to create, preserve, reformat, and reformat the records again. A hidden collaboration over hundreds of years, at each stage costing the better part of a small fortune to enable. This same process happened again and again in countries like Britain, preserving billions of bits of paper with ideas, which centuries later thanks to a generation of work devoted to converting that paper into machine-readable text, gave students an opportunity to data mine in their history classrooms. For those of us who live in these Western countries that benefited from this extraordinary series of unlikely events leading us to the present situation, it seems an entirely normal progression of a learned society. But this is not normal;

it is utterly unusual—the product of a very particular type of culture that was not replicated frequently around the globe. Instead, this is a culture that honed its record keeping practices during centuries of building and administering a global empire. The paper trail of that empire enabled a small group of people in European capitals such as London to exert control around the world. It has left hundreds of kilometres of shelves across Europe that are filled with that administrative paper trail, many of which are now ripe for data mining.

7.3   Digital Resources not in Britain

But what of the ruled rather than the rulers? What if you do not own your people's written record? Or, how do you mine ideas that were not kept on paper at all? Not part of the literary tradition? It is easy to forget, but this was most of the world—even parts of it we now revere as learned. The ancient Greeks had writing but used spoken verse as a means of storing and transmitting epic poetry. The Inca of South America and the Aborigines in Australia were part of oral cultures, as were countless other civilizations. How do you data mine these traditions? So far, you can't—at least not at scale. The promise of data mining and machine learning have been over-egged because they are based on an assumption that the entire world collected and continues to collect information in a similar way. This over-egging is merely a repeat of the hyperbolic technological promises that came before them. Data mining and machine learning will make a big impact on aspects of historical teaching and scholarship, but not one that will touch all parts of the globe equally.

7.4   Colombia

Even in places with long histories of written culture such as Colombia, which was first visited by the Spanish at the dawn of the sixteenth century, they still find themselves in many ways hindered in the pursuit of big data analysis by decisions made centuries earlier. The country's colonial past is part of that hindrance. The territories that comprise Colombia today were, for over 300 years, colonial territories claimed by the Spanish monarchy. The Iberian empire built a complex bureaucratic machine made of papers produced on both sides of the Atlantic. The making of empire created one of the largest colonial archives ever written, which recorded information about former colonies across Latin America and the Philippines. Today, most of that archive sits in Spain at the Archivo de Indias de Sevilla (AIS). This puts legal title of some of Colombia's most important historical documents with the Spanish state. Even if Colombians did want to digitize and make these resources available for data mining, they do not have the legal means to force Spain's hand. This raises questions about who owns digital cultural heritage. A global legal framework designed to protect intellectual property, developed in the latter early modern period, has yet to come up

with satisfactory solutions to shared cultural heritage in the digital age. A handful of transnational projects, such as *Aluka* (Rüther, 2003), an online digital library of African heritage, are leading the way in seeking such solutions, but national and international laws remain a barrier for many seeking access to their heritage.

This remains a crucial problem to solve, according to the postcolonial view of historical studies in the digital age. As Roopika Risam has suggested, 'Within colonized and formerly colonized nations and for people outside of dominant cultures, access to means of digital knowledge production is essential to reshaping the dynamics of cultural power and claiming the humanity that has been denied by the history of colonialism' (Risam, 2018). Colombians wanting to use many of their own colonial era materials are thus at the mercy of Spanish policies and decisions about digitization, many of which were made in the late 1980s and early 1990s by people who did not foresee a future when people would expect to be able to download and manipulate historical data (Sánchez, 2017). While a huge number of documents are available online via AIS, the infrastructure of the archive cannot at present facilitate complex data analysis, and there is little that Colombians without advanced programming skills can do about it (Melo, 2020).

The case in regional Colombian archives is even less promising. Many of those archives hold valuable colonial documents, but their situation is precarious. Low budgets, poor enforcement of archival legislation, conservation problems, and the lack of catalogues has endangered the preservation of many historical archives across the country. Here, organisations such as the British Library play a vital role in preservation through their Endangered Archives Programme, making available resources to protect and digitize materials that are at risk of destruction, but even they do not have enough money to solve this global problem (British Library, 2004–2019). Some successful locally led digitization projects, such as Colombia's *Neogranadina*, stand out as shining examples of home-grown initiatives that provide access to important colonial Colombian materials; nevertheless, there is a long way to go before Colombians have a similar level of digital access to their history (Fundación Histórica Neogranadina, 2019).

Colombians also sit on the outside of a global culture that remains English-dominated in a number of ways, and has been for a long time. English viewpoints persist in certain corners of the Colombian archive, both through what was originally created, and what has been made available in digital form. For example, there are English-drawn maps of early Colombia: a 1772 map of Cartagena by I. Andrews (1772), as well as a series of English-language maps of the whole Colombia country by Cary (1813), Arrowsmith (1814), Finlayson (1822), and Hall (1828). As far as we are aware there are no early Colombian-drawn maps of England. Thus we have English eyes looking at Colombia, and nothing looking the other way, and the histories we write are sculpted in that image. We might call this the informal empire of Britain, extending intellectually even into territories that were never directly under their political control.

The English language also rears its head in many of the programming languages that scholars need to learn in order to work with big data. The 'reserved words' of programming languages that must be typed to perform various actions and

commands, are all in English. The Python programming language, popular with many digital historians, is a great example of the English barrier to entry. Its commands include 'and, as, assert, break, class, continue, else, except, False, finally, for, from, global, if, import, in, is, None, not, or, pass, raise, return, True, try, while, with, yield'.

An Anglophone who has been introduced to programming concepts may be able to puzzle out what these commands might do, or can at least use their English language skills to remember them in meaningful ways. A Spanish speaker has no such advantage. There are no ways to substitute Spanish language commands. An 'if statement' in Spanish is still 'if statement' rather than something more vernacular such as 'si la declaración'.

What was digitized also sculpts those histories we tell today. The early priorities of commercial digitization companies based in the Global North had an impact on the development of digital skills in the Global South (Kenney, Speiss, Crew, Smith, & Reilly, 2000; Putnam, 2016). These companies built many of the digital archives of primary sources in the early new millennium, access to which universities procured through expensive subscription fees. These projects tended to focus on English-language materials, which could more easily be marketed to the larger American higher education industry. While these companies have begun to diversify their offering and to include materials in different languages or created in different parts of the world, countries like Colombia were for years faced with a choice: subscribe to English-language archives, or do without the cutting-edge resources. This put fluency in English (itself a sign of privilege in many countries) as a key barrier in front of Latin American historians looking to work with many digital materials, and means any insights made using new methods such as data mining, will tell us only about the English speaking world. This is part of a larger history of colonization that reflect some biased historiographical tropes and issues of digital divides and open access, amongst others (Fiormonte, 2016).

Cultures of academic publishing in different countries also impact the type of work scholars engage with. Colombia, like many countries, tries to encourage scholars to up their game by providing an approved list of journals in which they encourage researchers to publish, and reward them if they do so. These so-called prestigious journals are used as a measure of Colombian scholarship's march towards progress on the international stage—perhaps itself a hangover of colonial mentalities. But there are unintended consequences of approved lists of journals. As Rafols et al. have noted, interdisciplinary research is often less well suited to these more prestigious and more traditional journals. That means that research employing newer methods such as machine learning and data mining may not find natural homes amongst the approved journals and scholars are thus dissuaded from engaging in that type of work (Rafols, Leydesdorff, O'Hare, Nightingale, & Stirling, 2012). Rafols pointed out in particular that countries such as Colombia, which may benefit most from interdisciplinary approaches to the problems they face, are particularly hit hard by this anti-interdisciplinary policy.

As a result of these and other factors in Colombia and other Latin American countries, the type of 'digital' work being done in the region differs from the priorities of the Global North. Colombia is developing a digital approach that is best suited to

Colombia and the wider societal and professional pressures in the region. Sometimes that aligned with what was going on elsewhere, and sometimes it did not. Tech buzz phrases may get attention in the press or on social media, but priorities for cultural memory organisations in countries such as Colombia are not always aligned with the needs or interests of researchers and teachers hoping to work at the cutting edge of technology and history. That is not a sign of a deficiency in the archivists and librarians, but a different awareness of where scarce time and resources should be focused to ensure the greatest overall benefit—and an approach which mirrors that of most cultural memory organizations in the Global North. As the devastating 2018 fire at Rio de Janeiro's National Museum or the 2019 fire at Notre Dame in Paris showed, without robust preservation strategies, all access is lost to both people and machines.

Thus, to date much of the focus of Latin American cultural memory organisations has been on accessibility and conservation rather than data mining, and Colombia is no different. This has certainly been the strategy of the Biblioteca Nacional of Colombia (National Library), which has created a 'Biblioteca Digital' website, as well as the Archivo General de la Nación (National Archives) and the Biblioteca Virtual del Banco de la República (Red de Bibliotecas del Banco de la República, 1997). All of these memory institutions have digitized a number of important historical collections. These include manuscripts, newspapers, engravings, literary works, photographic archives, and maps amongst others. All three of these collections have been produced with human readers rather than machine readers in mind. And why not? More Colombians can read text than write computer programmes, and many types of research and teaching are only possible with human-readable source material. The preservation and access approach is, therefore, the democratic and inclusive choice, even if it means few Colombians are able to harvest the benefits of robust data mining in historical studies the way their cousins in the North can.

Colombia's pathway into its own brand of digitally enabled historical work often relied upon the hard work of early-adopting individuals working in near isolation. Despite the challenges, there are pockets of activity involving scholars seeking to build robust digital data about the past, which may yet find their way into more Colombian history classrooms. As is often the case in the Global North, these pockets develop where someone shows initiative and enthusiasm. Historian Jaime Borja at the Universidad de los Andes in Bogota is one of those enthusiastic pioneers of robust digital data. His database, *Arte Colonial Americano* (ARCA), contains more than 20,000 images and accompanying enriched metadata of American colonial paintings created between 1530 and 1830 (Borja, n.d.). Like many digital archives, digital copies of the paintings are accessible for users to look at. The metadata makes it possible to analyze the relationship between body and gesture in colonial paintings, for example. However, ARCA has gone further, building a series of 'big data tools' into the site to make analysis even easier. This includes a dashboard that allows users to explore patterns in geography, theme, artists, or a combination of several factors. Also available is a network graphing tool designed to highlight connections between bits of information in the database. The findings of that type of query might not be obvious to a student taking a traditional approach to looking at the paintings, meaning

ARCA provides opportunities for educators and students to build new knowledge about the Latin American past.

Teaching too has been at the impetus of the adventurous. Early in the new millennium, Stefania Gallini at Colombia's National University pioneered some of the country's first forays into digital work in history classrooms. Gallini found an open and flexible history department that let her create and teach digitally focused courses as part of the methodology offering in the history program. It started with a proposal to teach a course called 'Internet and History' back in 2002. Drawing her educational experience from abroad in the United Kingdom and Italy, her offering was distinctly in line with courses offered in the Global North at the same time. From Michael John Gorman's 'The Wired Historian' (Gorman, 2002) at Stanford to Ian Archer's 'Internet Data Course' (Archer, 2002) at the Institute of Historical Research in London the same year, Gallini's teaching shows that Colombia was never behind when it came to teaching technology and history together, and that there were always people looking beyond the seas for inspiration on how to change Colombian history classrooms. Her dedication to this new interdisciplinary approach to teaching expanded in 2013–2015, with the creation of *Laboratorio de Cartografía Histórica e Historia Digital* CaHID (Lab of Historical Cartography and Digital History) (2019), a physical space with computers, scanners, and software that students could use for experimenting with digital technology. What she created in Colombia was in many ways similar to digital history labs elsewhere, including William J. Turkel's 'Lab for Humanistic Fabrication' at Western University in Canada, Mike Cosgrave's digital learning environment at University College Cork in Ireland, or Stanford's 'Center for Spatial and Textual Analysis' in the United States—all operational at the same time as Gallini's own space. Gallini's lab was quickly appropriated by students who collectively created the rules for using the space and began experimenting with digital history projects. Very soon some students began graduating with theses that involve using digital media such as blogs or digital cartography (Díaz Ángel, 2007–2019). The emphasis on 'space' is perhaps key to understanding digital methods in Colombian historical studies. Faced with a relative lack of 'big data' in the archive, the land provided one of the best measurable sources of new data. As David Bushnell's *The Making of Modern Colombia* starts: 'In the beginning there were mountains, plains, and rivers, but especially mountains; no one geographic feature has so moulded the history of Colombia as the Andes' (Bushnell, 1993).

Drawn by the power and influence of the landscape, many key Colombian works have turned to spatial analysis for inspiration. For instance, Natalia Jaramillo, a Colombian graduate student with an interdisciplinary background in history and geography, is using drones to generate a topographic map of the Media Luna (Half Moon) island in Antarctica. Much like Google Earth, she uses software to stitch together hundreds of photographs, to produce the first new map of the island in half a century (Jaramillo, 2016–2019; Wright, 2019). Afanador's own work on Colombia's transition from colony to republic in northern South America also takes a geographical approach, seeking to structure geospatial and economic data in small and medium size datasets from primary sources such as maps, economic texts, and geographic

descriptions produced by bureaucrats, military men, clerics, and naturalists. The aim of the project is to experiment with data modeling and visualize the spatial dimensions and conflicting visions of territory and political economy, thus contribute to the understanding of conflicts that arise from such historical tensions. Big data may not be available for these Colombian scholars, but innovative approaches to what is available is certainly not lacking.

A lack of access to robust machine-readable data in textual format was probably a key reason why spatial humanities became so popular amongst the technologically inclined in Colombia. Data mining and machine learning typically depend on large sets of clean and consistent data, often in textual form (although algorithms are changing and this may not always be the case). Colombians have not traditionally had many home-grown datasets of historical materials that would facilitate this type of work. Infrastructural, economic, historiographic, and institutional challenges needed to be overcome before the conditions were right for building that data from the surviving archival materials. The process of creating reliable data also takes time and money, and practitioners must navigate local cultures of collecting that have been embedded in libraries and archives in the region far longer than the term 'digital' has been on the lips of those in the Global North.

Far more common than 'big data' for Colombian historians, has been the productive pursuit of public history. In 2016, the *Third International Public History Conference* was held in Bogotá, Colombia, bringing together national and international scholars (Universidad de los Andes, 2016b). Shortly after that, the project *Historias Para Lo Que Viene* was born after the majority of Colombia voted not to support the implementation of the peace with the guerrillas in 2016. The project was an invitation to create open discussions about Colombian history as a strategy to support the understanding of the current situation of the country and the need to tell stories of conflict after years of violence (Universidad de los Andes, 2016a).

The conflict has inspired other historically themed projects. Sometimes interest in the land came together with public history when historians turned their minds to restitution and reconciliation. Conversations about land use and agency in Colombia have been at the heart of the country's attempts to overcome the fifty years of armed conflict. Although the lack of an inventory of the country's land is a pressing issue, some advances have been made in building databases that document the armed conflict. This line of research has been carried out by the *National Center of Historical Memory* in their Observatory of Memory and Conflict, the most information-intensive collection about the Colombian armed conflict. The project's creators have integrated more than 10,000 databases and documents containing information about the time and place of violent acts, as well as details of both victims and perpetrators of violence (Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica, 2019). Thousands of data points about the armed conflict are now available in open access forms thanks to this initiative, opening up possibilities for historians by creating new sources put together for the express purpose of understanding Colombia's recent past (Universidad Nacional de Colombia, 2013–2019).

Along with these initiatives, historians have likewise been collaborating with mainstream media to create digital public history projects. At the same time, some

institutional spaces have started to favour interdisciplinarity, despite the barriers of approved journal lists already mentioned (Villamizar et al., n.d.). When Universidad de los Andes decided to develop a master's degree in Digital Humanities in 2016, it chose to sit the programme at the intersection of several departments where students could learn from a range of different perspectives. Historians came together with musicians, journalists, artists, art historians, literature scholars, designers, social scientists, education experts, and computer scientists. The emphasis was on the power of interdisciplinarity itself, rather than an assumption that a few tech buzz phrases would provide Colombians with the answers it needs for the future. Perhaps tellingly, the history students who have enrolled on the programme have tended to favour digital public history projects over data-intensive ones (Facultad de Artes y Humanidades, Universidad de los Andes, 2016).

7.5 Conclusion

This leads us to the question: what does Colombian historical studies need to make the most of a digital future suited to its own needs and goals? We firmly believe that Colombians are best placed to tell us about their needs, and that building an understanding of the types of skills Colombians are currently trying to learn provides us with a clear window into the types of support they will need in the near future. One way to measure that need is through web traffic reports of the *Programming Historian* project, a peer-reviewed digital learning resource published in English, Spanish, and French. The project's more than 150 tutorials are aimed at humanists interested in learning technical skills. It gets more than one million visitors per year around the world, with a growing number of readers in Latin America.

An analysis of the traffic logs shows that Latin American-based readers are seeking substantially different digital skills from readers of the English publication, or from readers based in Spain. In the twelve months following May 2018, English readers were more likely to access lessons that taught analysis skills that could be used to produce quantitatively based historical research findings. In particular, lessons that teach skills that we might describe as 'data mining' or analysing large volumes of materials were much more popular with English readers than those from other language groups. This included lessons on getting started with topic modelling, corpus linguistics basics, and downloading large numbers of webpages semi-automatically—for example, to download a large database one page at a time for offline analysis (Froehlich, 2015; Graham, Weingart, & Milligan, 2012; Milligan, 2012). Given the buzz around data mining in the English press, this shows an alignment between English buzz and English skills seeking.

By comparison, readers in Latin America were more likely to be reading basic programming and computing skills, such as how to manipulate text or files with the Python programming language (Turkel, 2017a, b). Also popular in Latin America were lessons on digital mapping—again reinforcing the connection to studying space and place rather than text (Clifford, MacFadyen, & Macfarlane, 2018). Geography

proved important for understanding Latin American needs, because the lessons that were popular in South America differed from those widely accessible in Spain. For example, one of the most popular lessons in Spain was a tutorial on Linked Open Data—one of the buzz phrases of the decade that promises to enable you to access well-structured information from library, museum, and archival collections, for use in web-based tools, apps, or analyses. It is the same type of technology that lets app developers create a tool that mashes together bus and train timetables with satellite data to tell you the quickest route between two places in real time. But in order to be useful, you need access to lots of different well-structured datasets, and at the time of writing, those are much more common in Europe than in South America. The *Programming Historian* lesson in question uses the data from a European collection (Lincoln, 2017). Nothing remotely resembling the same scale or quality exists in South America, and thus it is not surprising that Spanish readers have different digital skills and interests than their cousins to the south. Self-learners are voting with their clicks, and providing an insight not only into what they want to learn, but how educators can best support the different regional technical needs in different parts of the world. English speaks in a loud voice, but we must remember to listen carefully to the diverse and global needs of learners seeking to make the most of the digital age.

This chapter has explained why this conversation about data analysis and history is happening in places like the UK, but not in Colombia. We have argued that the reasons are nothing to do with computers, and everything to do with history. Big data and machine learning are, therefore, poised to have a big impact on historical studies. But it will be a measured impact, and one that does not affect the whole world equally. We as historians must thus take care to ensure that too much faith is not put into it, and that we collectively look at a globally relevant set of new skills for students of the past. To peg data mining and machine learning as the only next big thing is to ignore the contexts facing countries of the Global South, and to suggest that their problems are less advanced, or not important. Instead, we believe that digital technology can and will continue to transform the way we teach and learn history in the Global South, but that it will do so in a way that is most appropriate for the educational and archival context in which those countries operate. It is a different path, and one we must all support as it develops.

As long as historians keep that in mind moving forward, we are confident that an even greater proportion of the next generation of history students will be poised to tackle the buzz phrases of tomorrow. We think that the next buzz phrase should have something in it about globally equitable approaches to understanding and solving the challenges facing the discipline. Instead, we have a feeling it will have something to do with robots. We hope we are wrong.

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Chapter 8
Study Tours: History Studies Abroad as an Exploration of Points of Departure in a Zone of *Im*proximal Development

Adrian Jones

> Surely our job as teachers [of history] is to puzzle, confuse and amaze? We must rear a new generation of students who will gaze in wonder at texts and artefacts, quick to puzzle over a translation, slow to project or to appropriate, quick to assume there is a significance, slow to generalise about it.
> Bynum, *Wonder,* (1997).
> The man who finds his homeland sweet is still a tender beginner; he to whom every soil is as his native one is already strong; but he is perfect to whom the whole world is a foreign land.
> *Didascalicon de studio legendi*, (late 1120s)

Abstract This chapter explores distinctive aspects of history studies when conducted as a university class travelling abroad. Whereas effective teaching of children and adolescents studying 'at home' is usually associated with a 'zone of proximal development', this chapter suggests that when your history classroom re-locates to a foreign land history teaching encounters worlds of wander and wonder: a zone of *im*proximal development. Rather than try to assess student learning outcomes via sampling that will always be too small, this essay offers an experienced teacher's (contestable!) reflections on historical and educational foundations of these differences. These foundations prompt four practicalities for academics planning study tours: (1) Centre every aspect of the tour around an explicit and universal focus question, reiterating it in a closing assessment open to a variety of interpretations. (2) Enable daily time and space, while travelling, for academic de-briefs with students. (3) Frame focus-question-related study topics for students to prepare, before travelling, each linked to a site visited. A student—not just the academic and the local guide—then becomes an instructor, of sorts, on tour, at least once, probably twice. (4) Find ways to discuss the anthropology of 'othering' at induction classes before you tour, tasking students to ponder the 'us' and 'me' in encounters with 'them'.

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8.1 Introduction

Janet Bennett's essay on study abroad entitled 'On Becoming a Global Soul' (2008) begins by quoting the second text above. It is a translation (1961) of a sentence (Book 3, Chap. 20) in a foundational text modelling higher education in the twelfth-century medieval West: *Didascalicon de studio legendi*, or 'On the Study of Reading'.

   This chapter is about university studies of history conducted while travelling 'abroad'. Janet Bennett and the medieval author of the *Didascalicon* both wrote about all kinds of tertiary study abroad. This chapter explores the particularities of history studies occasioned abroad. Unlike the sequestered campus classes in which most higher studies of history are conducted in senior-school and university, one of my points is that contemporary studies of history, when conducted while studying abroad, are kind of 'medieval'. The 'medieval' analogy suggests that history studies nowadays, if conducted abroad, tend to disrupt and displace students, imaginatively and constructively, as medieval higher studies once did (De Hamel, 2008, pp. 6–13; Ward, 1979)—and, as we shall see, the monk writing the *Didascalicon* explained.

   I write to suggest that history studies conducted abroad differ from closeted 'Classical' and 'Modern (Reinhard Koselleck's *Neuzeit*)' fora for higher studies of history. History studies conducted abroad differ, so I contend, in two key ways:

1.   In the first way, the difference baulks at one of educational theorist Lev Vygotsky's most influential models of teaching and learning as a 'zone of proximal development'. My 'Educational Note' to come in the last third of this article suggests university-level studies of history, when conducted abroad, reflect a 'zone of *im*proximal development'. I nonetheless still follow Vygotsky's model of proximal pedagogy suggesting effective teaching always focuses on what the student is doing, not on what the teacher does. Effective teaching is still cognisant of what a learner can do without help, and on what the learner could achieve with guidance and encouragement. I only suggest adult study and travel tweaks the model, even though it remains as formidable and as admirable as ever. It is not belied here. It is just extended. A foreign (i.e. *im*proximal) zone also stimulates learning, provided the learner can still feel safe.

2.   In the second way—the learning and teaching implications of which are discussed in my 'Historical Note' to come in the middle part of this chapter— the difference relates to the ways, when abroad, metaphors and metonyms (Runia, 2006b, p. 309; White, 1973) envelop students' lives and engage their fuller attention; the Other either becomes like something they think they know (metaphor) or the Other is re-named by association (metonym) (White, 1976). The experience of travel exposes students to a 'being-in (*Da-sein*)' that's new to them, to use Martin Heidegger's phrase (Dreyfus, 1991; Heidegger, 1996: Sects. 4, 20; Hopkins, 1999). It disrupts and displaces (Grünzweig & Rinehart, 2013a, b, p. 17). It elicits 'uncanniness (*Unheimlichkeit*)' (Casey, 1993, p. 34; Heidegger, 1996, Sect. 40). It also intrigues. The students' sense of 'being-in-the-world (*In-der-Welt-sein*)' (Heidegger, 1996, Sects. 23, 69) is changing

when with others somewhere abroad (*Mitdasein*: Heidegger, 1996: Sects. 26–27). They are also 'amidst (*Sein bei*)' (Dreyfus, 1991, xi) in new surrounding 'environs (*Umwelt*)' (Heidegger, 1996, Sect. 12) encountering 'presences' that may 'escape [forever, or just for a while,] the dimension of meaning' (Gumbrecht, 2004, 57). Students also encounter 'the unrepresented way the past is in the present' (Runia, 2006a, p. 1) and 'the sub-conscious persistence [and envelopment] of an unacknowledged past' (Runia, 2010, p. 232).

Cocooning 'Classical' and 'Modern' models of higher studies of history seldom displace and disrupt like this. These traditional loci for advanced-level history classes dwell in, and even obsess about, once-represented ways the past is now represented in the present (Jones, 2019); everything known somehow has to seem acknowledged. Scholarship drives experience. These traditional ways of learning differ from study abroad because they were once [i.e. in the 'Classical' era], and are often still [i.e. in the 'Modern' era], centred on *gymnasia* or in tutorials on campus, whether they be in the traditional Arts Bachelor settings of capital-city ivory towers or in liberal arts college towns. These 'Classical' and 'Modern' loci construct class and classroom cloisters and closets. Their classrooms are also often steeped in the smug mindsets of metropoles. 'Classical' and 'Modern' habits sequestering students in campus cocoons of professions, of ideas, and of privilege, can sometimes also frame the Other as 'barbarian'.

But all these frames are harder to sustain when undertaking higher studies of history abroad. This is because the travelling students may lack the means, as yet, to interpret, let alone understand. Experience overdetermines scholarship. Travelling students experience and intuit, even before they understand, the layering of time and place. This is Koselleck's 'simultaneity of the non-simultaneous (*Gleichzeitigkeit des Ungleichzeitigen*)' (Spiegel, quoting 29; Koselleck, 1979, 2004), another name for alterity and for heritage. Studies of history while abroad leave more room for wander and wonder.

Hence the importance of de-briefs, while travelling—teachers can still lecture, a bit, but it should build out from student experiences, eliciting class conversations, rather than attempting to prescribe them. The key point of all the aforementioned Heideggerian metaphysics remains simple; however, 'being there' makes a difference to any tertiary study, not least the tertiary study of history abroad. 'Being there' is as important 'at home' if your classroom involves visiting a site or a local museum.

This realisation has practical implications. 'Being-in' when abroad also necessitates every kind of 'teaching' actually 'hearing people to speak' (Palmer, 2007, p. 6) by seizing every opportunity to de-brief. For all these reasons, I begin this chapter with my teacher biography. I was there. I think I know.

8.2 Personal Note

For over three decades, anchored in Melbourne, I framed, taught and assessed second- and third-year university subjects devoted to European, Ottoman and Russian history, traversing eras ancient to medieval to modern. My intellectual imagination had been empowered by my doctoral training in the USA, with its insistence on breadth across a millennium of French, Russian and Anatolian–Balkan history, even though when I arrived at Grad. School I was foolish enough to think I should just focus on one decade in the USSR in the dismal first half of the twentieth century. At Grad. School, I learned to look back—long and wide, and always with frames of comparison, only a few of which were explicit. You learned connections were possible, whether across eras, or between societies. And once I had been teaching for a decade and a half, I got itchy feet, combining revisions of these Russian and Byzantine–Balkan–Ottoman history subjects, biennially, with student group travel either to Turkey (to Edirne, Bursa, Çanakkale and İstanbul in Marmara region) or to the Russian Federation (to Moscow, St Petersburg, Novgorod and Yaroslavl). When you travel, you look wide and long. The past does not meet you, when you are in situ—St Petersburg excepted perhaps—in the filleted era sub-divisions so typical of university studies of history. When I retire, I will extend this approach to leading history tours of retired folk to Russia, Turkey, Slovenia, Romania and perhaps to Normandy and the Pas-de-Calais. The world is an oyster; learning is truly lifelong.

But I write this chapter about history studies abroad with my fellow academic teachers of history in mind, and not the tour guides, and not the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) specialists. First and foremost, I am an academic historian who loves teaching. I am not an Educational Developer. I am not even sure what that means. I love my 'stuff'—as all academics do. I love to learn new things. The best way to learn them is to teach them. 'We' academic teachers of history already have ideas about what works best when we try to think about how to expand student worldviews. Regarding all studies of culture and history, no matter what the level, experts, novices and ignoramuses alike readily intuit that 'being there' makes a difference. Wonder works as soon as you wander (Moore, 2013, p. 32).

But there are also two important caveats that need to be entered. The first caveat is that the wonder and the wander is not really a matter of 'immersion'. Any promise of immersion in any promotion of study abroad is more of a puff, unless the study tour involves an extended home stay among native monolinguals, and/or longer-term language learning with a class of multilinguals who must learn together in their new alien tongue. 'Immersion' is a typical exaggeration when it comes to marketing study tours abroad (Hammer, 2012, pp. 124–26; Paige & Vande Berg, 2012, p. 54; Vande Berg, Paige, & Lou, 2012, pp. 3, 20–21). The 'sink-or-swim' 'immersive' metaphor of the swimming pool does not apply; the students on a study tour are still cocooned by their group, by their native language and by the expectations they arrived with (Vande Berg, Paige, & Lou, 2012, pp. 6–7; Citron, 2013, pp. 41–56). We always tend to see what we are ready to see (Poe, 2000). The second caveat is that wonder and wander study abroad experiences tend to be taken up by atypical

students. Study abroad-ers have more capital: financial, social and cultural (Green, Gannaway, Sheppard, & Jamarani, 2015). They are also more likely to be 'extrovert' and 'sensate' personality types (Miao & Harris, 2012; Nilsson, 2013; Petersdotter, Niehoff, & Freund, 2017).

Studies of history abroad are more a matter of 'constructive exposure', not 'immersion'. Foreign *mises-en-scène* do envelop students and intrude on them, nonetheless. And they do so in ways resembling what one great educator, Lev Vygotsky, noticed regarding children at play. If children are always 'a head taller' when they play (Moll, 2013, p. 36; Vygotsky, 1978, p. 102), students are always a head wider when they wander.

Travel and study in the university years also resembles the transition of four-year olds from home to kinder. Study Abroad resembles flitting between 'home corner' and the sand-pit. You learn heaps, not least that there is more than one mat to sit on. But the four-year olds can never quite put their fingers on the what they have learned, let alone on the how; likewise travel amid tertiary study. It can be as hard, upon return, to explain what they know they gained (Kartoshkina, 2015). This is also why students' invariably positive self-appraisals of their stints of study abroad as personally 'transformative' should not be treated as sceptically as critics aver (Vande Berg, Paige & Lou, 2012, pp. xi–xii, 22–23). Kindergarten and study abroad are similar in this respect: beyond pleasant memories, the real fruits ripen slower, via later-onset social capabilities and relativities, often emerging willy nilly, but seldom remaining so, as the years pass. T.S. Eliot explained in 'Little Gidding', stanza V, his fourth of *Four Quartets* (1942):

> What we call the beginning is often the end
>
> And to make and end is to make a beginning.
>
> The end is where we start from….
>
> We shall not cease from exploration
>
> And the end of all our exploring
>
> Will be to arrive where we started
>
> And know the place for the first time.

The contrasts of study abroad experiences with the traditional history classroom could not be greater. Regarding formalised studies of history, no matter the level, students are often unloaded into a passive classroom, or maybe let loose alone in a library. We know serrying and/or sequestering can assist student attention to wander. Sometimes the didactive agendas of traditional history classrooms can even impede the wonder that students also routinely maintain is the reason why they took up studies of history (Moore, 2013, pp. 1–2). Expertise has always been as capable of choking wonder as releasing it (Moore, 2013, pp. 10–11).

Students 'abroad' necessarily become more engaged and less able to cocoon their attention when their class shifts to alien ground. When students study 'at home', they tend to be closeted and instrumental, focussing on the assessment task at hand. Other

'home' priorities press close. In these ways, when students stay 'home', academics' intrinsic fascinations with contexts and contrasts is more often deflected by students' more extrinsic focus on whether their teachers' agendas really do seem (to the students!) to contribute to their grade or task. When students study 'abroad', they soon see why more is involved in their education than the next task or their last grade. When students study 'at home', their academics also tend to subject them to fish-finger or fish-fillet history subjects, not whole fish: they 'cover' the first half of the twentieth-century, say, but not the second, and not the nineteenth-century. When students study 'abroad', however, standing in a square, or filing along a museum corridor; they see how nothing in life, in culture, let alone in history, arrives boxed and filleted in classroom-&-syllabus kinds of ways: nineteenth-century things collude and collide with things from the eighteenth-, the seventeenth- and who-knows-what centuries (Smith, 2002, pp. 589–90).

As an experienced tour leader who is also steeped in studies of the history and philosophy of history research and history teaching, I will now try to explain whys and hows of all this. The literature tends to obsess about why so many US undergraduates can spend a semester, alone or together, abroad, and yet still remain so… mono-cultural (Gordon, 2010; Robbins, 2011). As a philosopher of sorts, I also draw on phenomenological philosophies of place and space, ones Graham Greene also explored in *The Quiet American* (1955).

8.3   Historical Note

Quoting Janet Bennett, I began this essay with her analogy. Studying and reading in Latin in the twelfth-century era of the *Didascalicon* was also a kind of study abroad. The analogy needs explanation. Higher level students way back then travelled 'abroad', even when staying 'home', and certainly when venturing far, because they used Latin. Readers and writers, almost all of whom were monks or canons, shunned their vernacular worlds; writing and literacy in their native language was mostly either rare or sinful, absent or irrelevant. Middle-schooled writers might learn some Latin (in the West) or Greek (in the East) 'at home', but not enough to lead worship or to staff a Lord's office. You had to take a longer journey in order to achieve that. You tonsured yourself, or you became a canon in a Cathedral school. All were far from 'home'.

If we ignore the gender bias in the quotation from the *Didascalicon* below—par for that age, and for most thereafter—the phrase that Janet Bennett quoted in English still goes to the heart of any consideration of 'study abroad'—not least the studies abroad of history. Here is the quotation again, together with the original Latin:

> The man who finds his homeland sweet is still a tender beginner; he to whom every soil is as his native one is already strong; but he is perfect to whom the whole world is a foreign land. / Delicatus ille est adhuc cui patria dulcis est, fortis autem cui omne solum patria est, perfectus vero cui mundus totus exilium est. (III.20)

From the Middle Ages, and persisting long after the Renaissance, any acquiring of advanced education necessitated travel: you crossed cultures, residing elsewhere. In the medieval West, Latin was mastered, or Greek in the Orthodox East; rarely both till the Renaissance and Reformation understood their common value, via a bridge forged by Arabic. Travel also necessitated acquiring further multi-lingual vernacular conversation and chancery skills, even if there was little thought to be worth reading in vernacular languages.

The author of the *Didascalicon*'s trans-national perspective on higher education is what is important for this study of history studies abroad. The author knew all novices love 'home', but he also knew they are only 'tender beginners (*delicatus*)'. This is the typical 'etic' stance so often discussed in contemporary anthropology: the common observer's from-the-outside looking-in view, with its usual concomitant: an 'us' tut-tutting 'them' (Headland, Pike, & Harris, 1990). The medieval author of the *Didascalicon* already knew about this. Ancient Greeks thought of Barbarians likewise. *Plus ça change, plus que c'est la même chose*: the more things change the more they stay the same.

Like every lecturer in a history study abroad subject, the author of the *Didascalicon* wanted his novitiates to leave 'home' behind. He wanted them to prove and improve themselves by following his alien agenda for reading and thinking, in his case by adapting and adopting Latinate and monastic elective affinities. The middling clause in the quotation evidences the author's view that student capacities to adapt to and to adopt another culture were signs of educational advance: *fortis autem cui omne solum patria est*. The *fortis autem* also resembles stage two in Milton Bennett's influential contemporary model of developmental steps in inter-cultural learning. Bennett suggests 'defence' ('acceptance') of cultural differences typically supersedes 'denial' of cultural difference ('minimization') (Bennett, 2012). This is also the typical 'emic' stance so often discussed in contemporary anthropology: a rarer, more detached from-the-inside looking-out view, with its unusual initial concomitant: an uncritical transfer of affinities from the old 'us' to a new 'them', with which 'we' can now identify more (Headland et al., 1990). Bennett (2012) now defines this as 'reversal' and 'adaptation'. The student supposedly goes 'native', becoming more Russian than a Russian.

The author of the *Didascalicon* was a renowned higher teacher in medieval Paris: Hugues (ca 1096–1141) of the Augustinian *Abbaye de St Victor*. His *Didascalicon* was also one of the first books printed by Gutenburg in 1474. Hugues' key message regarding higher education, whatever the era, was and is that it is always trans-national. 'Study abroad' has always been important. And 'going native', moreover, was and is seldom the final goal: *fortis autem cui omne solum patria est*. The ability to relativise everything, even oneself—though perhaps not, for Hugues, one's faith—is the final goal: *perfectus vero cui mundus totus exilium est*.

By choosing to quote Hugues at the outset, Janet Bennett had outcomes of study abroad in mind. She thought study abroad elicited interculturally competent 'global souls' (Bennett, 2008): *perfectus vero cui mundus totus exilium est*. If Hugues de St Victor's actual rationale for study abroad did differ from Janet Bennett's, the differences were never so much as to undermine Bennett's core point about the

'globalism' it engenders. Hugues actually had the appeal of the monastic calling in mind. Hugues thought students should be able to leave any and all worldly worlds: *perfectus vero cui mundus totus exilium.* While Bennett's 'global soul' rendition (via Taylor's translation, 1961) is accurate in spirit, Hugues was thinking of the renunciation of the realities of the secular world and the calling of his well-educated Augustinian canons to the *Scriptorium.*

The proponents of study abroad nowadays also point to similar transferable skills. They aver that once students have gone off to study abroad, say in Germany first up, they are also enabled later on to learn and to thrive in… Georgia, whether US or Caucasus. To adapt the anthropological argot, the student studying abroad will be alert to the emic (by dwelling) and to the etic (by decoding). Like many an advocate of study abroad today, Hugues de St Victor also viewed higher studies—sacred or secular—as redeeming souls. The advanced learner progressed in Hugues' St Victor Abbey School, a precursor of the famous University of Paris, from comprehension (*sensus*) to meaning (*sententia*), and from reading (*lectio*) to *meditatio* thence to *operatio* (FitzGerald, 2010; Harkins, 2009, pp. 275–76).

Excepting that women are now in the class, nothing much has changed since the twelfth century regarding trans-national perspectives on higher education. In Milton Bennett's model of developmental steps in international inter-cultural learning (i.e. study abroad), 'integration' of cultural difference typically supersedes 'adaptation' (Bennett, 2012, p. 110). Pedersen (1994) sets out a similar sequence for 'culture shock'. In the anthropological model of La Brack and Bathurst (2012, pp. 197, 208–10) 'culture shock' refers to capacities engendered by study abroad to conduct 'interaction analyses', rather than to tut-tut (i.e. the etic) about good/better/best. In the latter cases, the best usually starts with the student's under-explored preference for 'our ways'. But then they might suddenly reverse, after a significant 'foreign' experience, to an equally naïve preference for 'theirs', well before it becomes the mature and relativized 'interaction analysis' La Brack and Bathurst prefer. Like-wise, in the norms and values model for study abroad Michael Tarrant has set forth, 'integration' involves 'critical' global citizenship: the adopting of a 'justice focus', rather than mere 'altruism' of a naïve and self-absorbed volunteer (Knollenberg, McGehee, Boley, & Clemmens, 2014; Tarrant, 2010, quoting pp. 433, 436; Tarrant, Stoner, Borrie, Kyle, Moore, & Moore, 2011). So too, with Darla Deardorff (2006, 2008), citing Michael Byram (1997), both of whom were focussed on better practices in assessment of study abroad, the development was from the personal (i.e. from mere attitudes) to the interpersonal and interactive (i.e. to the ability to relativise yourself).

While all of these traits are recognisable as agendas of any study of history, not least the study of history while abroad, they still seem to under-sell the experience. This is because the pseudo-social-sciences of progress postulated in these models overlook the wonder of wonder in education, and not least in studies of history conducted abroad. Here too there are medieval connections, as a renowned medieval historian, Caroline Walker Bynum, explained:

> Wonder is the special characteristic of the historian… if we understand *admiratio* in its medieval sense, as cognitive, perspectival, non-appropriative, and deeply respectful of the specificity of the world…. We write the best history when the specificity, the awe-fulness,

of what our sources render up bowls us over with its complexity and its significance. Our research is better when we move only cautiously to understanding, when fear that we appropriate the 'Other' leads us not so much to writing about ourselves and our fears as to crafting our stories with attentive, wondering care (1997, pp. 24–25).

The study of history when conducted abroad then becomes an exercise in wonder studies or '*admiratio*'. The un-cloistered Otherness of the foreign world shatters the smug certitudes of campus and classroom, making the learning specific, but not necessarily specialised or even respectful. It also makes the learning phenomenal and experiential in ways that are also 'cognitive, perspectival, non-appropriative'. The novice abroad's experience of difference and 'non-appropriation' is key. The student can no longer imagine that a single (etic) line of argument can encompass a historical problem. Yet this is precisely what students often do, when tasked to write an essay 'at home' in an examination, in a classroom or on a campus.

This key message about 'wonder' still echoes. The importance of Hugues' point (and Bynum's elucidation) was anticipated by Erich Auerbach (1892–1957) who wrote *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature* (1946, 1953) in exile in Istanbul (Konuk 2010). Auerbach first published it in Switzerland only in 1946. The key point—Auerbach argued (1952, 1969); with Janet Bennett deferring without knowing (2008)—was that Hugues emphasised the worth of recognising that everyone has 'a point of departure' (Auerbach 1952, pp. 49–50; 1969, p. 18). Here then is the key value-add engendered by studies of history when conducted abroad. They oblige students to explore other 'points of departure (Auerbach's *Ansatzpunkte*)' (Auerbach, 1946, 1952, 1969). Study abroad always provokes 'thinking not as usual' (Yershova, De Jeagbere, & Mestenhauser, 2000).

The ways students learn on a study tour is best described as 'sticky'. This is a term invented by Malcom Gladwell (2000, ch. 3), and since adapted in the adult-&-community education literature (Moore, 2013, p. 17; Silberman, 2007, p. 4). The odd term 'stickiness' focuses on why only some things 'fix' attention, and why only some experiences 'transform', to adopt Jack Mezirow's term (1991). The science journalist, Malcolm Gladwell, for instance, summarised scores of studies of the global children's TV phenomenon, *Sesame Street*, correcting misconceptions about learning and 'stickiness'. Gladwell surprised by de-emphasising intellectual stimulation per se and instead emphasising learner feelings about whether they felt they might be able to understand:

> Kids don't watch when they are stimulated, and look away when they are bored. They watch when they understand and look away when they are confused (Gladwell, 2000, 102).

'Stickiness' and the link to perceptions either of confusion or of possible understanding is as important a consideration for adult learners engaged in a study tour as for infants sucking their thumb and watching *Sesame Street* on TV.

Study abroad also combines the active and the latent, the experiential and the contextual. Study abroad is a 'wandering process that compares learning with a journey not only to achieve immediate goals, but also to satisfy affective goals, such as curiosity, sensuality and adventure' (Beames, Higgins, & McNicol, 2012, pp. 8–9, 49–54; Miao & Harris, 2012, quoting p. 436). Students encounter on tour 'changes

in the salience of intercultural knowledge' (Czerwionka, Artamonova, & Barbosa, 2015, p. 93). But there is an important proviso: they must have scope to de-brief: to interrogate and to discuss their experiences and judgments (Deardorff, 2008, p. 45; Long et al., 2010; Mestenhauser, 2013; Moore, 2013, p. 35; Savicki 2012, pp. 232–33; Schrum, Kortecamp, Rosenfeld, Briscoe, & Steeves, 2016, p. 49; Selby, 2008; Silberman, 2007).

These observations can then be distilled into a range of best-practice recommendations. The leader-teacher assists the all-important interrogation and evaluation of experiences in two key ways. First, by his or her prior—often repeated and discussed—framing of a focus question to unify everything done on tour (Moore, 2013, pp. 2–3, 20–22; Ellinghaus, Spinks, Moore, Herrington, & Atherton, 2019, pp. 172–73). Second, by inviting students to apply Darla Deardorff's phased 'OSEE' repertoire of instructions to help them decode their own discoveries and experiences (Deardorff, 2000):

O – Observe what is happening.

S – State objectively what is happening.

E – Explore different explanations for what is happening.

E – Evaluate which explanation(s) is/are the most cogent.

Every day needs an extensive de-brief, even if it is over a dinner, a coffee or a beer. While abroad together, the academic-leader-instructor needs to oscillate between 'coach' and 'facilitator' roles, evincing rather less perhaps of the 'expert' and the 'evaluator' roles, trying always to privilege the students' experiences instead (Ellinghaus et al., 2019, pp. 173–75; Herrington, 2006, pp. 2–8; Moore, 2013, pp. 2–3, 33, 48–49; Passarelli & Kolb, 2012). Students studying abroad need to understand that their unusual combination of travel and study means they are engaged in an 'intentional process of transforming experience into knowledge' (Passarelli & Kolb, 2012, p. 158). Today's world now values this global cultural intelligence about 'points of departure' much more than did the illiterate everyday worlds that Hugues de St Victor left behind for the cloister—but our world only values these 'points of departure' if study tour participants can articulate how differences in cultures mean something and are important (Barbuto, Beenen, & Tran, 2015; Bretag & van der Veen, 2017; Grünzweig & Rinehart, 2013a, b; Herrington, 2006, p. 7; Mestenhauser, 2013; Williams, 2009).

Let a pioneer in the field, Josef Mestenhauser (1925–2015), explain. Mestenhauser drew on an influential anthropological treatise (Headland et al., 1990). A refugee from Czechoslovakia, Mestenhauser worked at the University of Minnesota managing study abroad:

what is international is not only a matter of the geography and culture of the other countries, but also of our own perceptual frames of reference. What one knows depends on the position from which one observes a country or culture: from the outside looking in (*etic*) or from the inside looking out (*emic*). The difficulty lies in the fact that the etic thinking is the entry point into another culture (2002, p. 182).

Of course, we need both etic and emic thinking. But the emic is always harder to grasp. You grasp it by suspending your own judgments and by making the effort to find the values of the people you are observing: their 'points of departure'.

Best practice in 'teaching' via study abroad is therefore especially attentive to the easy-to-overlook 'their' pronoun preceding the 'points of departure'. Students can certainly be helped to be readier to grasp these 'points of departure', if their instructors include the etic/emic distinction in orientation sessions prior to travel. But there's also more involved. Goldstein and Keller's brilliant study has explained how. They examined pre-conceptions of students contemplating study abroad. Tasked to anticipate challenges they might face, students routinely 'attribute[d] culture shock to differences in the external environment' (2015, p. 187): the foreign culture, language and surroundings. Their pronoun of choice for their worries was almost always the foreign third person: they, them, their. Save for students with prior extensive international experience, or with some experience of language learning, most students in Goldstein and Keller's study were not ready to interrogate the first person: I, me, mine. Unless their instructors helped them with pre-departure orientations, and with de-briefs while travelling, they might overlook 'internal affective or cognitive factors, such as poor stress management, identity confusion or prejudice' (2015, pp. 187, 192).

8.4 Educational Note

My observations of these student experiences and reactions also prompt me to reflect on a key tenet in contemporary approaches to education, no matter the level: Lev Semënovich Vygotsky's modelling of effective pedagogy as operating in a teacher-determined 'Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) or Зона Ближайшево Развития)' *vis-à-vis* the learner. I want to suggest that, sometimes, a more pertinent approach to education in the discipline of history in higher education, whenever it combines with study abroad, might also be fruitfully considered as responding to a 'Zone of *Im*proximal Development (ZPD)'. In this way, study abroad is like kindergarten. From a student perspective, it resembles un- or at least under-structured learning, but actually, like kindergarten, it enables rapid intellectual development because the learner escapes the cocoon of the 'home' classroom. The learning is more 'transformative' (Mezirow, 1991) while the students are 'away', because it envelops more aspects of the learner's being. Students become 'aware of how and why our assumptions have come to constrain the way we perceive, understand and feel about our world; changing these structures of habitual expectation to make a more inclusive, discriminating and integrating perspective; and finally making choices or otherwise acting upon these new understandings (Mezirow, 1991, p. 167).

What is Vygotsky's 'Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)'? Vygotsky's educational notion was not about student abilities, nor did it model learning as akin to accumulating. Although he had adverted to it in many different addresses and publications in the USSR before, Vygotsky's first renowned mention of the ZPD came in 1934

in Sect. 4.4 of a posthumously published compendium, first appearing in English as *Thought and Language* in 1962 (Vygotsky, 1962; Chaiklin, 2003, p. 40). Vygotsky's ZPD was situational and cultural, as much as it was a teacher's pedagogical working principle:

> The difference between [ages] 12 and 8, or between 9 and 8, is what we call a zone of proximal development. It is the difference between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving, and the level of potential development as determined by problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86).

Prompted by the educational cultural psychologist Michael Cole's influential first reading of Vygotsky—a fruit of his encounter with the deceased Vygotsky's friend and colleague, the neuropsychologist, Aleksandr Romanovich Luria (1902–77) in Moscow in the early 1960 s—the ZPD was reduced to a pedagogical model focussed on short-term student learning outcomes as 'scaffolded' by perceptive teachers (Smagorinsky, 2018). In fact, Vygotsky's ZPD was the entire and reachable realm of cognition (Moll, 2013), not just tomorrow's test. As a socialist and revolutionary supporting Bolshevism, Vygotsky opposed every cultural and sociological barrier to access and success in education. Like many other Jews born in the 'Pale of Settlement'—Vygotsky was born in Orsha and raised in Gomel' in Belarus—Vygotsky embraced the new freedoms afforded by the October Revolution. Jews like Vygotsky from the Pale—once part of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, but since 1791 either in the Russian or in the Habsburg Empires—had little or no access to higher education. These heritages of oppression were one reason why the Yiddish-&-Russian adept Vygotsky emphasised social contexts both constraining and mediating (i.e. internally and externally, via meanings and signs) people's possibilities in education (Yasnitsky 2011).

By focussing on the ZPD, Vygotsky alerted teachers to rely less on 'coverage' (Calder, 2006), that is, on what they had supposedly 'taught'. Vygotsky wanted teachers to focus instead on what the students were doing (Biggs, 2012), looking for tell-tale evidence in student work of any new qualitative capacity to alter or amend ways they had once defined a situation: typically, whether the students either would or could re-represent the thing-to-hand, or change a prior pattern of action in relation to the thing-to-hand (Wertsch, 1984, pp. 7–18). At the most basic level, for instance: do they now eat broccoli? Do the deaf or blind now grasp how pedestrian signals signify? At the more advanced levels, such as combining of travel and study in higher education with a trip to Russia: do they know when they have encountered new ways of balancing the interests of the collective and the individual, and can they discuss and evaluate the same? The ZPD could still be about the scaffolding of next-lesson 'instruction (обучение)', but it was never content with what a student could already do right now. For Vygotsky, the ZPD was always about what students should and could be able to do, either with some teacher guidance, or via collaboration with their peers (Jones, 2011a, b; Vygotsky, 1978, pp. 86–87). Considered categorically, however, the difference was also more about cats and snakes, not mammals and reptiles—to adapt a metaphor of Vygotsky's. The metaphor meant, for Vygotsky, that

'cats and snakes' real learning was far from synonymous with schooling, because learning in real-life contexts, like travel, is always less science-y, less book-bound and less systematic (i.e. the typical 'mammals and reptiles' framing of a classroom 'at home'). In real-world learning, of which study abroad is an instance, topics are far less likely to emerge and to resolve themselves in a test or in an essay's pointed single line of argument, as they tend to do in textbooks and classrooms 'at home'. Nothing 'live'—let alone nothing 'abroad'— presents as a discrete categorical object of study (Moll, 2013, pp. 34–35).

Study abroad is not like the classroom and textbook, lab and essay categories of 'reptiles and mammals'. It encounters 'cats and snakes'. Then it invites students to derive meanings, situationally, specifically and inductively. The academic-leader-instructor cannot lecture that much on much, ahead of experience, as there is too much else to see, to do and to ponder. There is still a zone in which the students develop and in which the students encounter the alien land. But there is also an important difference in higher education (and, I suspect, in kindergarten), the zone can also be *im*proximal.

This chapter on study abroad now suggests another means of students' insertion (i.e. not immersion) 'abroad' into a stimulating environment in which they still feel safe, but which is alien to them nonetheless. The journey and the context come to resemble a child in play, and the tertiary students, like the ones at kinder, also start to become 'a head taller' than themselves. Edification and enchantment have their uses, as has long been evident from the aristocratic history of 'The Grand Tour', and from the longer bourgeois history and commercial success of *Blue Guides*, *Lonely Planets* and *Guides Rocard* and *Michelin.*

This journey of insertion and discovery is not simply 'Positivism', as Vande Berg, Paige, and Lou (2012, p. 10) and Bennett (2012, p. 70) aver. Discovery learning is real. It is prompted by insertion into a new place (Grünewald, 2003; Wurdinger & Carson, 2010, Chap. 6). We need to remember how most children in kindergarten, and even many primary- and sometimes even junior-secondary students, seldom demand relevance from their history teachers; they love castles, costumes, *The Guinness Book of Records*, witches and dinosaurs (Egan, 1997, p. 6, 1999, pp. 37, 144). Each responds to a new site, whether it's 'home corner' or the sandpit, whether it's Hanoi or Moscow. All of these zones can be all at once utterly proximal and *im*proximal as the child at kinder and the study tour participant grow heads wider and taller than usual. Vygotsky's way of thinking about teaching (pedagogy; обучение) as occupying a 'zone' between 'what is' and 'what could' or 'what might be', and between 'guidance' and 'collaboration', still applies, however. It is just that as the students grow ever younger and ever older the proximities and possibilities can expand wonderfully and 'wander-fully'. Tertiary studies of history, if undertaken abroad, both resemble kindergarten—when they open students to a world of experiential learning in encouraging students to wander and wonder—and do not resemble kindergarten—when they establish a zone of *im*proximal development.

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Chapter 9
Positioning: Making Use of Post-qualitative Research Practices

Adele Nye and Jennifer Clark

> If students are to become aware of their own historicity in order to understand the human condition, they should, among other things, be able to position themselves as historical beings in the context of narratives that extend beyond the story of their own lives.
>
> Van Straaten, Wilshut and Oostdam, 'Making history relevant to students by connecting past, present and future', (2016).

Abstract Generally speaking, when studying history, students read for information from a position of perceived ignorance. As teachers, we try to instil in them the need to interrogate secondary sources for argument and primary sources for context. We rarely talk with them about the equally important need to understand their own position as historians and what they, as unique individuals, bring to the history construction process. By introducing students to post-qualitative research practices, it is possible to help them recognise the expansive and dynamic nature of the history discipline, the important shaping role of the historian and the way in which the past and the present are intimately linked in embodied historical experiences.

9.1 Prologue

As teachers of history, we regularly structure opportunities for students to learn, understand and practise the historian's craft. We give lectures that offer a broad-brush approach to the topic content including interpretation of the arguments found in the historiography. In seminars and tutorials we discuss issues and approaches to specific elements of the topic in more depth. We set secondary and primary readings for analysis and discussion. We expect students to write essays based on

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a series of technical and cognitive challenges—finding and interpreting sources, evaluating evidence, constructing an argument, systematically referencing. But we hardly ever ask students to think themselves into the role of the historian and to unpack and consciously engage with how their embodied subjectivities and agency are produced through the discursive and material relations of their environment. We rarely construct opportunities for history making outside of strictly traditional boundaries. Nor do we deconstruct with students the methodologies we teach in order to understand their ontological and epistemological foundations (St Pierre, 2014, p. 12). What opportunities might arise for students when we offer multiple and different ways of engaging with historical sources, materials and places? Students might study history differently if we consider the generative nature of wandering and the potential of serendipitous encounters in the historical space.

As innovation swells the discipline of history to respond to contemporary intellectual challenges, we need to consider more seriously how to involve students in thinking above and beyond the topic content to the greater potential of the discipline, because ultimately, that is where new history takes its finest and most revealing shape. The study of approaches to history may begin with analysing the contribution of Herodotus, but it should also move far beyond that. Students need guidance and encouragement to unpack their own lives and their embodied experience of historical inquiry to understand how they might operate as historians who are individuals, and therefore how they might push the boundaries of such a dynamic discipline.

Openness to the innovation that comes with diversity contemporises the historical processes of the profession. Increasingly the best history leaves us with a profound sense that we have been to a new place and seen the past from a very different viewpoint. How do we encourage students to be open-minded and innovative about how to approach the discipline? How can we help students to experiment and explore what history is and how it can be constructed differently? How can we encourage students to see their own embodied experience as intrinsically valuable and a unique gateway into historical interpretation? How can we lift what is unconscious into the conscious and thereby construct the process of historical thinking and historical discovery in a very personal way? In some respects these ideas are enriched by Sophie Tamas who explains that: 'In dominant linear Western ways of thinking, sight equals progress equals knowledge and buried things acquire value once they're unearthed. The absent and unseen are framed in terms of erasure, loss, and repression' but there is also 'fallow time, when places are inaccessible or hidden, gathering value that will be released in the future' (2016, p. 122). The aim here is to ask students to identify what might lie in their own fallow time, the currently unseen and unheard, their unrevealed selves, and to consider what value is there for them.

9.2 Theoretical Underpinnings

In this chapter, we suggest that one way to encourage student self-awareness of the embodied nature of historical practice is to employ an interdisciplinary pedagogical approach drawing from a range of methods including nomadic inquiry, affect, affective assemblages and flows, and diffractive pedagogies.

9.2.1 Nomadic Inquiry

Nomadic inquiry asks us to acknowledge that we are positioned within the research process and to welcome the possibility of doing things differently which may lay outside the institutional or disciplinary norms. Nomadic inquiry challenges the notion of objectivity and frees us to explore using all of the senses, feelings and ideas at our disposal. Nomadic inquiry as research practice is initially drawn from the work of Deleuze and Guattari (1987). Numerous researchers, including Richardson (1994) St Pierre (1997a, b) Somerville (2008) and Braidotti (2012), have effectively employed the concept for research in education. It is often regarded as a generative approach that offers alternative pathways for research. Nomadic inquiry rethinks structural formats within the academy and allows for a more serendipitous exploratory approach. It is indicative of slow and deep thinking, wandering, wondering and writing as research practice. In the classroom, this approach can relieve the pressure to deduce the 'right' answer and encourage thinking outside the box. A focus on allowing multiple representations of the self as learner or indeed consideration of the possibilities of the posthuman are both encouraged. The eclectic nature of the nomadic approach, wandering between and among materialities, is liberating for students and researchers. It recognises value in exploring and problematising territorialisation and de-territorialisation as a means for thinking and writing (St Pierre, 1997a). These Deleuzian and Guattarian concepts of perpetual movement between territories, spaces of knowing and representation, reflect a sense of connectedness, entanglement and becoming (1987, p. 508).

Nomadic inquiry can push and unsettle the boundaries of the history discipline and, more importantly, disrupt the idea of the historian and their historical practice. Critical reflection on one's practice requires confidence and for students in particular, permission, to question their perceptions of doing history, and speaking and writing in non-traditional ways. Given encouragement and affirmation to undertake a nomadic approach to their research, we suggest opens up opportunities and creative possibilities that may lead to more innovative history.

For Richardson and St Pierre, nomadic research focused on writing and imagining as a form of intellectual discovery and led them into spaces that might not ever have been reached using traditional methods (Richardson & St Pierre, 2018). Such inquiry is experimental—'risky, creative, surprising and remarkable'—and creates new spaces for recognition and revelation outside traditional boundaries and expected

patterns (St Pierre, 2018 p. 604). It ignores lineal progression and privileges the aside, the afterthought, and the thought that seeps in uninvited.

Somerville also drew from a nomadic perspective as she developed her framework of postmodern emergence highlighting 'the irrational, messy and embodied process of becoming-other-to-one's-self in research' (2008, p. 209). For new historians this personal reflective work is invaluable, but it is not necessarily easy nor a direct process. The willingness to wonder, write and embrace the possibilities for learning in 'the chaotic place of unknowing' is, therefore, essential (Nakamura cited in Somerville, 2008, p. 2010). The emergent and permission-giving approach devised by Somerville is especially useful in pedagogy.

Braidotti (2012) suggests nomadic theory challenges the embedded structural hierarchies and allows for difference. This emerges through thinking differently, becoming differently and destabilising spatial and temporal traditions (Braidotti, 2012, pp. 30–31). We are reminded by Braidotti that nomadic theory and practice is, therefore, inherently political and, in turn, a process or statement of activism. Braidotti (2012, p. 271) considers the emergent narratives of this work to be 'figurations' or cartographies of the present by which the political and ethical structures and their impact are exposed and analysed. Braidotti (2012, p. 31) states that: 'A nomadic, nonlinear philosophy of time as a zigzagging line of internally fractured coalitions of dynamic subjects-in-becoming supports a very creative reading of memory and its close relationship to the imagination'.

In this chapter, we reflect on the heavily value-laden positionality of our work. In this very personal process, we hope to show how students employing nomadic narrative might consider the human possibilities of historicism. One of the key ideas we want students to explore is affect and the affective flows that might inhabit their historical research practice. While such concepts are not traditional tools for historical study, we propose that they offer opportunities for students of history to pursue innovative pathways to historical analysis.

9.2.2   Affect (Flows, Assemblages and Pedagogies)

How might we capture and analyse experiences of historical research within multiple landscapes? It became clear to us that the concepts of affect, affective flows and assemblages offered both the tools and the opportunity for experimental and experiential scholarly practice. In this chapter, we have drawn from the work on affect by Deleuze and Guattari (1987) and then considered how others have applied the concept in their work including Barnett (2008), Gregg and Seigworth (2010), Hickey-Moody (2013) and Wolfe (2017). According to Barnett (2008, p. 188):

> Affect is presented as an ontological layer of embodied existence, delimited by reference to the purely formal relationship of the capacity *to be affected* and *to affect*. … affect is doubly located: in the relational in-between of fields of interaction; and layered below the level of minded, intentional consciousness.

Affect also refers to the 'prepersonal intensities' (Massumi, 1987, p. vxii) that emerge between the human and non-human. Affect alludes to a sense of interaction and becoming (Ott, 2017, p. 9). It takes into account our aesthetic reaction to the world, and our bodily responses to 'sounds, lights, smells, the atmospheres of places and people' and feelings (Hickey-Moody, 2013, p. 80).

Affective flows are transitional, not easily articulated but perhaps representative of a promise of understanding or things to come. Affective flows might be thought of as shimmers, vibrations or sensations that evoke connection. Massumi wrote of a 'bustling zone of indistinction' (cited in Siegworth & Gregg, p. 13). Hickey-Moody (2013, p. 80) similarly alludes to the notion of affect as linked with confusion, change and movement that occurs within, against and around the body. Ringrose reminds us that 'assemblages and bodies also need to be evaluated according to their affective capacities' (2011, p. 601). We might consider what marks or scars are left by such reverberations and how might these enrich our analysis?

According to Hickey-Moody (2013, p. 94) 'An assemblage is a contextual arrangement in which heterogeneous times, spaces, bodies and modes of operation are connected'. Feely (2020, p. 179) suggests 'An assemblage should not be understood as a fixed entity because it is always in a process of becoming' and Mazzei and Jackson argue that assemblage is that which creates a territory and the potential for de-territorialisation (2016, p. 1094). Territorialisation and re-territorialisation are particularly useful for us as researchers (and for students) as a category for analysis of practice, ethics and scholarship. To consider how assemblages are co-constructed by researchers and others and, then, how they might be located within the theoretical and epistemological frameworks of the history discipline highlights the becoming processes of the emergent historian and their ontological/scholarly position. Of particular interest is the generative value of the slippages between the threshold moments. Within these slippages are opportunities for the learner to consider the crossing of boundaries, of erasures or ruptures they encounter in the analysis process.

The concept of affective assemblages allows us to think about the ways in which the affective flows are connected, dissolved and reconnected through the research process (Ringrose, 2011, 2013). Wolfe (2017, p. 64) explores 'the discursive and the material implications of affective shame' within a school-girl assemblage. Her research participants, who viewed filmic evidence of themselves, 'dialogically remade the past, present and future. Re/membering was altered and multiple truths emerged as context changed'. In another example, Gannon, Gottschall, and Camden Pratt (2013) explored the capacity of affective assemblages in the form of a collective biography. They suggest the affective assemblage is an ongoing process where energies surge and wane. Tracking the affective assemblages of bodies, sites, text and scholarship allowed us to explore ontological and positional dilemmas of doing history differently.

9.2.3   Diffraction

In seeking an overarching term for our pedagogical approach, we found resonance in the notion of diffraction. Diffraction or diffractive analysis was developed by Haraway (1997, 2004) and Barad (2007). Diffraction is a reaction to an encounter. Barad (2007) explains the term in relation to waves overlapping, crashing and encountering each other thus creating a disturbance. It might be regarded as a pedagogical tool that has the potential to disrupt traditional interpretivist ways of researching as well as designed to be generative and open to new creative possibilities (Charteris and Smardon, 2016; Davies, 2014; Hickey-Moody, Palmer and Sayers, 2016; Hill, 2017; Lenz Taguchi, 2012; Mazzei, 2014). Hillevi Lenz Taguchi explains diffraction 'as an embodied engagement with the materiality of research data' (2012, p. 265). Smartt Gullion suggests that the process speaks back to the purported distance that occurs in the practice of thematic coding and recognises the blending of researcher, theory and data. She writes (2018, p. 104):

> Our time is thus spent not identifying causal factors in a linear model, but rather with the identifications of becomings in assemblages, the hanging together of affects and agencies and, the foldings.

The idea that analysis and research could be ongoing, fluid and makes space for emergent multiplicities resonated with us. Like Hill, we regard this work 'moving within and beyond reflective practice' (2012, p. 3). We see opportunity for surprise, serendipitous exploration and critical reflection energised by dispositions of willingness and openness.

As we consider the history student in contentious times, we see not just the generative potential of this approach but its timeliness. Braidotti has called for urgent and critical scholarly work as we enter what she has described as the posthuman predicament; the convergence of posthumanism and post-anthropocentrism (2019, pp. 8–9). Braidotti suggests (2019, p.11) in this context that we must ask of ourselves and our work the most difficult and the simplest questions—what type of human are we? What type of researchers are we? What type of analysis and dissemination do we deploy? These are the ethical dimensions of our work and our position as researchers. These are also the questions we want our students to be thinking about from the outset.

9.3   Performance

To demonstrate the potential of post-qualitative theories for teaching history we undertook a trial research project on European foundling homes and, at the same time, consciously reflected on that process through a pedagogical lens.

The giving up of children, willingly or not, has a long and tortured history. What Kertzer (1994, p. 453) refers to as 'institutionalised abandonment' was an attempt to save children while at the same time providing anonymity for the mother who could deposit a baby in a 'baby wheel' without incrimination or rebuke. Kertzer (1991, p. 5)

refers to such abandonment as occurring in 'huge numbers' throughout Europe in the nineteenth century, although it did not begin then, nor has it ended. Contemporary, automatically heated, technologically responsive newly commissioned baby hatches are appearing in hospital walls to address a modern problem (Baby Boxes, 2012).

By mid-nineteenth century, Kertzer posits that some 35,000 children were abandoned each year in Italy alone with some 1,200 homes to deal with them (1991, p. 5). In Florence, a hospital was built dedicated solely to the receipt of foundlings. The Ospedale degli Innocenti accepted its first baby in 1445. In 1465, it took 200 children a year, mostly girls. By 1484 that figure had risen to over 1000. By 1873, 2,318 children were accepted into a system of care and management. Only half were illegitimate, the others the victims of acute poverty and desperation (Filipponi, Mazzocchi & Ludovici, 2016, pp. 21, 35). In England, the London Foundling Hospital, formally known as 'The Hospital for the Education and Maintenance of Exposed and Deserted Young Children', was granted Royal Charter in 1739 and took in its first children in 1741. Initially restricting its intake to approximately 20 children per year, by order of Parliament after 1756 the Hospital could not turn a child away. Thousands were accepted from all over England, not just London. Two-thirds of the children died. Between 1741 and 1760, only 152 children were reclaimed of the 16, 282 who were deposited (Styles, 2010, pp. 9–14). In that same period, parents left tokens with 5000 children. The tokens remain on display in the Foundling Museum with a similar collection on view in Florence at the Museo degli Innocenti.

Tokens range from trinkets, pieces of cloth, buttons, disfigured coins or snippets of embroidery. When children were received, their details were recorded and wrapped together with their token. This was the official documentation of the admission process, but the token also acted as a point of recognition if someone ever returned to claim the child. Sometimes, the token was halved to make identification easier. To reclaim a child before 1764 from the London Foundling Hospital, the petitioner had to promise to reimburse the hospital the costs of childcare even before they learned if the child was dead or alive. That policy was eventually reversed (Bright & Clark, 2014, p. 10).

Although the foundling homes in Florence and London now have substantial museums attached to them, which gives them a high cultural profile and substantial physical presence, other homes, or remnants of them, are scattered across Europe representing a complex historical story of both rampant child abandonment and reactive childcare. Neither necessarily produced a happy ending.

The type of historical knowledge outlined above is not the same as that re-produced in Figure 9.1 in Sect. 9.4. The topic is the same but the outcomes are very different. The process of freely responding to the historical material, the wandering across formal disciplinary boundaries and epistemological territories was a liberating experience. It gave us permission to think about the history we research and the history we write in very different ways. The practice of embodied reaction and seeing thought as an embodied expression was a revelation. Most importantly, the assemblage has helped to surface us as historians and to help us understand our positionality in regard to this topic specifically, and to history writing more generally.

9.4   The Methodology

The method we used is broken down into six phases. The following description of the method includes examples from our own process of exploring sites of child abandonment in Europe. Suggestions as to how this method might be translated into a teaching situation are included in parentheses.

1. *Identify an entry point into the past*. We became interested in the topic of foundling homes when we discovered that children were deposited along with an individualised token that would be used as an identifier when and if the parent reclaimed the child. These tokens exist in two excellent museum collections in the Foundling Hospital at Coram Fields, London and at the Museo degli Innocenti in Florence. We also visited a number of other sites where the remnants of foundling homes were identifiable. We allowed ourselves to respond to the objects and the sites in an unrestrained way that facilitated connection. (Ask students to work in pairs and look for and select an object that resonates with them as an entry point into an historical topic. Ideally, for this exercise, the object should be easily accessible and tangible, for example, something from family history or in a museum collection. The ultimate aim would be for students to find a token, which might be an object of significance, that somehow resonates with them.)

2. *Explore the origin and purpose of the object*. We were initially interested in the foundling tokens and began to talk about them as indicative of a range of cultural, social, political and economic conditions. We examined many of the tokens in some detail to identify various branches that such a study might take us. (Ask students to talk about their object with their partner, looking closely at it, thinking about the object in context, and allowing themselves to respond to the object in a free-flowing reflective way. Students should not be constrained at this point but feel free to engage with the object on an emotional level. This process might also include a visit to a site, for example, an outdoor location or an archive. Students would be asked to unpack the token using a combination of the aforementioned post-qualitative theories. All the while, students will be asked to develop strong reflective skills to unpack what they, as individuals bring to the history, and what they, as a pair of researchers add to the history because of their conversations together. In this way, students will be guided through a process of scholarship that ultimately reveals to them that they are peculiarly positioned to do history and that their positioning is a significant part of the process of the history they write, the subjects they choose to study, the sources they select and the way they present their work. Practically speaking students would be invited to wander, perhaps physically as well as intellectually, as they look for gateways into historical scholarship via the many tokens or marks that they see in the present.)

3. *Immediately journal those thoughts and responses and connections to capture the affective flow and the immediacy of the response*. When we visited a foundling home or viewed the token collections, we immediately wrote down

our responses and translated our physical and emotional experiences into words. We did this quickly and without revision. The process was unhindered and unstifled. The data collection process (in the field) began with fast and intense writing blurring between process and outcome and using writing as method (Richardson & St Pierre, 2018). The intention was to mobilise the affective flows we encountered and reconfigure, through writing, our personal entanglements that occurred on research sites. We undertook an intentional process of assemblage; producing our raw journals, transforming them into poems or thought tracks and categorising them to facilitate analysis. These literate assemblages became our scholarly outcomes but we were also conscious of the multiple assemblages that occurred through long train conversations grappling with concepts, data, images, philosophies and other travellers' intrusions as we moved from historic site to site. There were material assemblages that rattled in our suitcase, mementos, souvenirs, stray objects in place and out of place. The rich entanglement of theory, objects, bodies, encounters and voices energised our writing and thinking. (Ask students to journal their responses to the object they chose or the places that were associated with the object that they might have visited as part of the exercise and to do that freely and without revision.)

4. *Print the journals, and then literally cut them into snippets of individual thoughts*. We took each of our site visit journals, printed them, and cut out each thought as a separate idea. (Ask students to print their journals and cut them into individual thought snippets.)
5. *Reconstruct the thoughts into paper curtains* (Charteris, Nye, & Jones, 2017, p. 58). We reconstructed our individual journals to create a blended response that identified both what we shared in our responses and what was different. (Ask students to reconstruct their thoughts so that their individual responses are represented but at the same time they can see a uniquely blended response).
6. *Analyse the new history we have created*. We recognised in the assemblage a particular history of the foundling homes that was reflective, experiential, emotional and strongly positioned. This was a different history. It was a history through affect. (Ask students to look at what they have created and to see themselves represented and positioned within it. Ask students to recognise their positionality as a determinant factor in the construction of this new history and to consider, more broadly, how positionality might then influence how they might press the boundaries of historical writing as a consequence of this realisation.)

In the figure below, we have recorded our thought curtains from visits to two sites. The first is Museo degli Innocenti in Florence which contains a large exhibition of the tokens left with the abandoned children. The second is in Berlin where a Foundling Home was repurposed. Our immediate responses to the site visits taken from the journaling exercise and the cutting apart are in the left column. In the column on the right, we have analysed those responses, creating a layering that is at one and the same time embodied and intellectualised. The figure can be read vertically, horizontally or in both directions at once: lineal engagement is not necessarily a prescription for effective understanding. As Maria Tumarkin (2018, p. 81) tells us: 'Time as a straight

line is a monstrosity . . . A child comes into a world that is like a tar pit, a tar pit of prehistoric ferocity, the kind that could suck a Columbian mammoth in. In this world a little creature still sorting its hind legs from its front legs does not stand a chance. Cannot stand. Time is not a river pushing people forward as they lunge at floating branches… But an oily, seeping substance. Black and sticky.'

Figure 9.1

Assemblage	*Analysis of the assemblage*
'affective assemblage' …'cutting together apart' (Kofoed & Ringrose, 2012; Barad 2014). Florence I have been here before and know what is further down the hall. Everything in the Innocenti was a distraction until I found the tokens. Slow scholarship to notice the details. What if I miss the important bits? Weren't we going to stand still? Losing any semblance of a pattern. Didn't we map out a process?	As historians we come to any topic with our 'carrier bag' of knowledge (Haraway, 2004, p.127). In this case a previous visit prepared us. It is useful to unpack what we know and don't know when coming to sources and looking for evidence. Taking time to look and think reveals layers, levels and hidden details but slow scholarship is difficult because once you are in place the affective flows can rupture planned approaches. In fact, this is the messiness that comes in research practice, but which often reveals the most. Openness to messiness means openness to new opportunities (Somerville, 2007, 2008). There are advantages to being responsive, even performative. The assemblage is always fluid, never fixed (Feely, 2020). The management of process was also reflected in our reliance on maps to find our way, physically and intellectually. Our maps were ever-present, in every context, used, or unused, we always had a map as a starting point and perhaps for security to make sure we were on the right track, to create at least the semblance of order: 'a refrain is like a song that creates the beginnings of order in chaos' - '[a]nybody, possessing a refrain, can carry it with them as protection as that body "wanders out on lines of drift"'(Jackson, 2016, pp. 183-4).
The token room was dimly lit, a semi-circular bank of drawers waiting to be opened - beautifully crafted - which one to choose?	As historians we are entangled in the lighting and the dimming, the pushing and the pulling, the opening and the closing of human and non-human historical sources. Every time we make a choice to

Pulling on the handle the little door came down easily revealing a sliding box. Pull it out and a light comes on inside. Some lights stay on. As you scan the drawers you are lured to the ones already lit. But what of the unlit? Will they miss out? Each box revealed a little token, an identity tag deposited with the child, resting on bright blue cloth. Each drawer held a disembodied child, the tokened child. I couldn't help but think they were like little drawers in a morgue. Life is precarious, you always end up in a drawer of sorts – luck of the draw.	shine a light on an aspect of the past, other aspects remain unlit. With each movement of the hand we are enacting reconfiguration of the patterns of the assemblage before us. In our minds we try to make sense of what we see by reconfiguring how we engage with the materials. These are the choices we make. Someone else might choose differently. That will make their story different.
How could I choose one? Each name and date says I was important, loved, cared for, abandoned - all of those things and none of them at the same time. Saturnina arrived with half a button stitched to a little red patch decorated with cross stitches. Looked at that one for a long time. I am a needleworker. Did her mother make that for her or cut it off her own dress?	There are times when there are turning points, or points of rupture, where we move from not having enough information, to finding some. In this case the information on the drawers was unsatisfactory – it was contradictory. There was a great distance between the researcher and the material. Then Saturnina emerges from the list as a point of identification. She becomes the human entry point into what was becoming just a sea of faceless names and dates. Saturnina began to take shape as I made a connection with her mother. I, too, am a needleworker. This hole cut in my dress that I worry and enlarge with fingering is where the piece was taken by them at the Foundlings as token when I left my precious in their charge. Whereby that cloth shall be the means, they say, for me to recognise myself to her when the world's workings and men's schemes shall turn to mine and her favour. Though the nights grow frost and my fortunes tip. By then, I fear, the space of my worrying will surely not fit to the piece they kept, and wrote beside *Alice*. (Curtis, 2012, p. 43).

Clicking through I see the complexities. And then the sound of a child's cry. Everywhere I looked I saw the ghosts of children. They feel like the now. Will they be abandoned again? It feels important. And who am I to read their stories?	Through diffraction, the past seeps into the present. Maria Tumarkin says it '[i]nfiltrates more like, imbues, infuses, it is invisible this past, it is gas not solid, an odourless, colourless chemical agent bouncing around in the lungs, crackling in the spaces between us, in the air the culture breathes in, out' (2019, p.128). The affective assemblage leads us to consider the ethical responsibilities of the historian and the importance of the work we do. The affective flows of the subtle soundscape of the museum and our own position as mothers, meant we reacted. Charteris (2014) would refer to this as an 'epistemological shudder' as one responds to the multiplicity of our layered positions and intellectual work.
Berlin It was cold, bleak and grey. We went in search of the site of the first foundling home established in 1697. Found it, well, where it was. Not there now. Just a rather blank modern building. The home had been moved in 1850 to Rummelsburger See and then the building was destroyed in World War II so there would not be much to see.	The process began with traditional cartographies, historic maps and seeking signage. We looked for the location of Berlin's first foundling home. In this instance we know the building was gone and we were looking for traces of the past, tangible or less than tangible, shades of the past.
I have an 1850s map we are now using. I am sure it is near here. I recognise it, yes, this is the park. The houses must be further down. There it is – a big signboard –with some old photographs and information about the foundling home. It is around here somewhere. This way? No, nothing there. That way? Must be. Look up. Lift the gaze. Look in front of me. Right in front of me. Exactly in front of me. They are light cream and look like they have been built in the 1980s. They look too new. Neat. Flats by the look. Some new verandahs. But there, match the windows, match the trims. Two of them right in front of me. Pretty sure this is the place.	The second site is marked by a plaque; in the first instance it was misread. The buildings are then noted and photographed. The evidence we were searching for was lost in plain sight for quite a while, unrecognisable in its context. We had to wait for recognition of what we actually had in front of us. We couldn't recognise it until we looked in a different direction and until we asked the right questions. What made sense for us, the Deleuzian refrain, were the maps we used. In this case an 1850s map and Google maps. In other cases, museum guide maps, old postcards that were maps of the past. We always turned to the map for security – spatial cartographies were our refrain, and the link to our scholarly becoming.

Walked down to Rummelsburger See. The scene opened out over the lake, dark, heavy, cold. Walking along beside the lake there were children everywhere. Toddlers in prams. Toddlers in funny carts, three abreast and looking at each other like children in a big wheel barrow, like toys pushed around for sport. The woman pushing them was laughing, playing with them. They all had little jersey beanies.	Walking and wondering as a research methodology has been utilised in multiple disciplines, connecting aesthetics, and ethnography (Springgay, 2011; Springgay and Truman, 2019; Blaise, Rooney & Pollitt, 2019). This approach seems like a useful extension of our historical endeavour in our exploration of place, affective flows, memory and the unexpected.
There had been a prison here as well. Does that make two prisons, one for criminals and one for children. Looking down into the complex of buildings, I see the tower of the prison still there, still poking up into the skyline, unmistakable. The tower now blends into the housing estate. Is that what time does, blends bits of the past, but they still stick out like this tower sticks out. Will it ever go away? Should it?	We were in search of the foundling home from the 19th century and yet all around us were children. The past and the present were so visually and aurally intertwined. Further down the path the territories alter suddenly with the unforeseen presence of a prison site. The affective flows, with the power of a Deleuzian 'crowbar', irrevocably rupture the moment (Massumi, 1987, xv). Diffractive shards splinter the assemblage.
There are three boards rising from the park with three faces on them, each telling an experience of being picked up by the Stasi and taken to Rummelsburg prison. Put in cells for hours, interrogated, frightened, worried, normal people, their faces look out from the signboards. They tell their stories and so the housing estate with the red tower will never go away. I will take away their stories and my eye will take away the red tower. I will take it home with me. The beautiful lake behind me, the red tower in front of me and the foundling home down the road.	There is now no escape from the embedded narratives of the oral histories, the unflinching statistics, and material presence of the old prison observation tower. Seepage of the past has become a torrent. Researcher bodies become marked, deflated and in a state of bewilderment and shock. The affective flows rage between the human and non-human, the present and the past.
We are crushed. The stories are horrendous. We went in search of a 1697 site that ended in a Nazi prison. Then 1945 and it was all over. No, then the Stasi used it.	Slow scholarship becomes essential. There is no moving through these histories quickly. Pained reading, photographing, wandering, and eventually wondering.

A small boat is tied up nearby with a tent over the top – sign – home sweet home.	
We walked back the way we came. Back for another look at the two buildings of the foundling home.	The return to the original houses is a slow paced walk. The weight of difficult and unexpected histories needs to be processed.
I looked to the ground. What is it? Have we dropped something? Is something lost? Is something found that was lost?	The multiple territorialisation and re-territorialisation mark this journey. The seepages of the past prison felt profound and encompassing.
Lying in the path, half embedded was half a child's toy, a little animal, a black and white tiger, headless, missing something, lost part of itself, and lost the other half of itself. I wonder if a child has dropped it. I stopped to pick it up.	The unexpected discovery of the child's toy tilts the narrative and excursion again. The incredulity of the material placement acts as a shudder. The final stages of the walk return to an idyllic discourse in a soundscape marked by children's laughter.
I look up and realised we are right in front of the foundling home. In the middle of the path, in front of the home, I find a half toy, a half token. My token fits in the hand, like a gem, a gift of richness from an unknown child. Find me, take me home. With no head and split in half I put it in my bag. What a wonderful place.	As researchers, mothers and a grandmother this sound returns us to the modern children's play space. Sounds and bodies, swings, parents and carers confirm the present holds court again. Yet the prison, the faces of the victims who contributed their stories now leave irrevocable traces: 'Won't say I'm transfixed – too baroque – but I am something. I am rearranged' (Tumarkin, 2018, p.124).

9.5 Pedagogical Application

In this chapter, we suggest that students can be prepared for a useful exercise in contemporary historical thinking by being introduced to the theories and practices of nomadic inquiry, diffractive pedagogy, affective assemblages and affective flows. This approach is a pedagogical tool to encourage students to think about the practice of historicism. It provides a critical lens of the historian in place and the intra-active engagement of the historian and the objects/sites of history. By mapping the affective flows, the student problematises the sources they are observing and using. It helps to resist the easy taken-for-granted approach to history. It raises awareness of ontology and the links with epistemology. It is a tool that can be used to teach explicitly something we imagine all students will somehow come to understand, and that they contribute to the history they write by the choices they make and the insights they bring. Sometimes this is not so easily attained by students who look for absolutes and don't readily grasp the humanness of the historical process.

The aim of this pedagogical approach is to highlight the importance of under-standing the role of the historian, to encourage an affinity with interdisciplinarity as

the cutting edge of historical scholarship and a boldness to reveal oneself in one's scholarship. This pedagogy highlights creativity, profiles the historian as much as the content, and reinforces traditional ideas around source selection, evidence identification and the importance of questioning. In this case, the process is more important than the outcome itself. The ultimate aim is for students to see themselves in the history they write and to identify the positive benefits of that for their professional development and for the broader historical corpus. They begin this process by using an embodied approach to liberate their thinking about what history is. The mind and the body work in tandem; the new historian can utilise both to understand the past (Hickey-Moody, 2013, p. 82).

9.6 Epilogue

Maria Tumarkin, in her book *Axiomatic*, created unique histories by slicing and rejoining Australian society. The merged result created an unusually embodied history that is in many ways profoundly disturbing because it breaks so many discipline boundaries and barriers. It is difficult to discern what *Axiomatic* is exactly. Is it creative writing? Is it cultural history? Is it commentary? Is it personal reflection? The difficulty of not easily being able to describe this work forces consideration and reconsideration of it, to cut it apart and blend it together, to analyse and synthesise, to name and rename and still fall short of knowing. We always want to label something to understand it but sometimes the most effective work defies such effort. It is liberating to see a history so freed from constraints and yet at the same time so resonant of everything that we value in good history, the ability to make us think, to take us somewhere new and to challenge our understanding of subject matter and the disciplines that contain it. Writing about the past can be and perhaps should be that challenging. 'The past does not move through the present like a pointed finger or a shadowy confessor in a long cloak', says Tumarkin. 'The past is not *told you so.* Not *this is how it all began.* It is a knock on the door in the middle of the night. You open the door and no one is there' (2018, p. 124).

In this chapter, we have described and practised a method of research that utilises a variety of post-qualitative techniques that open ourselves fearlessly to the contemporary potential of history. In particular, nomadic inquiry, affect (flows and assemblages) and diffraction. We have explored how, by using these methods, we might achieve two things. The first is a different sort of history of a topic, in this case a more personalised, blended, Tumarkin-like history of foundling hospitals and their response to child abandonment in Europe. The second is to consider and document through that process how a history pedagogy based on these methods and principles might assist students to think more deeply about themselves as embodied historians. Such a pedagogy would encourage students to develop a greater freedom to explore new ways of doing history, to look more generously on cross-disciplinary opportunities and to understand the fundamental, though often unrecognised, importance

of positioning for an historian. We hope that the history classroom using this pedagogy will be challenging but also liberating and that such a pedagogy will nurture young historians willing to take risks with the discipline, because therein lies the opportunities for innovation.

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Part III
What to Teach for the Contemporary World

Chapter 10
Gender and Intersectionality

Anna Maguire

Abstract This chapter critically explores my experiences as a teacher of sexuality and gender, in the context of modern Britain (both in subject matter and academic location), and the opportunities and challenges of teaching gender history amidst global feminist movements and LGBTQIA + activism. How do we reflect critically on previous feminist waves when many of our students are the centre of feminisms' fourth-wave and other activism? What does a commitment to intersectional feminism look like in a teaching environment? Starting from my own positionality, as a young, white, cisgender, precariously employed woman, this chapter considers the teaching (and researching) of histories of feminisms, gender and sexuality in classrooms predominantly made up of explicitly feminist students. The chapter moves through considerations alongside practical examples of negotiating silences in classroom and archives; dynamics of authority, privilege, inequality and performativity in the classroom; learning the process of creating historical arguments and applying broad frameworks of structural analysis to micro-histories and case studies; and the project of diversifying and anti-racism in the curriculum and classroom, within and beyond a gender history framework. The chapter concludes with a reflection upon the lived experiences of students, which are navigated within this teaching and the contribution of these to pastoral support and emotional labour.

10.1 Introduction

Although teaching courses on sexuality and gender in modern British history for both undergraduate and postgraduate taught students has been the bulk of my teaching load, I feel very much at the start of the ongoing project of learning to teach well, to teach inclusively and to develop my pedagogical practice. The precarious nature of the contemporary world is something which I am living; though more secure than many, this teaching experience has taken place either as a graduate teaching assistant during and after my doctorate or as part of an initial ten month teaching fellowship which

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was subsequently extended to two years in total. In my teaching and my research, I am struggling with socially and politically significant issues: migration and global entanglements; violence and war; inequality and inequity based on poverty, class, religion, race, disability, gender and sexuality (Maguire, 2018, 2019). What follows here is a reflection on these ongoing struggles and questions in relation to teaching gender history: as an object of historical study, as a methodology of doing history and a pedagogical practice.

It is important to establish that my teaching of gender history is rooted in my feminism and an ongoing pedagogical commitment to inclusive and accessible teaching. My own feminism began during my undergraduate education (2009–12) and developed as part of the 'fourth-wave': dominated by digital media, where I lurked and read—both social networks including Facebook groups and Twitter and online feminist publications in the UK and the USA—alongside conversations with friends and discussion events (Munro, 2013). At the same time as studying histories of gender and sexuality in Modern Britain, writing an undergraduate dissertation on Edwardian actresses and sex work, my feminism was woken by rape culture, sexual violence and #everydaysexism. As I listened and read and learnt about Black feminist thought, intersectionality, ableism, trans-inclusive feminism and more, my historical thought and research was also developing. By the time I started to teach in 2015, my feminist and historical thought were firmly intertwined. I am now teaching histories of gender and sexuality in a post-#MeToo world, where feminism and social media have drawn out into the open that which was silenced and whispered. While Time may not be Up in academic circles, we are working within the milieu of discourses and experiences of sexual violence, toxic masculinity and an enlivened awareness and understanding of the structures of power relations which made this possible (Ahmed, 2016; Ford, 2018).

The roots of women's history as a discipline emerged as part of the Women's Liberation Movement: a radical genre, which highlighted women's experience, oppression and the absence of historical voice. My own experience and that of many of my colleagues is imbricated in the same process in which our discipline had begun; a desire within our historical work to practise our activism, now within an understanding of gender history rather than women's history. June Purvis noted in her review of the field in 2018 and the development of women's history to gender history that, 'in the UK women's history has become less feminist in this hard-hitting sense, less concerned with the sexual dynamics of power between women and men' (Purvis, 2018, p. 95). I disagree. The expansion of the field, recent (re)insistences on the work needed to make these not just White Women or White Feminism history courses, critical approaches to masculinity, the growth of LGBTQIA + history, and the still uneven gender equality in UK History have a lot to say not only to the academy but to contemporary feminism. The courses I teach are about sexuality and gender in modern Britain, rather than solely women in Modern British History, though the lives and experiences of women, their activism, feminist or otherwise, and the impact of patriarchal (as well as class and racial) structures fills most of our weeks. Despite the activist roots and ongoing work of our discipline, struggles remain: within the neo-liberal university model, within the marketization of education and the UK's

fee regime, within the casualization of the teaching workforce. As the 2018 Royal Historical Society Reports on UK History established, structural barriers to equality persist, not only in relation to gender but also to race and ethnicity. I am part of the vast majority of white historians working and teaching in the UK, striving to be an ally to my colleagues and students of colour, but inevitably getting things wrong. My presence in the classroom and the institution forms another brick in the wall of whiteness in UK history departments: as Ahmed writes, 'whiteness can be experienced as wall: something solid, a body with mass that stops you from getting through' (Ahmed, 2017b, p. 146). 93.7% of UK History staff are white according to the RHS report (Royal Historical Society, 2018a). 'Addressing and rectifying these systemic problems' of lack of ethnic diversity for staff and students and for histories within the curriculum 'are essential for the health of the discipline of university-based History' (Royal Historical Society, 2018a, p. 7). Within the RHS Gender Equality report were findings that gender-based discrimination and abusive behaviour was widely reported, and that discrimination is disproportionately experienced at early-career stage and that overwork is gendered in its effects on historians (Royal Historical Society, 2018b, pp. 7–10). The teaching of gender and intersectionality is not then only concerned with the exchange of knowledge and the fostering of an inclusive and collaborative classroom but the larger structural inequities and violences within the discipline of history and the university more widely. Significant and simultaneous investment in the processes of complaint, of union activism and engaging with but remaining critical of agendas of diversity and inclusion means our teaching is more than effective: it is active, resistant and part of a struggle for justice (Ahmed, 2017a; Woods & Harris, 2018). We cannot simply hold non-performative commitments; we have to work to bring these to effect (Ahmed, 2018, p. 727).

This chapter critically explores my experiences as a teacher of sexuality and gender, in the context of modern Britain (both in subject matter and academic location), and the opportunities and challenges of teaching gender history in an era of global feminist movements and LGBTQIA+ activism. These courses, inherited from teachers who have added their own designs and inflection, are rooted in feminism and the women's movement, from pioneering writers like Wollstonecraft, Wheeler and Thompson to suffrage, housewives' associations, campaigns for women's ordination, fights for abortion rights, women on strike, for equal pay and other rights, to second-wave feminism, nuclear disarmament, the Gay Liberation movement, alliances against political oppression (including Lesbians and Gays Support the Miners) and anti-racist movements. How do we reflect critically on previous feminist waves when many of our students are the centre of feminisms' fourth-wave? What does a commitment to intersectional feminism look like in a teaching environment? Starting from my own positionality, as a young, white, cisgender, precariously employed female scholar working at a Russell Group university, this chapter considers the teaching of histories of women and men, feminisms, gender and sexuality in classrooms which have predominantly been female, ethnically mixed and frequently self-identified and vocally feminist. The chapter moves through considerations alongside practical examples of negotiating silences in classroom and archives; dynamics of authority, privilege, inequality and performativity in the classroom;

learning the process of creating historical arguments and applying broad frameworks of structural analysis to diverse micro-histories and case studies; and the project of diversifying the curriculum within and beyond a gender history framework. The chapter concludes with a reflection upon the impact on teaching gender history on pastoral support and emotional labour.

10.2 Feminist Thought, Pedagogical Practice and the Contemporary World

My thought and practice is based on collaboration, exchange and continual learning, with students, friends and colleagues. Modes of teaching gender history and retaining its feminist heart were part of my own learning and through co-teaching and designing modules with inspiring colleagues, being a member of feminist networks and reading groups, making friends in academic departments and having students help me to practice how I inhabit these in the classroom is fundamental. The collective endeavour of reworking reading lists with colleagues, of sharing teaching strategies, successes and failures with my office mates, strategizing modes of resistance for committee meetings or discussing many of the readings cited in this piece with fellow feminist teachers has been a joy of spending two years in a department. This activity feels like a way of bringing theory to practice and many of the examples and ideas I discuss here are rooted in the conversations and solidarities formed while working. This collaboration is something I seek to bring to the gender history classroom as one mode of transmitting my feminist thought to my pedagogical practice. It is important to recognise the capital that students bring with them to the classroom—their own personal experiences, ideas and identities—which are fundamental to recognise within our practice. Their own engagement with gender and sexuality, as gendered beings, having gendered experiences or in more active and activist forms acts as a foundation to this collaboration.

As is usual at the start of a new course or with a new teaching group, students are asked why they are taking modules which are focused on gender in modern Britain. In these classes, personal experiences are frequently evoked: a lack of women's history or gender history in other modules or at school, their own engagement with feminist activity, or wanting to understand further the lives and experiences of 'ordinary' women and men in the past, including their own family histories. What I have also asked students, and established by a show of hands (including my own), is whether they identify as feminists. The proportion seems to be increasing year-on-year, with almost all students identifying as such in the last academic year. Students' feminism ranges from those who are actively involved within and without the university in intersectional feminist societies, LGBTQIA + activism, 'decolonising' initiatives or as student reps (in various capacities) to those engaged digitally and discursively. The acknowledgement of the political engagement within our classroom is necessary, exciting and dynamic. Ono-George (2019, p. 503) has importantly insisted on the

classroom and its politics: 'we can choose to pretend that what we do in the classroom is apolitical or we can acknowledge the role we have as educators in engaging our students'. This has important consequences for thinking about our role as teachers; in the anonymous student feedback at the end of one of my modules, an undergraduate noted that they now felt 'less prejudiced' towards 'LGBT' people than they had at the start of the course. History teaching enacts change.

Intersectionality—how multiple social identities interact to shape the experiences of, and structure the oppression of, individuals and groups—is both essential to my feminist thought and a framework for my teaching (Crenshaw, 1989). I want to bring this concept to bear on the content of my courses and on my 'experiences with power and marginalisation in the classroom' (Mohajeri, Rodriguez, & Schneider, 2019, p. 170). Though established by the legal scholar and black feminist Kimberlé Crenshaw in the late 1980s, building on a long history of social justice movements and black feminist writing and scholarship—Angela Davis, Audre Lorde, the Combahee River Collective, Sojourner Truth—and taken up in academic circles, it has been in the last five or six years where the concept has really resurfaced as part of the fourth-wave's discourse and beyond. As a result, students enter the classroom with some understanding of what intersectionality means and how they might be 'intersectional' in their thought, writing and practice. This is sometimes but not necessarily based on a critical reading of Crenshaw but is accompanied by an eagerness and enthusiasm to apply this to their historical studies. In a 2017 interview, Crenshaw herself commented upon the prolific dissemination of the term, it's 'hashtaggable' use: 'the other issue is that intersectionality can get used as a blanket term to mean, "Well, it's complicated." Sometimes, "It's complicated" is an excuse not to do anything' (Crenshaw, 2017). As well as halting our activism, what might this do to our understanding of history? Gender history is already complicated—what do we ask our students to do with this complexity?

In my classroom, we begin with unpicking structural intersectionality as a mode of feminist thought. Within these modules, this means examining gender and sexualities in modern Britain and how these categories of analysis relate to others: age, class, race and ethnicity, nationality, region and religion. I aim to inspire in students an approach that 'accentuates the mobilities of intersecting differentials', attending to social power, political economies, ideologies, materiality and practice (Davis, 2010, p. 143). So in class, we deconstruct the construction and performativity of masculinity and femininity in opposition in a binary but we also explore how working class women had a different experience of single motherhood than upper-class women; how women of colour had a different experience within the Women's Liberation Movement than white women; generational differences of queer masculinity and why it was different to be a lesbian in London than in rural Scotland. Throughout the course, the idea of Britishness is questioned and destabilised: who gets to be British, to demonstrate citizenship and how is this gendered?

One of the most immediate ways of exposing these intersections and interrogating conceptual categories has been by using archival resources relating to the course's key themes. Archival material also helps to shift the power dynamics of the course— allowing the sources to speak for themselves, enabling students to see themselves

as historians actively engaged in creating new historical knowledge through their arguments and analysis, and allowing them to practise collaborative learning within and without the classroom setting. Some of this involves physically accessing materials in field trips to the Wellcome Collection or the Women's Library at LSE, a privilege of our London base. Other times, this means using digital repositories: the Elizabeth Roberts oral history collection of working-class history, the oral histories of the Sisterhood and After project, the digitised Spare Rib archive, or those collected by projects such as Striking Women or Our Migration Story. To take the Wellcome Collection as an example, undergraduate students go to the archive to read materials related to Marie Stopes, the pioneering author and scientist (with links to eugenics), including letters she received in the 1920s and 1930s asking for advice relating to birth control and sex. Students noted that their physical contact with archival sources made their studies feel more real, and they were especially surprised by the diversity of letters that Stopes received, including men writing to ask for help in improving their wives' sexual pleasure. By seeing where people wrote from for advice, from Woking to Cairo, their work and the economic situations they described, the various family sizes they discussed or health reasons given to explain why they sought Stopes' advice and technology for birth control, the diverse market for this knowledge became enlivened.

The surprise and complexity of the archive offers a brilliant experience: seeing students connect with and realise the agency of diverse historical actors. What comes next is returning to the historical structures in which these experiences took place. While I am committed to the significance of the micro-history or life-writing, especially within gender history as a way of 'listening to everything, including things we did not expect or even necessarily want to find' as Julia Laite has described, being able to tie these experiences to big questions and themes is an important skill for our students to learn (Laite, 2015). Being able to take individual experiences and thinking about the structures of oppression, whether patriarchal, racial or economic, is critical for students not only in their historical study but in looking to the future. The #MeToo movement was rooted in the personal traumas of women, shared to expose and fight back against systems of violence and silencing. More than just solidarity, the complexities of sexual harassment and violence in the workplace or at home were connected to enact change. For the Stopes' collection, students begin to map these individual letters onto the economics of the 1920s and 30s, the post-First World War context, the growth of welfare feminism and how these married couples and families might contribute or challenge our understandings and chronologies of the rise in companionate ideals (Brooke, 2011; Cohen, 1993; Langhamer, 2013).

These bigger questions are extended to thinking about our contemporary society and where it fits within these structures and narratives. In modules where the end date is 2000—when many of our undergraduate students were born—there is still something of a temporal jump to get to the present day but they nonetheless are eager to connect their historical study to the contemporary, not least in inspiring and motivating their commitments to enacting change. Gillette's advert, 'We Believe: The Best Men Can Be', released in January 2019, was perfect timing for a dedicated seminar on histories of masculinity and fatherhood, with discussions ranging from

toxic masculinity to gender performativity, linking examples from the film with historical work on men pushing prams, and helped us think about how gender activism intersects with capitalism (King, 2013). Sexual violence case studies from Victorian and Edwardian England are read alongside second-wave writing and news items on contemporary trials where teenage children have been framed as sexual aggressors or 'predators' complicit in their own abuse (Bates, 2016). In the week on gender and education, the RHS reports are listed in the further reading and students are encouraged to reflect on the higher education system they learn within. Some of the strongest student responses have been in relation to equal pay when they realise the length of the campaign or when they reflect on the 'double burden' they hope to escape from but recognise in the lives of mothers and grandmothers. Frustration and fury are consistent emotions in the classroom; continuities like these challenge the progress of the past and require students to critically examine their present.

It's something of a cliché to observe that the feminist thought and practice of teachers of gender and sexuality in history and beyond crosses a number of different perspectives, not least in how our students respond to these new ideas. But there is a danger in the points of division, especially within the transphobic and trans-exclusionary elements of 'gender-critical' feminists (Hines, 2019). I am writing this the day after a small but vocal selection of British academics wrote to the *Times*, expressing 'concern' about the relationships between Stonewall and UK universities and how Stonewall's definition of transphobia 'leaves academics unable to question the contested notion of "gender identity" without fear of sanction' (Stock et al., 2019). When teaching a module which thinks about how gender has been historicised, which includes an investigation of those who, in the past, might be identified as 'trans', we must have an explicitly stated commitment to a classroom which is inclusive, supportive and safe for trans and non-binary individuals (Open Letter, 2019). Part of this means teaching using the voices and writers of transgender historians and academics, such as Stephen Whittle and Susan Stryker, and showing students how to analyse people in the past as trans, whether or not they use the label for themselves, based on their movement from one gender to another. It's also to encourage students to think of trans more abstractly as an analytic with which to study change, 'to ask new questions about gender categories and other forms of human difference' (Agarwal, 2018; Hines, 2007). Questioning and uncertainty remains a crucial part of teaching histories of gender and sexuality, promoting care, attention and best practice, around labels and naming, for example (Skidmore, 2017). Our students are well practised in engaging with new language forms and understanding the need for these to shift over time, through digital media or indeed in their transition to reading academic histories and theories. Their flexibility remains something from which we as teachers can learn.

10.3   Classroom Dynamics

A pedagogical priority for any module content is fostering an inclusive classroom environment, which enables participation from all learners, rather than necessarily a safe space, which may not be possible for everyone within the contemporary classroom. Teaching topics around sexuality and gender history often means students are negotiating topics which are relevant to their identities and personal experience. As such, clear ground rules are established at the beginning of these courses in consultation with the students, including respect of others' experience and the expertise that gives them to speak to particular topics. We also talk about the skills required to develop a participatory classroom where everyone is an active member of the cohort practising reading, listening, asking appropriate questions, and other modes of communication. Students are asked to suggest activities that they have enjoyed or disliked in the past so we can all recognise the diverse modes of learning and teaching we bring with us.

Learning from my colleagues' approaches, I call upon the idea of the classroom as a 'brave space', where the emphasis is on students' trialling and testing ideas and participating in rigorous academic investigation within an environment which is respectful and supportive. In such a space, conflict may be a 'pedagogical opportunity to challenge normalized forms of behaviour and thinking' when it takes place within the expectations of classroom behaviour (Wagner, 2005). When two students disputed the representative nature of the film *Suffragette* (2015) which we'd watched as part of our week on gender and public history, letting the heated debate continue (with my support and interjections) made for an uncomfortable end to the seminar but was a crucial pedagogical intervention. This also requires our own bravery as teachers, to be open to critique, to try and to fail. My own failures, including being called out by a student for not including any women of colour in my week on women and work, are embarrassing and uncomfortable memories but a necessary part of my practice. I see these failures as part of efforts to 'dismantle knowledge hierarchies', as part of a 'broader and deeper disruption and recasting of gender and education discourses and research practices' (Manion & Shah, 2019).

This disruption can be problematic: as a young woman, my authority in the classroom has occasionally been undermined to the detriment of teaching and learning. Though I mostly teach other younger women, some students, usually older white male students who 'remember' the periods of history we discuss, have made teaching frustrating and upsetting in what they say, seeking to dismiss women's agency or the significance of feminist activity, and how they say it, interrupting me, directly questioning my knowledge or sources. Katy Sian's important work (2019) has demonstrated the challenges faced by 'racially marked academics'—interruption, challenge, humiliation, testing—and 'the emotional and psychological strains of teaching within British universities' (p. 11). If your authority is already in question, there is a tension in dismantling hierarchies and defining who has the agency to do so.

Silence is a common feature of the history seminar room and the history archive. Asking who gets to speak, when they speak and for whom remains a continued

part of learning about gender in the past. As a result, we mobilise a wide range of source material to fill in the gap and talk about the modes in which these voices have been captured. We use social surveys including Maud Pember Reeves' *Round About A Pound A Week* (1913), Hannah Gavron's *Captive Wife* (1966) or Ruth Glass' *Newcomers* (1960) and we ask questions about measuring, motivation and the creation of narratives. We consult criminal and police records taken from the National Archives for weeks on homosexuality or prostitution (Iglikowski, 2017). It might be fictional sources in novels or film: from *Piccadilly* (1929) to *Flame in the Streets* (1961), *Love on the Dole* (1933) to *The 'L' Shaped Room* (1960). Frequently, we turn to oral histories which we listen to together in class and analyse. The shared roots of gender history and oral history within 'history from below' continue to make it one of the most significant aspects of our research and teaching, investing the experiences of 'ordinary people' with the significance they are warranted and continuing to offer narratives which sit outside the state or the official or the institutional (McDowell, 2016; Szreter & Fisher, 2010). Where silences and absences remain, they are addressed head on to think about the imbalances and ambiguities of history writing, dynamics of archiving and collecting in the past and ways of further recovering marginalised experiences.

In the classroom, sometimes silence is requisite: students need to sit with their thoughts and feelings and process the new content or methodologies we have been discussing. Sometimes silence is required from those who are privileged in some way and goes hand in hand with listening, to allow the space to hear and amplify the voices of others. Silence can be used as a mode of resistance: a sign of disengagement with a topic which is not inclusive or triggering; or refusal to have to, once again, explain one's own positionality and experience for the education or others (Wagner, 2005, p. 265). Sometimes students are silent because they haven't done the reading, they don't understand the reading or they don't feel confident about the contributions they can make. Discerning between these silences are needed, sometimes asking for silence from some and providing alternative lines of communication for others. Sometimes this comes through emails and office hours. Often it requires direct intervention: 'Who would like to ask some questions before we start?' 'Who hasn't had a chance to share yet?' 'Who would like to add to that?' 'Can you be our note-taker for this part?' For the most part, classes are run in ways to promote active participation from all, to build up the trust required that allows mistakes to be made and gently to ask some students to reflect on the space they are taking up. I try to model this for students by re-stating at the start of lectures my positionality in relation to specific topics and noting which voices I am choosing to amplify. We engage in different sorts of 'doing history' in classes to challenge established patterns of discussion and promote different forms of learning. Archival field trips make a real difference here, as students create knowledge rather than depend on what they have read ahead of time. We've experimented with reading templates to promote discussion, asked students to prepare written work ahead of time, placed whiteboards and markers around the seminar room for collaborative written contributions, used post-it notes to collect thoughts or think-pair-share activities, so everyone gets a chance to have their say in whichever format they feel comfortable.

The explicit politics of the classroom create their own dynamics and performativity that need to be managed. For those students active in contemporary feminist politics, the challenge can be ensuring sustained historical attention to the feminism of the past, rather than an immediate dismissal of thinkers being 'too second-wave' or insufficiently intersectional. Performing 'woke-ness' or allyship for the validation of peers or teachers can lead to the imposition of a baseline demand of 'good feminism' before actors in the past can even be considered. While making links to the contemporary world is significant in challenging teleological thinking and understanding change over time, the anchoring of our discipline within its historical past is a particular challenge in this type of module, as we move ever closer to the present. As a teacher, this necessitates reminding students to look at the structures and contexts these actors are working within, not to excuse or understand but to explain, for example, why free abortion on demand was a priority for white women involved in second-wave-feminism but why this priority alienated Black feminists. Responses include adapting the curriculum and ensuring multiple entry points into historical topics, which means that no single school of thought is taken as the established mode through which to approach feminism in the past. Ensuring the centrality of Black feminist thought, for example through the work of Southall Black Sisters or the Organisation of Women of African and Asian Descent, requires students to challenge their cultural assumptions and privilege, which for white students especially means engaging with what Davis (2010, p. 139) has called a 'pedagogy of unmirroring'. Listening to the testimony of previous activists through the *Sisterhood and After* project enabled students to understand the shifting landscape of priorities, preoccupations and activism and trace the origins of their contemporary modes of organising.

I am concerned that this performativity can be silencing or intimidating in discussion or writing: a number of students in preparation for revision have said that they are intentionally avoiding returning to some topics because they are worried about 'getting it wrong' within the pressurised setting of the exam hall. That same concern about gaps between knowledge and comfort with the languages of contemporary feminism has been expressed in confidences, in relation to sexuality or trans experience or racialised histories, all coming back to a fundamental student desire to express their thoughts about experiences which aren't their own but not to cause harm or offence in doing so if they get that language wrong. To be clear, none of these students are attempting to express views which are racist, sexist, homophobic or transphobic: topics which should not be up for debate within the contemporary classroom. Instead what they experience is apprehension and discomfort. Discomfort is, I believe, a fundamental pedagogical tool. Students should find that trying new modes of thinking is something with which they have to grapple. But understanding this engagement as a process, as a form of learning, as an exercise in vulnerability and failure is in itself hard and dependent on degrees of trust and the building of proactive community and solidarity within the classroom. As b hooks (1989, p. 51) has noted:

> The feminist classroom…is and should be a place where there is a sense of struggle, where there is visible acknowledgement of the union of theory and practice, where we work together as teachers and students to overcome the estrangement and alienation that have become so much the norm in the contemporary university.

In a time when we are all being measured in different ways—students through testing, teachers through evaluations—how far do the matrices of success prohibit failure? What if you feel like you cannot yet speak the language of the feminist classroom? While the aim of the feminist classroom may be to disband or remove hierarchies (temporarily or permanently), to overcome estrangement and alienation, we remain teachers and assessors who have a power to weld in the marks we give, the exams we set and the language we speak. Karlsson (2015, p. 660) reminds us: 'The classroom is not separate from the world outside; it is not a safe egalitarian space even if we wish that it were'. We need to allow students this space to reflect on their own privilege, to make mistakes, to apologise, to listen and learn from our peers, while developing codes for how we call them in, ensuring that we as teachers are the ones taking on the burden of education rather than letting this fall onto the students who are vulnerable to the perhaps un-intentional but still painful micro-aggression or discriminatory or hate-filled remark.

10.4   'Decolonizing' and 'Diversity' for Histories of Sexuality and Gender

How we teach histories of gender and sexuality is as important as the content of the scholarship we teach. With intersectionality at the heart of my approach, it is my responsibility as a white woman to ensure my engagement with the role of race in histories of gender and sexuality and more broadly within British higher education, drawing on and amplifying the writings and expertise of women of colour, and using these to critique my own approaches. In the UK, the moves towards 'decolonizing', rather than or as well as 'diversifying', the academy and the curriculum have become increasingly discussed by academics and students alike. What this means ranges in its application from de-centring the West to challenging the structural inequalities and institutional racism of British higher education. Mohanty (2003, pp. 518–521) has identified three pedagogical models of 'internationalizing' the women's studies curriculum in a US context: the feminist-as-tourist model, the feminist-as-explorer model and the feminist solidarity or comparative feminist studies model. It is the latter that Mohanty (2003, p. 518) identifies as the most useful pedagogical strategy: 'it is through this model that we can put into practice the idea of "common differences" as the basis for deeper solidarity across differences and unequal power relations'. In reading Mohanty's work (2003, p. 519), I have realised how the feminist-as-tourist model with its 'add and stir method' is still so often seen to be the solution to reading lists and curriculum lacking in diversity. In my own courses, this has in the past been my response to weeks that were dominated by white authors or white

experience often without disaggregating the experiences of Black and Asian women, for example, homogenously collapsing all women into categories 'of colour' with little attention to the intersectionality I claimed to practice. Adding more Indigenous writers, writers from the Global South, Black writers and writers of colour to our reading lists is important as are readings about the experiences of men and women of colour but if a singular addition as one topic within a module or one reading each week this can create a stereotype, a stagnant category of difference. It can leave students of colour vulnerable to seeing themselves within the historicised past only as contradiction to or confirmation of the white norm.

In a UK Higher Education context, this approach has been critiqued by Ono-George and others and was acknowledged to be insufficient by the RHS Report on Race and Ethnicity: 'the content and diversity of the curriculum do not map directly onto issues of BME equality'; adding black and brown authors to reading lists does not stop students and members of staff experiencing or enacting racism within the university (Ono-George, 2019, p. 502). Instead, as Ono-George (2018, p. 503) makes clear, an anti-racist pedagogy is necessary, one which addresses 'the absence of race and inequality in course curricula…(and) is equally aimed at incorporating anti-racist teaching practice in the classroom and challenging racism in our wider communities'. Through critical thinking, collaboration, the active participation of all students rather than speaking solely to the teacher, striving to remove existing power hierarchies, and to place classroom learning with the wider context of student lives, an anti-racist pedagogy should go hand-in-hand with the objectives of any pedagogy claiming to be feminist and intersectional in its practice (Ono-George, 2019, p. 504). To get to Mohanty's (2003, p. 522) model of feminist solidarity, emphasizing relations of 'mutuality, co-responsibility, and common interests', we not only shift our curricula to ensure that when students read about the suffrage movement in Britain, for example, they also read about the Indian suffrage movement and its transnational connections. This encourages students to think about activism across boundaries so that our classroom becomes a mutual, participatory space. In our feminist reading group, we have discussed what this might look like in practice—how do we escape the power dynamics of the classroom when we are required to set and mark assessments for one? Is this easier when you are a temporary member of staff, less visibly caught up within the institution's power? If so, does this potentially add to the perceived positivity of casualization by those who would like to see it expanded? Colleagues' models of inclusive classrooms where students are empowered to create and lead their learning, from flipped seminars to participatory assessment, through online journals and note-taking to collaborative role-plays, have acted as modes through which our pedagogy might better accompany the content and curricula we design (Higher Education Academy, n.d.).

10.5   Pastoral Care and Emotional Labour

The work of creating an inclusive classroom for teaching histories of sexuality and gender is extensive, whether in creating and preparing new forms of learning or reading beyond our immediate frameworks and transforming reading lists. It may also necessitate additional work beyond the classroom. Teaching gender history raises issues that frequently have a connection to the personal experience of our students: sexual identity, family life, sexual violence, and abortion. The introductory classes on these modules face this head on and directly. I state that everyone in the classroom will be engaging with the module from their own contexts and unique standpoints and that students should think ahead about topics that might be charged or triggering. Classes include content warnings around readings, which make reference to rape, for example, not to stop students from reading but to allow them to make the necessary preparations for doing so. We also discuss the nature of the course material in our first seminars. We frequently read sources—oral histories, diaries, letters, memoirs— where we use an individual's personal experience to make connections with broader historical narratives and arguments. This personal testimony is, therefore, open to discussion and debate within the classroom and can resonate emotionally with individual students in ways they or I do not expect, around education or family life, for example. It can lead to students' own personal experiences entering the classroom discourse which changes the dynamics of the classroom, perhaps less 'academic' but ultimately valuing the importance of the micro, the local, the everyday, the remembered, and developing solidarities and understandings of position. This less formal dynamic may also be a result of my age and gender: sometimes I feel uncomfortable about how much students may share of themselves in seminar settings—does that come from me or from them? Is this just my resistance to moving from outside the 'traditional' classroom to a more feminist one? Am I trying to secure my own white 'exceptionality'?

This continues beyond the classroom, acting as a base for conversation and exchange. Emotional labour and care work have been gendered within the academy. Teaching gender and sexuality may make you a natural fit for gender equality or diversity and inclusion work and committees, which may well be the case. As Ahmed (2018, p. 724) forcefully states, 'diversity work is work'. There is not the space here to think about this in the depth which others have, but sufficient to say that when we think about the work of the gender history classroom we must think too about the administrative and service work which runs alongside it. Inclusivity brokers approachability. Attempting to transform the institution into something more inclusive and equal marks you as someone invested in change. Students view you as a confidant or an ally and a necessary emotional support: it is in your classrooms where they are feeling and vocalising their experiences, sometimes in unexpected ways. In my case, as a younger female teacher, I may present as more immediately identifiable with their experience and less like the imagined face of the institution, though this shared demographic status does not automatically equip me with better skills or success. This experience is multiplied for colleagues who are people of colour or are

known or assumed to be part of the LGBTQIA + community, whose presence may serve to make the classroom or university a less alienating place but who also have to labour to negotiate the racial and gendered power dynamics within teaching environments (Griffin & Reddick, 2011). My experience is a privilege—it is gratifying and fulfilling to be offered someone's trust and to offer support in return—but it also places strain on your own physical, mental and emotional resources, especially when it comes alongside formal mentoring and diversity work. Lee and Maynard (2019, p. 107) report that:

> Faculty members of colour and/or female faculty members may both be pressured by colleagues or department chairs to perform this work (even when it is personally gratifying to them) and yet also reap negative consequences such as loss of time for research and emotional exhaustion.

This is work that matters but which is not always counted. The institutional boundaries of signposting to dedicated support networks only protect teachers so far; this is not a case where we need more 'confidence' to safeguard ourselves but for this work to be properly supported and valued. Further, we may not want to work within the frameworks of support offered by the organisation: 'working "in house" would not transform the master's house' (Ahmed, 2018, p. 745). There are risks here; over commitment to student support, whether voluntary or not; scrutiny and surveillance from our colleagues; or feeling like we're letting down our students who, by virtue of our pedagogy, we have set out to support. This is a particular issue for precarious scholars; being taken away from research time (a higher value activity?) which can lead to our permanent employment, leaving students who we've developed supportive relationships with after ten months or a year. There is no neat solution; additional labour is required of all within the neo-liberal academic machine. What we can start with is a recognition throughout the university and not only in history that what we teach, who teaches it and how we teach it can lead to increased labour in supporting students which needs to be valued and taken seriously.

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Chapter 11
Teaching About War and Genocide

Vesna Drapac

Abstract This chapter explores the different but complementary approaches I apply when teaching about war, ethnic cleansing, and genocide in the twentieth century. Some of the potential pitfalls in courses dealing with these topics are oversimplification or trivialisation, instrumentalisation, and politicisation. The historiography of these subjects is so complex, and the material so sensitive, that the temptation is to discourage the expression of diverse opinions in the classroom. Research on Holocaust education programs has shown that the conflation of presentist concerns and civic instruction with the study of traumatic pasts can lead to superficial explanations which have little resonance beyond the classroom. My courses are structured around key historical debates and build students' capacity in critical and independent thinking through comparison as well as through intensive research on case studies. I have found the use of film and witness testimony particularly effective in my teaching. The chapter will suggest that rigorous historical process has a more important role to play in equipping students with the capacity to make their way in the world as ethical, active, and engaged citizens than mere exposure to traumatic history.

11.1 Introduction

My teaching trajectory has been informed in part by a fundamental paradox: there is a huge amount of scholarly work on the history of war and genocide and the output is growing exponentially, yet it does not seem to have ameliorated similar problems in the world today. One could well ask, 'why have we not learnt from "difficult pasts"?' According to some scholars, we try to draw too many divergent lessons from these pasts. We expect these lessons to fulfil too many purposes, from creating model citizens, to protecting human rights, to preventing genocides. This makes the subject matter vulnerable to oversimplification, instrumentalization and politicisation (Bos, 2014; Goldberg, 2018; Gray 2014). It is also the case that an overexposure to the unprecedented violence of World War II and the Holocaust has led to desensitisation.

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But simply knowing about atrocities in the past has never meant that atrocities will not be repeated. For most people, such events are part of a past that is long gone and the links between it and the present are too difficult or too uncomfortable to trace. I believe that it is important to teach difficult pasts and to make them meaningful to contemporary students. In order to do this well for my period, one must take into account several variables, but three stand out, namely: (1) the critical importance of the impact of post-war history on the evolution of the historiography; (2) the tendency to interpret events in terms of a moralising teleology; and (3) the ostensible tension between explaining and relativising. It is also important to be aware of the chasm between academic scholarship on the history of the war and the Holocaust and the popular understanding of these topics.

11.2 Living and Contributing to a Changing Historiography

Scholarship on the pedagogy of teaching difficult pasts notes the importance of the 'positionality' of the teacher and the need on the teacher's part for self-reflection on the relationship between their background and their teaching (Bos, 2014, p. 407). My life story and my career trajectory have a bearing on the way I have interrogated and interpreted the controversial historiography of World War II and, in turn, how I have conceptualised my courses. When I was an undergraduate in the late 1970s, one of my tutors asked about my background, and when I told him my parents are Croatian, he pronounced that Croats had been 'worse than the Nazis' in the war. He did not discriminate against me on the grounds of my guilt by association, but it was a confronting experience nonetheless. When I went to Oxford, my supervisor, Professor Richard Cobb, seemed bemused when he found out about my Croatian background. (When I knew him better, I realised that this was a bit of an act.) He said without any compunction and in his inimitable way, 'Of course in the war we hated the Croats'. I responded rather meekly, 'I know'. To which he replied 'tell me about the Croats'. A different experience again. We had many conversations about Croats throughout my candidature and when I left Oxford he said that one day I had to write about Yugoslavia. (My DPhil thesis was on Catholics in occupied Paris.)

At the time I was growing up and when I entered university, the historiography of the war and of fascism and anti-fascism was rudimentary. Questions of collaboration and resistance, which were intertwined with concepts of fascism and anti-fascism, were highly politicised. It was common for people to say things like Croats or Poles or Ukrainians or Baltic peoples were the most enthusiastic collaborators whose violence surprised 'even the Germans'. It was anyone's guess who was the worst among these groups, but they apparently did not need much prodding to fulfil the Nazis' racial objective of a 'Jew-free Europe'. However, in the case of Croats as 'Yugoslavs', and Poles, there was also a highly visible and militarily active antifascist resistance. The Yugoslav resistance was led by Communists, but as it gained momentum it attracted

large numbers of non-Communists into its ranks, becoming a true 'people's army'. So how were these different tendencies, extreme collaboration on the one hand, and triumphant resistance on the other, to be woven into an integrated narrative of the Croats' war? With great difficulty Indeed, it is still the case that name-calling between political rivals in Croatia—and other European countries—draws on tropes from the wartime past. My parents were too young to have had any role of any import in World War II. My grandparents and extended family were supporters of the majority Croatian political party in interwar Yugoslavia, the Croat Peasant Party. While they did not have ties to the collaborationist Ustasha regime, my family were anti-Communist and never identified with the Partisans. People like members of my family would be classified as right-wing collaborators in scholarly works as well as in the popular imagination.

Very early in my historical thinking I became aware of how the historiography of the war had taken shape and why. I saw first-hand what happened when the teleological (I had no word to describe it then) approach to the war was applied routinely and unthinkingly, and how geopolitics impacted historical enterprises. I noted the importance given to definitions and to the application of labels like collaboration and resistance. I also observed the way in which notions of collective guilt for atrocities committed during the war could be attributed sweepingly. It seemed to me that a number of variables were treated in a cursory fashion or just ignored. These included the responses of different social groups to occupation and the multiple reasons for collaboration, which could take many forms and which was not necessarily politically motivated. Nor could all collaboration be plotted on a continuum that led inexorably to participation in mass murder or genocide. Some of these variables predated the war while others resulted from the nature and the changing circumstances of the war itself. Studies of the interwar period were designed to uncover the 'roots' of behaviour in the war which became a backdrop for, not a cause of, certain positioning. And yet behaviour in the war would have a bearing on how different groups fared, socially and politically, through to and during the Cold War. I did not live through the war but grew up among scholars who had or were born soon after, and who were creating new areas of expertise based on their research into fascism and national socialism and total war. This proximity made the subject compelling to me. The mid-twentieth crisis has been one of my main research interests and it has framed the core of my teaching for upper-level students at university.

11.3 Research-Driven Teaching Agenda

One of the most common observations in the scholarship on the pedagogy of difficult histories is that teachers, both in schools and universities, are often not qualified to teach on genocide generally, and on the Holocaust in particular (Bos, 2014, p. 403; Davies, 2000; Gray, 2014; Totten, 2012a). There is also the problem of 'teacher resistance'. This occurs when teachers take on these subjects reluctantly, either to fill gaps in the existing curriculum or to ensure coverage of compulsory topics in the

national or state curriculum (Totten, 2012a; Zembylas, 2018, pp. 189, 192). Pearce and Chapman, among others, make the point that large numbers of those responsible for teaching the Holocaust in schools in Britain are not history majors and rely on 'simplistic' textbooks or prepared education packs, complete with films and activities (Gray, 2014, pp. 65, 68; Pearce & Chapman, 2017, pp. 225, 227; Totten, 2012b). In the absence of deep knowledge about Nazi ideology or the Nazi state and empire, teachers often rely too heavily—sometimes entirely—on witness testimony or core victim texts (Gray, 2016). I was formed by academics who believed that university teachers in the humanities who draw on their own research are best placed to inform best teaching practice in their field. I have held this to be true throughout my career. But it is more difficult to subscribe to the dictum now, as universities in Australia are making greater distinctions between 'researchers' and 'teachers' which, as I will argue, can be a problem in the teaching of 'difficult histories'.

The mid-twentieth century crisis in Europe has engaged me in my academic pursuits but I have also extended my interest back in time to the late-nineteenth century and forward to the late-twentieth century. My first book is a study of Catholic parishes in occupied Paris (Drapac, 1998). In it, I ask 'what were the pressures on ordinary Catholics and how did their identity as Catholics shape how they lived through the ordeal of occupation?' My second book, in part the fulfilment of my pact with Professor Cobb all those years ago, is about the construction of the concept of Yugoslavia and its various permutations (Drapac, 2010). My third book, co-authored with my colleague, Gareth Pritchard, brings together our combined interest in the social history of Nazi-occupied Europe (Drapac and Pritchard, 2017). A key focus in my research has been the social and cultural impact of modern ideologies (nationalism, racism, fascism and national socialism, and communism) and of war. I am especially interested in the relationship between ideas (or hegemonic paradigms) and how societies function under duress and in times of rapid change. I consider what makes communities and societies cohere in a time of crisis and what makes them fragment. These research questions about ideology, lived experiences of dictatorship and war, and the geopolitical construction of states, also underpin my undergraduate teaching. My reflections here draw on my experience of teaching four undergraduate courses and one fourth-year honours class.

A significant literature exists on the pros and cons of various approaches to teaching about war and genocide (Bos, 2014; Epstein & Peck, 2018; Gray, 2014; Lezra, 2014; Murray, 2017b; Pearce & Chapman, 2017; Schweber, 2010; Totten & Pedersen, 2012). Often a teacher's approach is shaped by contemporary concerns and goals, such as the creation of moral citizens who lobby for the defence of human rights and for the protection of refugees and asylum seekers, and who aspire to prevent genocide. Given the extent of the abuse of human rights, the general plight of refugees and asylum seekers, and the number of documented genocides in recent decades, it would be difficult to conclude that these education programs have met their goals (Totten, 2012a). Furthermore, the school of thought that argues for the much-vaunted experiential approach to teaching these subjects, on the grounds that it builds understanding through empathy, has also come under close scrutiny. Teachers worry about

how to introduce harrowing information in various forums without disturbing or traumatising students (Bos, 2014, p. 403; Gray, 2014, p. 63; Lezra, 2014, p. 343). The 'pedagogy of empathy' and the 'pedagogy of identification' retain their advocates (Lezra, 2014). But others note that, at their most basic level, these approaches only result in the simulation of emotions which are fleeting and superficial at best (Bos, 2014, p. 405; Gray, 2014, p. 71; Zembylas, 2018, p. 191), and which lead to 'moral numbness' at worst (Seixas, 2018, p. 75). A troubling term that emerges in these debates about approach is 'Holocaust fatigue', which is seen to come about from a combination of facile teaching practices and 'activities', desensitisation, and student disengagement (Gray, 2014, p. 37; Schweber, 2010; Totten, 2012b).

While it would be impossible to teach difficult histories in a way that ignored emotions and disregarded the need to foster empathy, for the most part, my approach has been more strictly academic. I concur with those who argue that we must embrace, not shy away from, complexity in the classroom, and that we must present students with multiple approaches to the same, seemingly intractable, historical problems (Totten, 2012b). My method also involves establishing a critical distance between students and the events under review (Gray, 2014; Grever, 2018b). My experience has been that student engagement with difficult histories comes from engagement with the rigorous process of ongoing historical inquiry, not mere exposure, visual or otherwise, to traumatic pasts. I would say that I follow Monique Eckmann's advice: 'Don't put the lessons of history before the knowledge of the history itself' (Eckmann, 2010, p. 10, as quoted in Gray, 2014, p. 71). It is in the doing of the history that the students are empowered. They are not empowered by platitudinous reflections based on fatuous comparisons between their own existence and events that are completely beyond their lived experience (Bos, 2014; Gray, 2014; Schweber, 2010). I, therefore, discourage the study of this history as some kind of displacement activity, a means for students to disengage from their own communities and from difficult pasts closer to home (Bos, 2014, p. 411; Clark, 2018; Grever, 2018a, p. 203).

11.4   Students as Historians of Difficult Pasts

There is no doubt that Nazism drove the genocide of Europe's Jews in a context of unprecedented violence on the Eastern Front. Nor is there any doubt that the domination of Europe by the Nazis provided the opportunity for the collaboration of a diverse range of people in the Holocaust (Stone, 2004, 2008). That neat summary of events could make me and my courses redundant. Why would one even convene subjects on this topic? Why not just list all the FAQs about the war and genocide and answer each of them succinctly? The problem is that, in effect, this approach has long provided the formula for studying and teaching the relationship between Nazism and genocide, but it has not brought an end to indifference, or an end to state-driven ethnic violence, or an end to genocide. How might the teacher respond to this dilemma?

Much academic writing on the war and genocide is highly specialised and very demanding, even for university students who are in the early stage of encountering this history. Experiential or immersive learning can be an obstacle to clear thinking about historical processes and does not make this academic writing, or its conclusions, more accessible. So my priority is to establish pathways for students to access the complex historiography. One must begin simply. There are three things that I say to my students at the start. The first is that the greatest challenge to understanding the recent 'difficult past' is overcoming the temptation to read history backwards. The second is that this is, relatively speaking, a new historiography and that, despite the huge literature, what they have to say about these subjects may never have been said before. The third thing I tell them is that in tutorials and seminars I have no end point or specific outcome in mind and there is nothing I am directing (or willing!) them to say. This is how I introduce students to the historical process and how I encourage their participation in it from the outset.

Avoiding inherently deterministic and teleological arguments is not straightforward (Drapac & Pritchard, 2017). Indeed, the inherent teleology in the historiography is now more, not less, of an impediment to understanding. The teleology in the immediate post-war scholarship is easier to dissect. The embedded teleology is more difficult to dislodge, so deeply compacted are the unacknowledged premises on which this historiography has been founded. A good starting point is for students to recognise that the outcomes of the war had a bearing on the way the war was studied, remembered, imagined, and celebrated or commemorated. The first and most influential wave of writing about the war was the product of a political climate that was shaped by antifascism and the antifascist struggle. It was this struggle that led to the justification of the division of Europe. The German Democratic Republic was founded as an antifascist state. Recognising that interpretations of the past evolve over time also brings a level of sophistication that does not reduce arguments to the crude notion that history is written by 'the winners'. Students thus understand that all history is retrospective and the next step for them is to embrace the idea that there is no history without the historian. Nonetheless, like all practising historians, students need constantly to be warned that they should avoid the short cuts and refuse to accept the (false) wisdom that comes only with hindsight.

An important breakthrough comes when students see that not everyone's life clock was the same and that events of great historical significance to us may not have seemed so at the time. Reasoning backwards from the outcome of the war we commonly reflect: 'Oh look – it's 1938 and the Europeans are living in a dream world thinking that they can avoid war with Hitler'. Historians note that 'as late as 1938', at the time of the Munich accords, there were so many appeasers, so many collaborators in waiting. It is inferred that they should have known better and that because they did not work against the possibility of a Nazi-controlled Europe then they were somehow already complicit in what came to pass. This is one way of avoiding explaining more deeply how things unfolded as they did and leads to superficial responses to the question 'why?' The 'as late as' school of history, which I address both in my research and teaching, is based on this kind of mindless retrospectivity.

Apart from teleology, obstacles to the understanding of this past relate to how students conceptualise causality and contingency and, relatedly, how they understand agency. I confess here to drawing on old-fashioned but trusty friends. E. H. Carr's maxim that we will know the historian by the causes they invoke is important. So, too, is Karl Marx's insight into the limits of human agency and the extent to which the over-arching social, political and economic paradigm determines the range of choices available to individuals. The dichotomous approach, whereby resistance and collaboration are at either end of a continuum, has been, and remains, the foundation stone of scholarship on people's behaviour in World War II. This is in spite of the fact that historians now claim to have gone beyond the labels 'resistance' and 'collaboration'. In practice, the labels are still the notional markers of 'good' and 'bad' behaviour, with the inclusion of the hapless majority of in-betweens effectively classified as passively or actively complicit 'bystanders' (Drapac & Pritchard, 2017). Possibly the most influential German historian of this period, Ian Kershaw, wrote in the preface to one of his books: 'I should like to think that had I been around at the time I would have been a convinced anti-Nazi engaged in the underground resistance fight. However, I know really that I would have been as confused and felt as helpless as most of the people I am writing about' (Kershaw, 1983, p. viii). I remember how struck I was when, as a DPhil student, I read this for the first time. It revealed to me the mindset of an entire generation of historians and I decided, then and there, that it was not a useful starting point. It is impossible for Kershaw to know how he would have responded to Nazi rule. But there were also a multitude of different experiences at that time. Comparing oneself with X rather than Y, whether favourably or unfavourably, is random, and the sentiment contained within such a reflection is ahistorical. Variables of capacity, opportunity, and geography meant that there could be no single standard or benchmark—in this case, 'the underground resistance fight'—by which to judge all behaviour. To suggest that there was only one ethically acceptable path through the moral quagmire of the time and that if one did not take it one was somehow confused, and thereby culpable, is highly problematic. It does not help students to simulate this feeling of confusion. Kershaw's reflection shows how the historian's first principles can have an impact on interpretation.

Identifying the tension between contingency and agency in establishing how genocide as a process unfolds is illuminating for students. The 'stages of genocide' are useful in explaining how discrimination, isolation, removal, and 'concentration' of the persecuted can lead to still more dire consequences (Gellately & Kiernan, 2003). But the idea that there is an inevitability around the stages can be potentially distracting. It can blind students to the importance of contingency and why changes in patterns of behaviour could be driven by factors related to concerns that predated the period under consideration or had nothing to do with the persecuted people in question. It can also blind students to the fact that the war itself was a radical agent of change.

Teaching fascism and national socialism as related ideologies makes them understandable and knowable without making what Fascists and Nazis did excusable. This approach moves forward in time from the emergence of the ideologies in order to map what was perpetrated by whom, at what point, and why. It is different from

an entirely victim-centred approach which reasons backwards from the tragic and traumatic outcome of genocide. One explanation of the Holocaust is that it is unique, even 'outside history', and that attempts to make it 'knowable' lead to historicization, which can mean many things but, in this context, means relativising it (Gray, 2014; Murray, 2017a; Schweber, 2010; Wolff, 2020). The fear of relativisation has become more acute with the passing of the generation of witnesses and the generation of survivors whose testaments have been so important in disseminating knowledge about the Holocaust. But we also know that most 'bystanders' were not confronted with life-changing or life-threatening choices every day, if at all. Nor did moral dilemmas present themselves in the clear-cut ways that students might imagine. Rather, there was a seepage of ideology into social and private life, which is the way in which totalitarian governments function. A likely scenario is that one only became aware of this after the situation had changed to such an extent that there was no opportunity to make a 'good choice' or, if there was such an opportunity, it was not even recognised. It is my experience that students, like Kershaw, have a tendency to over-identify with those whom we have come to know as the 'bystanders'. This runs counter to the literature that notes and critiques an over- (and inappropriate) identification with victims and rescuers (Bos, 2014; Pearce, 2017; Schweber, 2010). In order to get students to attune to nuances of behaviour and to balance things, I invite them to consider the interplay of ideas and ideology as well as power relations in different contexts and within different groups. Some educators choose to run entire courses on women in fascist states, for example (Bos, 2014), but my preference is to focus on more groups and on the gendered underpinning of the dominant interpretations of collaboration and resistance. In this way, students come to appreciate some of the limitations of agency and choice without resorting to stereotypes about indifference. What kind of a society did the Nazis want to create? Who had a place in that society and who did not? Students need also to be made aware of what the Nazis said and what they did before coming to power, and how they behaved in power. The new studies of consumerism in Nazi Germany show that once it becomes the goal of people simply to live well and aspire to the good life depicted in advertising and state propaganda, there is no other social reality, there is no past or future, just the present. This is much closer to the students' own experience with regard to hegemonic paradigms than is the experience of the victim, or the perpetrator for that matter. But what does that actually mean in terms of understanding the choice and agency of historical actors?

One of my main goals is to encourage students to address basic questions about responsibility and agency in a way that leads to a robust discussion. I do not like to stage debates because they are so contrived. Fetishising choice and agency is common in the historiography. Once they are aware of the range of historical actors (men, women, the young, the elderly, and so forth) and the different social and geographical contexts in which these actors were living, students can begin to establish people's options and the extent to which they recognised them as such. One always has choices. But did all people in these difficult pasts have a plurality of equally tolerable options before them? What exactly made one's choices good or bad and what values underpinned them? Were all choices of the same magnitude? Were the consequences

of 'bad' choices foreseeable? When was it possible for people to know their choices were bad and in what context was that knowledge going to make any difference? Could the consequences of a bad choice be reversed even if one were remorseful? And what were the actual choices that made a difference within the National Socialist state or a state governed by ideological collaborators? These are complex questions that students can broach using evidence and argument. The last thing I want is to present a ready-made answer to these or any other questions. I have views about levels of responsibility within different groups, but the aim is not to make mine the preferred line of interpretation. I must say that this can be difficult to achieve in practice. It also results in students not agreeing with my views. But that is the reality of this controversial history. Sometimes students have wanted to anticipate my opinions. An ambitious student once said that the only thing they did not like about my teaching was that they could not establish my position on any given (legitimate!) historical controversy. More recently, students have commented favourably on my capacity to draw them out, especially on difficult or 'sensitive' issues, and to mediate between the various arguments put forward. What is critical is to establish the acceptable parameters of historical debates. Then there is a freedom and a kind of energy in the discussion without which students cannot feel that they are part of a larger historical enterprise or that they have something important to say or to contribute.

11.5 A New Methodology for a New Generation: Difficult Histories in Film

Even though I believe that the conceptualisation of the courses I convene is intellectually robust and methodologically novel, I have tended to teach in a way that played to my strengths as a lecturer and tutor. Teaching is inspiring and exhilarating for me. But there have been a number of changes which I have witnessed, and which have led me to re-think my approach to teaching. The last time I taught the course 'Fascism and National Socialism', there was a drop in enrolments. While that semester was one of my best teaching experiences in recent years and the student evaluations were very strong, I could not help thinking that the declining numbers related to a generational change whereby 'Fascism and National Socialism' do not immediately elicit the same interest they did twenty years ago. On the other hand, the numbers enrolled in my level-three course ('Reel History: World War II in Film'), which I introduced about ten years ago, have increased substantially. I believe that this in part indicates that film is a medium that allows students to interact in a new and dynamic way with the intellectual and human problems I address in my research and in my teaching. Immersive exhibition experiences at museums and 'dark tourism' to death camps can do similar things, but, as we have seen, the evidence suggests that the impact on visitors is normally short term (Grever, 2018b). In my opinion, a film absorbs students in ways that are more subtle and that can have a more enduring intellectual impact.

Since the 1930s, filmmakers have amply engaged with the historical questions I research and teach. According to an eminent historian of modern Germany, Geoffrey Eley, the depiction on film of the histories 'of ordinary lives beneath the big events.. . offers valuable starting points for studying World War II, allowing its public meanings to be rethought'. He adds: 'In that sense, cinema constructs its own history—not necessarily by the "truth" of its representations or the accuracy of its literal reconstructions but by visualising intimacy, interiority, and everydayness, which are otherwise notoriously resistant to the historian's eye' (Eley, 2001, p. 828). Eley was writing about evocations in film of the British experience of the Blitz. But his observation has a general application and recognises the usefulness of film as a method for engaging with history and historical processes, not merely as a means to 'recreate' the past or to make us 'feel' as if we were 'there'.

I have been much influenced by the work of Robert Rosenstone and others who present us with a framework for studying history on the screen beyond the limited perspective of focusing on accuracy in its narrowest sense (Guynn, 2006; Hughes-Warrington, 2007; Rosenstone, 2006; Thanouli, 2019). One deficiency Rosenstone identifies is that film might not provide a response to the question 'why?' To an extent I would agree: the war can be a mere backdrop in films on the Holocaust whereas, in fact, the war was its essential precondition. But I do not believe that the question 'why?' is as under-theorised in historical films as Rosenstone suggests. In any case, no film is ever a stand-alone source. As Rosenstone observes, we cannot expect films to do what books often fail to achieve in hundreds of pages. Documentaries can be useful. But I do not like to use documentaries other than the great experimental works, like those of Alain Resnais (*Night and Fog*, 1956) and Claude Lanzmann (*Shoah*, 1985), or those produced during the war by the 'Hollywood colonels'. Documentaries can be like closed books, telling a story that is complete unto itself. I focus instead on feature fiction films, or films based on 'true stories' seen by and made for large audiences. Some films mimic or parody the documentary style, while simultaneously engaging with the cinematic past as well as complex historical problems on the screen. Therefore, much in the same way that carefully chosen texts can map historiography over time, films bring to our attention the self-referential nature of the enterprise and the intellectual and creative perspective of the director who takes on the role of historian filmmaker. It is difficult for students to engage with traditional historical texts on this level. However, a film can lead them to a kind of historiographical analysis that is transformative.

My course on World War II in film is thus more methodologically experimental than the other topics I teach. It takes key historical problems about the war and enjoins students to incorporate popular culture into their academic frame of reference. This course is not about 'representations' of the war, or about 'accuracy' in films about the war. Nor is it a film studies course. It is a history course. It invites students to look at the process by which history unfolds on the screen. One of the underlying premises of the course is the recognition that 'authentic' history is not the preserve of academics. The quality and breadth of historical thinking or analysis contained in the greatest—and possibly most democratic—art form of the modern period is staggering. We see most things I have outlined here played out (the nature of choice

and agency, power relations, the impact of capacity, opportunity, and geography on behaviour, and so forth). A good film will also eschew teleology and suggest to students how the war was lived when its outcomes were not known. The point is for students to learn to engage with themes about the war as analysed by historian filmmakers just as they would any other historical text. There are different levels on which filmmakers analyse the past. Students consider how and why historian filmmakers communicate basic truths about the war and the extent to which their work can achieve what traditional histories cannot. Moreover, some films have been at the forefront of engagement with this difficult past. It is well-known that filmmakers in France, for example, have stimulated historians to produce novel interpretations of the 'dark years' of occupation (Rousso, 1987/1991). It is also the case that more and more people gain much of their historical knowledge from film (Gray, 2014, p. 68).

The historical truths communicated through film have the capacity to inform audiences as well as shape opinion. Therefore, it is important for us to have a vocabulary and a context for responding to history—difficult or otherwise—on the screen. With little hesitation students also consider how the practice of creating history in film is entangled in the way in which historian filmmakers engage with their own time and their own past. This is facilitated by the way the course is structured. A prescribed number of topics are studied and observed in different films produced at different times in different countries. Some images of the war prevail and persist in cinema, while others undergo transitions, at times subtle, at others less subtle. The course thus presents a most effective introduction to historiography (without it being labelled as such to begin) and stimulates high levels of student participation.

A film is also, perhaps, the best medium by which we can test the maxim that the way to jolt a post-traumatic society out of its indifference to, or estrangement from, a traumatic past, is to traumatise students. Some filmmakers believe that in the case of certain difficult histories—notably of the Holocaust—it is only through their traumatic representation that they can be known and truly understood. According to this argument, difficult histories cannot be known via the traditional historical process because this process, in itself, normalises or contextualises what is aberrant (Haggith & Newman, 2005; Hirsch, 2002, 2004; Kerner, 2011). Holocaust history must not be normalised or contextualised (and thereby relativised) as it will lose its special quality over time and become a historical event like any other which can be understood like any other. There is a fear that contextualisation will result in trivialisation and desanctification (Bos, 2014, p. 413; Gray, 2014, pp. 63, 64; Goldberg, 2018, p. 147). The fear of trivialisation and desanctification has become more acute with the passing of the generation of witnesses and survivors whose testaments have been so important in disseminating knowledge about the Holocaust. I have already said that I do not accept that there is a causal link between understanding this past and relativising it. Nor do I believe that there is a causal link between making difficult pasts knowable or understandable and, thereby, somehow excusable.

While I do not believe that the experiential approach stimulates sustained engagement with difficult pasts, my view is that at the university level a little trauma is not necessarily a bad thing for students. This is as long as they are warned that they may experience some discomfort (and are given the choice to avoid it) and as long as it

is not an end in itself. The point of what one is doing must be made clear. But I have observed that students can be so desensitised to visual representations of violence that they have a very high threshold for witnessing trauma on the screen. So, more effective than the 'false realism' of a Steven Spielberg film, for example, is the work of someone like Lanzmann. Lanzmann's approach and method have attracted criticism; however, I think his achievement is great for the very reasons he is criticised (Farr, 2005; Hirsch, 2002, 2004; Kerner, 2011).

Lanzmann never tried to present an objective view of what happened at Treblinka. He wanted to understand the killing process and those involved in it. He rejected what he regarded as the false realism of most Holocaust films and documentaries. For him, it was a travesty to try to recreate on film what happened in the death camps, and he famously said that if he found footage showing the gas chambers, he would destroy it. Perhaps the most traumatic evocation of the killing process on film is Lanzmann's interview with the Jewish barber, Abraham Bomba, whose role was to cut the hair of women about to be gassed. The story he tells and the way in which Lanzmann coaxed it out of him is more revealing, both of the abject process of dehumanisation and of the extermination process, than any graphic recreation ever could be. I have never become desensitised to the story Bomba tells. Once when I showed the Bomba clip to students, I found it difficult to speak afterwards, even though I had seen it many times before. I was not prepared for this response, and when I have shown it since, it is only at the end of a class. I have recently begun to speculate on the reasons why I have not become desensitised. I am not sure exactly, but I believe it has to do with the fact that my intellectual engagement with this history is ongoing and comprehensive. I am always thinking about how best to explain and discuss it in a way that makes the demanding, and sometimes impenetrable, historiography accessible to students. Concepts like 'coming to terms' with this past are foreign to me not just because they are facile, but because they suggest it will somehow no longer be present or connected to our own world.

11.6   A Moral Education—Theirs and Mine

Along with my study of film, other forms of history beyond the academy enable me to consider ways of deepening my engagement with difficult histories. I can see why it is the goal of some to 'come to terms with' or 'move on from' difficult pasts. But, as I have made clear, this is not my motivation. I am even less interested in treating the study of this past instrumentally to serve some poorly defined (albeit utopian) purpose in the present. I have been involved in curating an exhibition at the state's Migration Museum (situated a few hundred metres from my university) on Croatian immigration and settlement in South Australia since 1945. I have also collaborated in the conceptualisation of the permanent exhibition of the newly established Adelaide Holocaust Museum and Steiner Education Centre (AHMSEC). For these activities in the public domain, I have drawn on my primary research interests and my secondary research interest in immigration and multiculturalism. I have

found that complex questions can, indeed, be addressed in panels of about 150 words or less, so long as the questions are posed in a way that does not result in the usual (predictable and bowdlerised) narrative. In order to be successful, this work of the historian curator, like the work of the historian filmmaker, only on a smaller scale, must entail condensing myriad themes, plots, and subplots. Challenging historical problems can be broached in a way that meets the expectations and needs of a wide audience, as well the expectations and needs of various 'stakeholders' invested in the communication of these pasts (Harris, 2014; Lubar, 2014; Rabinowitz, 2011, 2013). The Croatian exhibition addressed and answered a set of questions about community and identity focusing on the immigrants as co-creators of a pluralistic, multicultural society. Similarly, for the AHMSEC exhibit, we avoided the usual chronological account, which is teleologically driven and chose, instead, to pose a series of questions (Why the Jews? Why at that moment?) in such a way that enables the visitor to enter the exhibition at any point.

If 'ordinary' students want to understand how 'ordinary' people behaved, then they need to consider what constitutes an ordinary life in the microcosm and how that can be made to fit into a larger story. How does micro-history relate to macro-history? Here we come back to the problem of student and teacher engagement with difficult history as a kind of displacement activity. Such displacement activity has been described as a 'screen memory' or 'cover memory' that buries a difficult history closer to home, for example, slavery in the United States and the violence towards Indigenous Australians and their ongoing displacement. (Bos, 2014, p. 411). What kinds of decisions do students make in daily life? Who do they define as their neighbour? How do they treat their neighbour? How do they treat victims of various abuses? If they are moralising about the past and how people lived their lives in the past, then they also have to have some sense of what constitutes a moral or ethical life in the present. How that can be communicated is, it must be said, part of a larger project than teaching three undergraduate courses on difficult histories.

Students who have no experience of violence or are unaware of the ideological underpinning of their own lives can see the world in a simplistic way. What is instructive for them is to understand what sustained the Nazi regime without reducing all the people of Europe to one of three categories: perpetrators, bystanders and victims. Nazi Germany was a complex modern state. Nazi-occupied Europe was a complex modern empire. Both were created by powerful, murderous ideologues and sustained by a combination of ambition, careerism, materialism, self-interest, opportunism, and indifference, as well as an effective bureaucracy. At the same time, the Nazis alienated, intimidated, terrorised, incarcerated, rendered powerless, and killed large numbers of individuals and members of various social and political groups (This was in addition to unleashing the genocide of Jewish people). How can we to contemplate this level of violence and terror in a setting infused with an optimistic and liberal belief in the boundlessness of political progress? There are few shared values that students can articulate as values other than in the most basic language. There is clearly, however, common ground on certain fundamental principles. In all my time of teaching on the Holocaust, for example, I have not encountered denial. The kinds of behaviours that teachers have reported in multiracial or multicultural schools in

Britain or the Netherlands, whereby pupils might cheer when they hear Hitler's name mentioned, or say he did not go far enough, is completely outside my experience (Gray, 2014, pp. 30–32; Grever, 2018a, p. 206). That said, there is a high degree of relativism in contemporary discourse. Relativism, when combined with (unthinking) universal acceptance of the hegemonic paradigms that govern and determine all behaviour in liberal democracies today (such as the commercial imperative), makes it difficult for students to negotiate this difficult terrain.

Nonetheless, the subjects I teach present the opportunity to study how ordinary people in the recent past and in societies not entirely unlike our own, confronted what, in hindsight, can be seen to be clear-cut moral or ethical problems but which were not necessarily fully, or at all, evident as such at the time. What do I mean by this? By studying these difficult histories, students can begin to understand how complex states function as well as the power relations that prop up such states. The question of the nature of support for dictatorships has engaged historians for many years and they have come up with increasingly convoluted interpretations of what sustained them. Having moved 'beyond totalitarianism', historians focus less on violence and intimidation, and the threat of violence and intimidation. Instead, they are more likely to argue that ordinary people 'participated' in the dictatorships and their criminal projects because it suited them materially, or because they were antisemitic, or self-serving, or weak, or simply vulnerable to material temptations. The word 'support', however, is, like others, value-laden. It points to a high degree of responsibility and culpability from the bottom up because it suggests that there was, as some historians put it, a high degree of 'consensus'. Perhaps 'support' might have been less freely given had there been an open poll with people being asked a question such as 'Would you consent to a dictatorship that will wage a total, brutalising war and introduce a policy of systematic extermination of Jewish people and other racial enemies of the master race, if it meant that you could continue working as a teacher?' I say this not to be facetious, or to put forward some kind of alibi for criminal behaviour. I say it because for students, especially if they are politically disengaged or see politics as something that occurs somewhere far away and not in their midst, these kinds of questions are jolting and make them think about how modern states work. The power of modern bureaucracies, and the total, all-encompassing ideologies embedded within them, is also something that students must learn to confront.

Thus, the history I teach provides some opportunity for a moral education but without the moralising. If students are involved in any way in political or social activism—and it must be said that the numbers of these kinds of students seem, in my experience, to be diminishing—then I also ask them to consider what happens when they are seeking change. I ask them to think about the process of saving a local 'significant' tree from property developers, or of introducing legislation to protect the environment in one of the most democratic countries in the world. What success are they likely to have in the face of hegemonic paradigms that are ostensibly extolling freedom and liberal values? I once asked a law-arts student, who said that they wanted to have an impact on human rights through working at the UN in Geneva, why that would have more impact than setting up a free legal practice in a local

suburb, where the crime rates among juveniles were high and the rates of detention and incarceration, especially of Indigenous youth, were also disproportionately high. In my opinion, their answer lacked a certain clarity, but there were important words like 'influence', 'policy', 'global' and 'international' thrown in. By contrast, the last time I taught 'Fascism and National Socialism', at the end of the course a student said, simply, that one of the important things they had learnt was always to take politics seriously, even in the little things, and never to take democratic processes for granted. For me, this was a sign that I had achieved something. If we do want students to situate themselves in historical moments when extremely bad choices were made, then it is far more effective for them to consider first how they behave in their own lives (Lezra, 2014). What kinds of people are they? By what principles do they live? What does success mean to them, how do they aim to achieve it, and at what cost? I say to my students, do not ask yourselves what you would have done in Nazi Germany or occupied France, but what you do in the normal course of your life.

11.7   Conclusion

For many reasons, the importance of the teaching/research nexus is recognised less and less while a gaping divide between teaching and research is becoming more and more evident in Australian universities. Teaching, we know, takes time from research. The system now in place rewards prolific, grant-winning researchers (we no longer use the term scholars) who routinely 'buy-out' their teaching. The teachers must, therefore, teach more and research less. Yet, it is clear that one of the concerns repeatedly raised in the literature to which I have referred is the problem of teachers without expertise engaging with this difficult history superficially, or with the aid of formulaic 'education packs'. This problem will only be compounded if future teachers—who comprise a large proportion of my students—are taught by academics who know a lot about pedagogy but very little about scholarship.

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Chapter 12
Environmental History: Teaching in a Time of Crisis

Andrea Gaynor

Abstract Teaching environmental history is at once a great responsibility and a tremendous opportunity to equip students to better understand and respond to the very serious, complex and multi-dimensional environmental challenges we face. This chapter discusses the applications of environmental history in a time of biodiversity and climate crises, and provides first-hand insights into the author's experience of teaching environmental history at undergraduate and honours level. The chapter surveys some of the challenges encountered and concludes with a smorgasbord of ideas for teaching environmental history and humanities in universities and beyond.

Environmental history has a heavy burden to bear. Awareness of the scale and consequences of environmental exploitation has been increasing since the 1960s, yet it seems that every day brings news of a new or escalating disaster. Human use of natural resources has tripled in just 40 years, taking with it much forest and woodland, ocean health and wildlife: the number of birds in north America, for example, has declined by almost a third since 1970 (Rosenberg et al., 2019). In spite of the climate movement's gathering momentum and positive policy shifts in some areas, the rate of greenhouse gas emissions isn't slowing quickly enough to avert escalating climate breakdown. Some of the big questions around our predicament are at least partly historical. The big one is 'how did we get here'? and relatedly, 'why is there not greater awareness and concern?' and 'what strategies might effectively turn things around?'. Given the likelihood of increasing environmental hazards, we can also look to history to find out about the likely outcomes of 'natural' disasters, and what we might as a society do in order to prepare for them better. Increasingly, as we see our life-support system breaking down, we are also thinking about the capacity of environmental factors and changes to shape human history.

Western Australian historian Frank Crowley once said 'The prize of all history is the understanding of modern times', and there are myriad aphorisms warning that if we don't understand the past we are doomed to repeat it. Yet learning from the

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past is a difficult, indeed treacherous, exercise: as all good historians know, contexts are thick and entangled, and never repeat precisely. Still, environmental history—perhaps even more than other areas of the discipline—is frequently approached with a sense of present-oriented urgency, and indeed it has much to offer the present. I firmly believe that historians use evidence from the past to tell the stories the present needs. Of course, that 'need' will be defined in diverse ways by different historians and their audiences, but none of our stories are ever told 'just because'. In our state of mounting environmental crisis, there is a growing need for environmental historical interventions.

Environmental history is essential to understand current environments at a range of scales more fully, as it illuminates the entangled choices and relationships that have produced them. In particular, it alerts us to hidden causes and powerful motors of change—chief among them the malleable endurance of capitalism and colonialism. In a similar vein, environmental history can chart the delayed and hidden destruction of what Rob Nixon calls 'slow violence', in which marginalised communities in the world's shadow places have experienced the seemingly inexorable degradation of their local life worlds, often as a by-product of first-world consumption. History de-naturalises and explains these effects. Relatedly, there is an important role for history in holding environmental wrong-doers to account, beyond the rapid churn of media story cycles: there can be no justice without history. More prosaically but perhaps no less importantly, environmental history can mitigate loss of memory within environmental management and advocacy organisations, enabling learning from mistakes and successes within and between groups.

Environmental history also yields stories of how thoughtful and committed people have achieved positive environmental change: through building political movements; by patient, hands-on, local work; through education of children and young people; and by pioneering more sustainable lifeways, to give but a few examples. It can therefore have an important inspirational and motivational dimension (Solnit, 2016). In a highly influential essay published back in 1992, environmental historian Bill Cronon (1992, p. 1375) proposed that 'narratives remain our chief moral compass in the world. Because we use them to motivate and explain our actions, the stories we tell change the way we act in the world'. Histories are not the only stories, but there is also an important place for environmental histories in our times. For anyone hoping to play a role in tackling our current environmental predicament, an understanding of environmental history is a useful, perhaps essential, item to have in the toolbox.

My first experience teaching environmental history was as a tutor at Murdoch University in 2001. The unit was an updated version of Professor Geoffrey Bolton's course in Australian environmental history. First taught at Murdoch in 1976, it was perhaps the earliest such course in Australia. Bolton's teaching informed, and in a way led to, his ground-breaking environmental history of Australia, *Spoils and Spoilers* (1981). It was a long-running course at an innovative and interdisciplinary university, continuing with its original title until 2010, then under a different name until 2016 (Gaynor & Griffiths, 2017, p. 150). My first opportunity to develop an environmental history course came in 2003, by which time I had commenced as a Lecturer at the University of Western Australia. My honours seminar, called 'Spoils and

Spoilers', attracted two brave students; undeterred, I ran it again the following year with another small but enthusiastic group. This experience suggested that Australian environmental history was a little too niche for our relatively small institution, so in 2011 I launched a level 2 (second year) global environmental history survey unit, which attracted a small but wonderfully engaged class of 28 students. Changes to our degree structure then opened up the opportunity to teach a revised version of the unit at level 1 as a broadening unit, and finally it found a substantial audience. Students came from across the university, roughly split between science and arts. There were few history majors. Almost all were concerned about the state of the planet, though some chose the unit for reasons entirely unrelated to content.

The global environmental history survey is but one of a range of ways in which environmental history is taught in universities today. Some units focus on particular periods or places, such as the environmental history of the American West or the environmental history of the twentieth century; others are thematic, dealing, for example, with environmental history of colonialism, animals or cities. One of the most enticing kinds of unit is focused on a particular place. In 2002, the students in Michael Lewis' Local Environmental History unit at Salisbury University, Maryland, spent the semester researching and writing a book on the history of the Wicomico River that runs through Salisbury (Lewis, 2004). William Cronon has famously set a 'place paper' assignment requiring his students to write an environmental history of a place they know well; this task is now scaffolded by an entire unit on the Making of the American Landscape (Cronon, n.d.). Focus sites need not be local. Inspired by Lewis' example, Matthew Evenden at the University of British Columbia taught a unit in which geography majors focused on the environmental history of the Peace River in northern British Columbia—a place none of them had visited—and published their findings as a website (Evenden, 2009). On the other end of the spectrum are units in Big History, which start with the Big Bang and move through the formation of the solar system and earth before dwelling on the millennia of human occupation of the planet and finally the blip of colonialism and industrialisation of the very recent past.

I decided to focus my own global survey unit loosely around three questions: What factors have shaped human dealings with the natural world? How have people changed the environment? How have different societies responded to environmental change over time? This formulation implies a separation between 'humans' and 'nature' that is increasingly contested, but I can live with that for a foundation course introducing students to the field. I have adopted a fairly conventional chronological/thematic structure covering what I felt were essential topics: Indigenous people and environments, religion, disasters, resources, animals, wilderness, nationalism, environmentalism, climate and cities. Gender, colonialism and capitalism are themes woven throughout. I then set out to find well-written and provocative works that would spark the students' interest and imagination, while attending to diversity of times and places, and—more recently—authors. I chose case studies that call upon students to challenge their assumptions about environments and how 'we' relate to them. Environmental history as a field is dominated by North America, so American topics are overrepresented while Asia is underrepresented. Including more writing by women and people of colour as essential reading for the unit is an ongoing project.

I teach environmental history—like all of my undergraduate units—in a workshop format, in which students work in teams of around eight throughout the semester. There can be up to six teams in a class, so there are multiple workshops scheduled, depending on the total enrolment (so far, up to 160 students). Active learning is more enduring than passive listening, and I firmly believe that if I'm asking students to bear the time and expense of coming into campus, they should be doing things they cannot very well do from the comfort of their lounge rooms. There are no lectures, the content is not recorded and attendance is mandatory, with participation weighted accordingly. In back-to-back classes with a short break in between we have one secondary source-based workshop and one primary source-based workshop. The order of these will vary depending on the week.

In each secondary source-based workshop, three students in each team have a formal role—speaker, secretary and chair. These roles are scheduled at the beginning of semester. The chair is responsible for organising the discussion and making sure that the group stays on task. The speaker briefly summarises the team's response to the question for the wider group. The secretary takes notes on proceedings and submits a brief report on the group's work that week (which includes an evaluation of each team member's contribution). Each week there are set readings, much like for a conventional tutorial, and the unit guide includes questions the students should consider while completing the reading. In the workshop, after I give a short introduction to the topic, each team will be allocated one of the questions and given time to discuss it and prepare their answer, which will be related to the group by the speaker; this then might lead to a conversation about points raised, between myself and the team, helping to clarify, reinforce or occasionally correct particular issues.

In these sessions, we've encountered Aboriginal and settler perspectives on Aboriginal more-than-human worlds and 'environmental impacts'. We've thought about the role of environment in colonialism in conversation with Alfred Crosby and Jared Diamond, and the role of Judeo-Christian religion in the current ecological crisis with Lynn White Jr and Keith Thomas. The San Francisco (1906) and Great Kantō (1923) earthquakes, as well as the American dust bowl and late nineteenth-century Indian famines, have helped us think about social power in disasters and reconstruction. Students have rarely considered the extent to which disasters are really 'natural', or the effect of social structures that put people—most often vulnerable people—in the way of natural hazards. This also gives us the opportunity to consider whether such events might reveal more about a society than they change. In a lively session on marine environmental history, we encounter the idea of shifting baselines—that scientists and others tend to accept the state of an ecosystem when they first encounter it as 'natural', without considering that it may have changed, even quite radically, from past states. We consider the nineteenth-century emergence of conservation and preservation in the USA, and trace the changing and problematic career of 'wilderness'. From there we home in on the ways in which nature can be deployed in support of nationalism (and nationalism can shape dealings with nature), with a focus on the nature and nationalism tradition in Germany and its apotheosis in the Third Reich. We then trace the emergence of environmentalisms in the global north and south from the mid-twentieth century, shining a comparative

light on the environmental discourses with which students will be most familiar. Recently, I have added a week on climate breakdown, in which I ask the students to read as much as they can of Nathaniel Rich's 'Losing Earth', published in the *New York Times Magazine*, and critiques of the article accessed via social media (Rich, 2018). I hadn't thought it necessary to talk to our cohort about climate change fundamentals, but my decision to do so was vindicated by the audible gasps when I played an animated gif visually representing temperature anomalies by country from 1880 to 2017 (Lipponnen, 2018). We finish the secondary source-based workshops with an introduction to urban environmental history and a chilling piece from Mike Davis on ruderal ecology (the study of ecological change on highly disturbed sites) in history and fiction, which leads us to think about cities as sites in which the maintenance of social order is contingent on the polity's ability to tame unruly nature.

Accompanying each secondary source-based workshop is a primary source-based one. Here the students engage with a wide range of materials; a different format each week keeps things lively. I usually provide a short, contextualising introduction to the sources, before students view or read them and begin their discussion. If we are looking at longer written sources I distribute them the week prior (and online via our Learning Management System), otherwise they are first encountered in class. We look at settler documents from early Perth, the city in which we are located, for evidence of Aboriginal environmental management, and for their biases and silences. For workshop 2, the students have collectively summarised the whole of *Guns, Germs and Steel* via a wiki in Blackboard, and in this workshop each team splits in two to debate the proposition that 'The broad patterns of human history are best explained by environmental factors'. (This isn't really a primary source exercise, but does challenge students to think about Diamond's use of evidence). We then examine a range of documents relating to the near-extermination of the American Bison in the late nineteenth century, including William Hornaday's account of the failure of Congress to use legal instruments to prevent the slaughter, and a map of battles between settler and native Americans between 1860 and 1890, the latter highlighting the role of environmental factors in wars on Indigenous peoples. For the workshop on earthquakes, we use contextualised and translated maps from J. Charles Schencking's excellent Great Kanto Earthquake website (Schencking, 2013) to home in on reconstruction after 'natural' disasters, and the manifold social and political barriers to use such events to effect lasting change. From there we move to iconic representations of the American dust bowl, in Dorothea Lange's photographs and Pare Lorenz's 1936 New Deal film *The Plow That Broke the Plains.* Here we think about the role of film and photography in placing meaning on environmental events, and how we can critically read such sources from an environmental historical perspective.

The workshop on fisheries, focusing on the mid-twentieth-century cod wars between the United Kingdom and Iceland, is one of my favourites. We used to watch two BBC documentaries produced during the cod wars before the website unfortunately vanished; now we watch extracts from an Icelandic documentary screened on the BBC (Sigurðsson, 2001), which includes contemporary footage as well as oral history interviews with those involved on both sides of the conflict. The students also

have a single A4 sheet providing some of the complex geopolitical background to these conflicts, to keep as a reference. Having thus introduced the conflict, each team then splits in half for a role play—one side is Iceland; the other the United Kingdom. It is 1972, the Icelandic coast guard is cutting the trawl nets of UK vessels and the British Navy has started to defend those vessels. The two parties have to negotiate an end to the dispute. It's fascinating to see how their resolutions compare with the actual resolution that was achieved. This again shows how resource conflicts are inextricably tied to other facets of national interest as well as regional and global governance. Switching gears, in the next workshop students read an extract from H. D. Thoreau's *Walden* (1854). We consider the appeal of 'getting back to nature' in mid-nineteenth century and contemporary contexts and, with an abridged version of Bill Cronon's classic essay on wilderness (Cronon, 2005), some of the pitfalls of this approach. For the workshop on nature and nationalism, we ask 'did it happen here?' with some extracts from Australian sources written in the 1990s on feral cats and gardening with native plants. We stay with Australia for the workshop on environmentalism, where we watch extracts from documentary footage of the dispute over Lake Pedder (*Lake Pedder: The Last Summer,* 1972 parts 1 and 2), and a film produced by The Wilderness Society during the Franklin River blockade (Scholes, 1983), comparing the two modes of environmental activism and accounting for the divergent outcomes. For the workshop on climate and culture, rather than staying with the current anthropogenic climate change crisis, we look to evidence of social and cultural responses to past climate variability, during the so-called Little Ice Age. After discussing the difference between these past variations and current anthropogenic global heating, we look at poetry, art and witchcraft prosecution statistics, considering the utility of each of these sources. The last primary source workshop is used for review, consolidation and feedback.

Over time I have become more confident in discussing my own research in our workshops. I have undertaken research across a wide range of environmental historical topics, much of which has been engaged with scientists or community groups. At first, I was concerned that students might think I was big-noting myself, but eventually I realised that they really were interested in seeing how environmental history works in the real world. In the workshop on fishing, I discuss a project I undertook in collaboration with colleagues in Plant Biology at UWA, using oral history to push back baselines for fish populations in the Capes Region south of Perth. I talk about the uses and pitfalls of this approach, and how the oral histories provide a range of other useful insights into changing human interaction with the region's marine life. I also use my research on far-right elements within the Australian organic gardening and farming movement to provide a bridge between the workshop reading on Nazi environmental beliefs and policies and a more familiar Australian context. This historical story about 'antipodean eco-nazis' works to demonstrate that nature and nationalism have been connected in a range of settings. In the final workshop, on urban environmental history, I talk about my research into the environmental history of suburban food production, and how I have worked with local food and food justice advocates, as well as city farms and community gardens, to provide a historical context for new urban food initiatives. This provides a real-world example of community demand

for environmental history and its utility in providing instructive and inspiring stories in the service of sustainability.

By the end of the unit, then, students have encountered some foundational works in environmental history, and had their perspectives on 'environment' broadened and sharpened. In their feedback, students mainly talk about the unusual workshop format and how they like actively working in teams 'rather than being talked at'. Some also describe how the unit has provided new and useful perspectives on current environmental issues, which is very gratifying!

I have recently returned to teaching environmental history at honours level, but this time with a wider, environmental humanities orientation and a focus on key works by international authors. None of the ten students who took the class would have done so if it were an elective: as with the undergraduate students, they were not really sure what to expect and a little concerned that it would be a semester of proselytising environmentalism. It was, of course, not like that at all, and all of the students were very enthusiastic about it by the end of semester. I chose readings for the first 2 weeks that would orient them to environmental history and humanities, then we tackled major works by Bruno Latour, Timothy LeCain, Rob Nixon, Jason Moore, Anna Tsing, Timothy Moreton and Donna Haraway. It was an exhilarating, collegial, collaborative and supportive experience, in which we all (myself included) learnt from each other.

One of the biggest challenges in compiling and teaching a global environmental history unit is finding a balance between 'staple' topics and foundational works that have been central to the development of the field internationally and in Australia, and newer, more diverse and more experimental perspectives. I don't feel that I have yet achieved the right balance, and my next move is to further decolonise the curriculum. We are well placed to do so in environmental history, thanks to an initiative that began in response to a tweet by environmental historian Dolly Jorgensen about diversifying environmental history syllabi. Nancy Langston created a website and Zotero group, and Davey Fousey collated suggestions from the Twitter thread. The project grew into a shared Zotero library which by March 2020 contained over 600 items by women and scholars from diverse backgrounds, contributed by the environmental history community; all searchable by keyword and tags (Langston & Fousey, 2019). This is a rich resource for creating syllabi that will have students reading work by more diverse authors—though it still has a strong North American flavour.

Another challenge involves raising the profile of environmental history, in order to attract more undergraduate students to this growth area. Many people—including many students—remain unaware that this branch of history even exists. The most common response when I tell people that I'm an environmental historian is 'what's that?'. While Grove (2001) has traced the origins of environmental history back to late-eighteenth- and nineteenth-century environmental thinkers such as Alexander von Humboldt and George Perkins Marsh, environmental history is, by most accounts, a relatively new field, with its origin in the 1970s in the USA. Although it draws upon a longer tradition of historical geography, and still has intellectual connections with various strands of geographical inquiry, as a sub-field of

history, environmental history is a precocious newcomer. Brave students enticed—or required—to study environmental history at university are frequently nervous that it will involve science, or that they will fare poorly if they are not environmentalists. Environmental history was indeed related to the rise of environmentalism, along with social history: this was history from the ground up that would, as one early practitioner put it, make his 'university, and particularly the Department of History, more responsive to the problems of society' (Nash, 1972). While the field tends to attract people deeply concerned about the environment, it has produced many works critical of Western late-twentieth-century environmentalism, and encourages a critical and evidence-based approach. In crowded course handbooks and media landscapes, where numerous possibilities jostle for student attention, it is difficult to know how to raise awareness of environmental history and distinguish it from environmentalism. Given that many of my students come from the sciences, building awareness among colleagues in science is perhaps a good start.

Another challenge—and opportunity—lies in the relationship between environmental history and environmental humanities. The latter takes two forms: firstly, it often manifests institutionally as an umbrella under which cognate fields such as environmental history, ecocriticism, environmental anthropology, multispecies studies, environmental philosophy and various branches of geography nestle (or in more hostile academic climates, huddle). On other occasions, environmental humanities manifests as an interdisciplinary field with its own suite of concepts and approaches (Emmett & Nye, 2017; Rose, van Dooren, Chrulew, Cooke, Kearnes, & O'Gorman, 2012). Environmental humanities as a major provides an opportunity for students to study environmental history alongside cognate disciplines and to develop competence as engaged interdisciplinary researchers and communicators, ready to tackle environmental issues as primarily problems of society and culture. One barrier is that 'environmental humanities' is probably even less legible to students than 'environmental history'. Another is that in an academic context increasingly run along user-pays principles and oriented towards a (perceived) outcome of well-remunerated and stable employment, it can be difficult for students to see how they will gain sufficient return on their investment in studying environmental humanities. Fundamentally, here the problem is that the utterly crucial work of sustaining our common life-support system is often poorly recognised and remunerated; an interim solution may be promoting environmental history and humanities alongside more conventional career pathways such as law, teaching and perhaps even engineering.

In response to the emerging opportunities and challenges of teaching environmental history and humanities, in late 2019, the Australian & New Zealand Environmental History Network (https://www.environmentalhistory-au-nz.org), with the support of the International Consortium of Environmental History Organisations, the University of Western Australia and the State Library of New South Wales, organised a 2-day workshop on teaching environmental history and humanities. Participants at a range of career stages and from a range of backgrounds exchanged hopes, ideas and experiences as well as syllabi and other teaching materials. From this gathering emerged an exciting array of possibilities for teaching in the two fields, some of which I hope to try out with my own units.

An early session led to identification of possibilities for course themes or topics, including materiality, SDGs, economy, oceans, urban/rural, movement/mobility, justice, emotion, region/globe, climate change, sustainable cities and the Anthropocene. I regard the Anthropocene concept as problematic because of the way in which it elides diversity and produces an implicit connection between our current environmental crisis and humanity as a species. Terms like 'Manthropocene', 'Capitalocene' and 'Plantationocene' (Moore, 2015; Haraway, 2015; Raworth, 2014) strike me as more apt—but perhaps this could be one of the dilemmas around which a unit is structured.

Some key issues that participants identified in environmental history and humanities teaching included the presence of the environmental history 'canon' and how we engage with it from regions outside of North America and Europe. We also discussed issues of scale, and how we tackle the possibilities for doing environmental history and humanities at a range of scales, from big history and deep time to world history to biography and local studies. The relationship with 'science' was also teased out, involving issues around reaching science majors, incorporating environmental history/humanities into science programmes and communicating with science colleagues. Another set of useful discussions involved how we navigate hope and despair. Students often give me glowing feedback about my undergraduate unit while also remarking that it was 'so depressing' because of the focus on environmental devastation and relative lack of positive, hopeful historical examples. Workshop participants suggested a wealth of ways in which to provide students with tools for navigating the reality of destruction and loss without resorting to an unrealistic and ineffective optimism, for example, through looking at different kinds of loss and home-making (e.g. in refugee communities); extinction elegies; critically interrogating notions of emergency and emergence as well as resilience; through thinking about the ways in which historical and humanities interventions can inspire action including new forms of care and through historicising loss and emotion more generally.

We heard of ideas and experiences about possibilities for learning through diverse methods and sources, including storytelling, dance, oral history, art, objects and artefacts, sound, reflective and observational journals, glossaries, teamwork, multidisciplinary perspectives and debates, using student family histories as a resource, 'problem-based' inquiry, 'what is' questions, and through exploring the importance of diverse perspectives on a 'place' (following Doreen Massey's notion that places are never singular and stable but always have multiple identities) (Massey, 1994). This was followed up by a session devoted to fieldwork, led by Grace Karskens, which yielded inspiring and instructive examples from teachers working in a range of settings. Discussion ranged around activities from one-off short visits to site-based project work and dwelt on three main areas: benefits, strategies and challenges. Benefits included sensory experience, 'making it real', problem-based and place-based learning, multi-institutional potential and the possibility of extended independent projects rather than 'snack-sized learning'. Strategies included providing scaffolding in the form of skills for interpretation and supporting literature (perhaps for students to find); downloadable walking tours; inclusion of visiting scholars and

expert colleagues; connections with external organisations including cultural institutions and local government; undertaking readings in place; exploring contested and multiple meanings and 'cognitive apprenticeships'. Challenges varied according to the kind of fieldwork and ranged from logistics and scheduling, to paperwork and insurance, to managing risks associated with the potential for alcohol consumption and sex on multi-day expeditions.

A session on assessment, led by Jan Oosthoek, yielded a treasure trove of ideas for forms of project-based learning and associated assessment, from data visualising to podcasts, soundscapes, rephotography, posters and GPS logger apps. The relative merits of public and internal assessment yielded some particularly useful discussion. George Main, Senior Curator at the National Museum of Australia (NMA), led a session on GLAM (galleries, libraries, archives and museums), starting with an overview of the NMA's new environmental history gallery opening in 2021, and its various teaching opportunities. Grounded in some of the key environmental history and humanities literature, the gallery seeks to provide a visceral visitor experience of the agency and force of a more-than-human world. Nancy Cushing then drew us into a consideration of how we might collaborate for better teaching and learning across a range of institutional settings, leading to a range of practical suggestions for sharing resources, ideas, intelligence and perhaps even courses. Indigenous engagement was an intersectional theme, appearing regularly in discussions that emphasised the need to include Indigenous voices in unit materials and engage with local Indigenous people in place-based inquiry, in particular.

Teaching environmental history is at once a great responsibility and a fantastic opportunity to equip students to better understand and respond better to the very serious, complex and multi-dimensional environmental challenges we face. Environmental history and humanities more generally provide an important opportunity to reflect on the manifold causes of environmental problems, and their unevenly distributed risks and burdens. It also provides other opportunities—to get out of the classroom, to hear diverse voices, to get to know local places, to work collectively to solve problems and to imagine other ways of being and relating.

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Chapter 13
Citizenship and History

Alison Holland

> There really are no legal issues, there are only historical issues.
> The answers to the questions: who is criminalised? what is
> criminalised? and how is crime punished? can only come from a
> thorough historical accounting of patterns of marginalisation
> and privilege, of over-policing and under-policing and so on. My
> point is this: I come out of this degree seeing conversations
> about change and reform as being historical conversations that
> challenge ideas about the neutrality, about the fairness and about
> the inevitability of things.
> Gosling (2019).

Abstract In a complex, disturbing and rapidly changing contemporary world, characterised by violence, mass migration, displacement and identity politics what role can the study of history play in creating citizens who can navigate responsible and responsive personal and professional futures? Utilising surveys conducted among students and graduates of Modern History at Macquarie University, Sydney, this chapter will explore the connection between citizenship and historical literacy. In particular, it asks how, in what context and whether history graduates end up agentic, empathetic and socially responsible members of society. It will consider whether the discipline acts as an agent for social change and social justice.

13.1 Introduction

The above statement was part of a speech written and delivered by a modern history alumnus to an annual history awards ceremony at Macquarie University in Sydney. The student had completed his history major and was moving on to finish the law component of his degree. Law would be his destination, but he'd been a stellar modern history student. In the speech, he spoke about the study of history as an exercise in 'comprehensiveness' by which he meant the importance of approaching problems

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through reading and dialogue with teachers and peers. In history classes, the sharing of conversation, rumination, anecdote and knowledge about a topic was, he said, a group exercise in progressing understanding. This was especially important when thinking about the law. He argued that historical thinking allows us to see the law as something other than static. By explaining continuity and change, the study of history helps 'an advocate shift people away from seeing the law as it is' to understand how it has been 'constructed and applied'.

At the completion of this student's speech, those in the room who had taught him took pleasure in knowing that there was a budding lawyer who would bring historical understanding into his everyday practice. Further, advocacy—reform of the law—was his explicit aim.

This alumnus's comment graphically demonstrates the point made by Hitchcock, Shoemaker and Tosh, that an undergraduate degree in the social sciences imparts a set of skills relating to the individual's role as a citizen, a political and social participant in a community (Hitchcock, Shoemaker, & Tosh, 2000). The student also suggested that the particular practice and methodology of history study imparts not just understanding but knowledge, argumentation, reflexive thinking to problems and self-awareness. This is important because, like him, the vast majority of history graduates will not go on to careers as professional historians, nor will they be defined by their work. As this student demonstrated tertiary education—the study of history—impacts on an individual's perspective and behaviour throughout life.

In an age of so-called 'post-truth', of fake news and deep citizen disillusion with politics and the failures of democracies and democratic institutions to address pressing social problems, the study of history—the lifeblood of democracy—seems more pertinent than ever (ANU, 2019). Yet, it is also the case that, possibly at no other time in its history, has history had to defend its turf and justify its existence in the way it does now (Alterman, 2019). In part, this relates to the privileging of STEM literacy in discussions about meeting the educational challenges of the twenty-first century (Capraro & Han, 2014; Zeidler, 2016).

It is also related to the perceived tangible (quantifiable) benefits of 'doing' history. In a neoliberal polity what students should learn and the value of education is relative to their individual prospects for future earnings (Hastings, 2019). History academics at Macquarie University see this every year on Open Day when anxious parents sit beside anxious, but unavoidably history loving, high-school students and ask: 'what is the purpose of studying modern history and where will it 'get' my daughter/son'? For one student, this translated as her family declaring the Bachelor of Arts 'as useful as a piece of toilet paper' (Peattie, 2019).

One of the ways to respond to this concern and sentiment is to emphasise the transferable skills of a modern history major and Bachelor of Arts. This is not just qualities such as critical and analytical thinking, research and problem-solving, knowledge and effective communication. It is also a way of thinking and being in the world: perspective, understanding, worldview, empathy and responsibility. In short, it is the capability of historical thinking and historical literacy—their human/cultural capital—which sets history majors apart and gives them real-world applicability. Another way to respond to this anxiety is to listen to students and ex-students about

their modern history journeys. Teaching history has long engaged with ethical and moral debates. Moreover, it is generally recognised that the study of history is central to citizenship formation in democratic societies, that good history teaching may be a necessary condition for the formation of the 'good citizen' (Lee & Shemilt, 2007). But what kinds of citizens does it produce? This chapter explores the place of history teaching and learning in contemporary society, focusing on the question of the link between history education and citizenship. I focus on historical knowledge, problem-solving, history beyond university and what constitutes good citizenship.

I address these issues as a practitioner of university teaching for two decades. While I teach in Australian history survey units (nineteenth and twentieth centuries) I specialise in the teaching of Indigenous history. I have also taught units on environmental history and in the field of Indigenous education, as well as upper-level units on citizenship and rights in Australian history. The research for this paper included an anonymous survey which I conducted in the second semester, 2019. This was targeting all final year (300 level) students (including in the two units I was teaching at the time), as well as past history students. Out of 50 survey respondents, 38 were current, 300-level students and 12 were alumni.

The majority of responses were from the current 300-level cohort. Titled 'Making Better Citizens', the surveys asked students to reflect on a range of questions relating to skills and attributes of being a modern history major, learning outcomes, graduate capabilities and the relationship between the study of history and citizenship (Making Better Citizens, 2019). In the context of education, perception data such as student surveys is used to supplement the more objective evaluative methods such as assessment tasks, attendance and so forth. It is understood as a process of critical self-evaluation which can be used to improve the educational experience (Schwab, Sharma, & Loreman, 2018). Along with colleagues, I regularly undertake such surveys of teaching and unit experience to improve learning and teaching overall.

However, 'Making Better Citizens' was different. Notwithstanding the fact that student responses often illuminated aspects of teaching method, this survey targeted student perceptions of the study of history as a discipline rather than how it was taught at university. It also required students to think about citizenship; their own, and in the context of the broader society, to make conceptual connections between history and citizenship. The responses of students undertaking the modern history capstone unit that I was teaching were particularly interesting because historical literacy was the conceptual underpinning of the unit. Until 2019, this was the only compulsory unit in modern history, designed to be the culmination of their studies in the discipline. It is a unit which actively encourages student reflection about their skills as they transition to the next stages of their careers and/or study. In this context, historical literacy was framed as a transferable skill.

The experiences of a cohort of university students at one metropolitan university in Australia clearly limits the capacity to generalise. The aim, here, is rather to provide a case study of student perceptions of studying history and their own historical literacy. Discussed primarily in relation to school education historical literacy is rarely considered in tertiary history pedagogy (Lee, 2011). Education theorists and

scholars have linked it to historical understanding and consciousness (Virta, 2007). One such theorist, Peter Lee, has pointed to the need to pay attention to student's ideas about the discipline and their orientation to the past in a consideration of historical literacy (Lee, 2005).

What we see in this study is how historical literacy produces a particular kind of citizen, not in the way that history education may have done in the past in terms of instilling identification to a historically shaped nation-state, but as a disposition, a critical thinker, capable of judgement and tolerance and an appreciation of the contingency of the present (Mandler, 2002). The cohort might not be representative but it was diverse and there was a sense that even being asked to think about these questions and to think about history in this way was illuminating and even empowering.

13.2   Teaching Us About the World and Its Processes

One of the key benefits of studying history is that it produces aware, informed, reflexive and critical thinking citizens. At its simplest, the study of modern history teaches students about the world and its processes, satisfying what one student called 'the search for explanations (Holland, 2019). Historical literacy is about knowledge, not of facts, but understanding structural forces of change and continuity. As one student reflected in the capstone unit, 'knowing the exact date the Russian revolution occurred isn't nearly as important as understanding and analysing the larger narrative strands of Russian and European history that enabled such an event to occur when it did'. His foray into early modern European history enlightened him to 'the vast processes that have produced the modern world; complex human efforts into the centralisation of states, the development of capitalism, the beginning of a burgeoning global consumption and the origins of nation states' (Dehring, 2019). His experience of history had led him to think about it as a subject. He noted that it was not linear or intentional, nor was it coming to an end, as Fukuyama proclaimed, 'but perhaps we are on the brink of a restart in history'. He added, 'This era of bipolarity and unipolarity, originating with the First world war, may in fact be a historical anomaly soon to return to the previous historical multipolar system'. For another student learning about historical contingency, 'nothing is ever pre-ordained', was important. He added, 'we must realise that what we consider social truths are merely contingent on people believing that it is the truth'.

Many students articulate understanding the world as one of the key advantages of studying history. As one student reflected, majoring in modern history provided a framework to understand the contemporary world. This can translate as contextualising contemporary events and trends, such as the rise of Donald Trump or the rise of China in modern global politics. It also refers to being able to see patterns emerging and how decisions made in the past influence the present. It enables links to be drawn with past generations, understanding the similarities in the human experience. What students appreciated about their history training was that it also related to critical thinking enabling them to think deeply about a wide range of scenarios,

leading to informed judgements about the world. In the words of one student, 'the study of history makes one approach articles, books and blogs with a critical eye, ask questions about its validity, identify potential biases and take a step back and make my own evaluation about information'(Making Better Citizens, 2019).

One student commented that this was particularly evident in their study of post-modernity. In a unit titled 'Shock and Awe: A History of the Postmodern World', students explored contemporary issues, mostly from the 1980s to the present. It was challenging to respond to issues that were 'remarkably immediate', according to one, but the approach taken in the class contributed to a strong sense of grounding, 'often I get the sense that historically grounded explanation takes some time to cohere and emerge. This week-to-week process was both an individual and class-based exploration of creating and defending historically informed explanations for contemporary issues' (Making Better Citizens, 2019).

Another student described her own awakening. As an international relations major she chose a history unit as an elective. It was the first she'd done at university and, on the strength of it, she became a double major. The unit was 'The World Since 1945' and she had not realised how relevant the study of history was to everything she was doing and to contemporary issues such as decolonisation and neoliberalism. She added: 'I had in my own life enjoyed historical narratives and media immensely but had not realised how modern history covers more broadly and contextually major issues that 'continued in contemporary Australia and in a global context'(O'Neill, 2019). One alumni understood this the other way round, that all contemporary problems are historical ones. As they said, the idea that contemporary problems are unprecedented 'is going to be almost always wrong'. They added that there is nothing exceptional about the present and that our contemporary experiences can be traced back to dynamics that existed in the past (Making Better Citizens, 2019).

As well, teachers instilled in students the importance of asking questions and forming historical arguments based on evidence. One student reflected that extensive use of primary sources in her medieval and early modern classes encouraged the honing of historical imagination. For her, it was this melding of imaginative and intellectual processes that gave historians a unique skillset (Budd, 2019). For another, the dynamism and inspiration of history were in the combination of evidence and analysis (Making Better Citizens, 2019).

Others reflected on how the study of history allowed for a more reflexive position, one which lent itself to assessing and reasoning about events, issues and people in both the past and the present. In the words of one, 'things are never quite as simple as they might appear'(Making Better Citizens, 2019). Critical thinking allows students to assess and interrogate the past to gain a better understanding not just about events and their consequences but even 'to revision the past and provide an alternative to an accepted historical interpretation'(Guthrie, 2019). On the other hand, reflexive thinking creates a more understanding, less judgemental, humanity, as one 300-level student reflected:

> I believe that the empathy, flexible thinking, understanding of continuity and change, self-awareness, and understanding of macro and micro contexts that I have developed throughout my Modern History degree have fundamentally changed how I approach new information,

whether that be in my research, work, or personal life. I have developed an increasing awareness of the need to consider the reasons and contexts for actions, events and decisions. These skills have helped me to temper my bad habit of jumping to conclusions, and have helped me mature into a more reasoned student, worker, friend, family member and partner (Peattie, 2019).

To understanding, critical thinking and reflection can be added the notion of perspective. Perspective took many forms in student/alumni reflections from a broader perspective of time and place which history engenders, to being engaged with different peer perspectives on a topic in the classroom and different historians' perspectives in historiography. One student noted that class debates around the Cold War not only helped them hone an argument but, by hearing counter-arguments, showed a perspective that they hadn't thought of or explored before. This related to developing one's own perspective on events, people and moments in the past and present. Learning postcolonialism totally changed the perspective of one student about Australian history and demonstrated how that history is connected with the rest of the world. One student reflected that his study of war and peace challenged him to reframe his perspective on conflicts and read outside the mainstream narrative and commentary. The student noted that topics covered in the unit reminded them to consider all stakeholders (Making Better Citizens, 2019).

Several students commented on the ways in which their study of pop culture transformed their thinking, demonstrating that it has a history, too, which is deeply embedded in contemporary society. For one student contextualising the widely watched 1970s television show, *The Sullivans*, was a revelation. They were intrigued as to how a period drama set in the 1940s could have so much traction in the 1970s and concluded that the show was a site of nostalgia but also one of reassurance and reconciliation in the tumultuous 1970s (Making Better Citizens, 2019). For one mature-age student studying pop culture, completely transformed the way she thought about it. Dismissing it as low brow prior to her history training, she came to understand how, for example, punk or rap music was a reflection of its time and fascinating to interpret as a result. She commented, 'now I take time to engage with audio and movie presentations of all genres. It also made me honest about how little I knew of pop culture – I take gallery visits more critically than I did prior to studying that unit which was challenging for me in every way' (Guthrie, 2019).

For others, it was history's complementarity with other areas of study that made it particularly valuable whether that be in relation to education, law, Indigenous studies, business studies, ancient history, politics, sociology or international relations. This related to knowledge as well as methods. As one student commented 'The scope of social, cultural, political and environmental issues (covered in the history major) strengthens skills of synthesis in ways that are unparalleled' (Making Better Citizens, 2019).

13.3   Problem-Solving and Flexibility

It has recently been argued that because of rapid technological change and other social, political and economic disruptions in contemporary global society, graduate attributes of importance to employability and citizenship are more important than ever (Oliver & de St Jorre, 2018, pp. 821–836). Two attributes of increasing importance in this context are problem-solving, including generating ideas and innovative solutions and working effectively with others: collaboration and teamwork. Increasingly, students undertake group activities in class in which they are expected to demonstrate attributes of effective interpersonal communication, respect, listening, empathy and problem-solving. Oliver and de St Jorre argue that the skills students gain in the process need to be made more visible, explicit and embedded in assessed curricula (Oliver & de St Jorre, 2018, pp. 821–836).

Student reflections demonstrate just how important history training is for the acquisition of these powerful citizen skills. One of the big lessons of the capstone unit, which I communicated to students at the completion of the unit in 2019, was how it demonstrated the importance of effective collaboration and teamwork to outcomes and achievements. The key assessment task of the unit was participation in a debate. Students had to select a proposition out of a hat at the beginning of the semester and then work with their fellow debaters across the semester. In weeks 11 and 12, we had a debating cup and 20% of their mark was based on their group effort in the debate.

This was a very challenging task. The propositions were quotes from famous people/leaders/thinkers about history in some form and their task was to make an argument for or against using at least three historical or historiographical examples to illustrate. The lion share of their mark for the semester was their individual effort, firstly in the writing up of an individual thesis, then 10% on their own individual presentation in the debate, followed by participation in class and a written reflection. The students who won their side of the debate, however, were the ones that had clearly worked well together as a team. This was about effective communication, respect, support, trust, cohesion and group effort. Fundamentally, it was also about problem-solving. This was in relation to the proposition itself. How to argue that 'the history of liberty is a history of resistance' in the negative was extremely challenging. How to argue in the affirmative that 'it is the right of all nations to put their own interests first' was similarly challenging.

Yet, it was by no means a foregone conclusion that the alternative sides would automatically win. Indeed, in each case, the more convincing side had everything to do with effective problem-solving and teamwork. But problem-solving was also part of the collaborative experience itself. This included having to work cooperatively with others, arriving at a consensus about the team's approach, making decisions about what parts of the argument to include from each person's individual thesis, accommodating alternative views and perspectives, respectful listening and encouraging peers to be their best. Indeed, groups who did not show these things performed badly by contrast.

Students reflected on the challenges of this task. For one, it demanded creativity. Having to argue that 'we will be remembered more for what we destroy than what we create' in the negative, she was challenged but overcame the difficulty by 'approaching the statement from a very specific perspective with respect to Australian military history which situated destruction as the loss of lives and creation as the strategic opportunities created by the Gallipoli campaign' (Foley, 2019). While she believes that she would have made a stronger argument in the affirmative, this task demonstrated how her major reinforced critical and creative thinking skills.

Other students reflected on the collaborative side of this unit as the most enjoyable aspect. One noted how the teamwork aspect would be beneficial to future personal skills relating to employment. Another reflected on how working in a team across the semester helped them to improve their group work skills. For another, the debate itself impacted their thinking in relation to problem-solving but also having to think about a proposition historically. They commented on the pleasure of digging 'deep into the debate topic and the impacts of certain events and historical concepts on the way we, as a society, think. Having to think about collective memory made them think about the different ways we remember things individually and collectively even when we may not have experienced the event personally or firsthand. Very eye opening' (Making Better Citizens, 2019).

As a format for learning debates, whether in the form of in-class discussion or in a formal debate set-up, appear to be a very useful tool, demanding thinking on your feet and creativity. Describing the capstone debates as a 'historical moot court' one student commented how she and her teammates used evidence in different ways than they would normally have done in order to create a convincing argument where their stance (affirmative or negative) was predetermined (Tesara, 2019). This demonstrates that the kind of problem-solving engaged in revealed the contingent and constructed nature of historical knowledge and the multi-layered potential of possible solutions.

Further, debating develops reasoning and argumentation, helps critical thinking and perspective and being prepared to consider alternate views. As one student reflected heated class discussions demonstrated they could debate without getting into a physical fight. Debates also teach students the importance of flexibility. One student reflected on participating in a class debate in European history on how to interpret Napoleon Bonaparte, whether we explain his rise as the continuation of the French revolution or see him as the creator of a new era. This student was put on the latter side even though they were a proponent of the former. Being challenged in this way, having to suspend one's own views in favour of arguing something else, was, in the words of this student, 'one of the best challenges that I have had so far in studying Modern history' (Making Better Citizens, 2019).

Two examples of alumni who presented their problem-solving and creativity skills in job interviews demonstrate their transferability. One of our alumni is working at a marketing agency mainly focused on the retail sector. She credits her study of modern history as pivotal to her success in the industry, in terms of communication, problem-solving, understanding context, integration and synthesis of knowledge. Another got a job with a large corporate accounting firm following graduation as a modern history major. She tells the story of talking about a self-selected research

project she developed in early modern history and the essay that resulted in the job interview and how interested the company was not only with the topic but with her creativity and lateral thinking.

13.4 History Beyond the Ivory Tower

The alumni quoted at the beginning of this chapter used the platform of the history awards to tell his audience how he intended to use his history training outside the university walls. In many ways, it is hard to track where our majors end up and how their study informs their life and work. We have some anecdotal evidence but there is also evidence from student reflections and survey responses that the study of history has provided them with a set of skills that range from unique to transferable that they now have in their kitbags. As the foregoing discussion demonstrates, the study of history changes the way students think about themselves and the world which is also suggestive of their future outlooks. Cultural awareness, appreciation of diversity, social engagement, judgement, empathy and compassion were frequently noted in student responses. For example, 'contribute to contemporary debates with an informed, sensitive and critical understanding of the relationship between past and present' was very high on students' assessment of learning outcomes and their applicability in the survey I conducted.

Perhaps one of the most revealing aspects of student survey responses in terms of tracking the impact of modern history study beyond university was in relation to the survey question on graduate capabilities. These include things like research capacity, effective communication and critical thinking as well as creativity, being socially and environmentally aware and capable of professional and personal judgement. Out of ten capabilities listed in the survey, commitment to continuous learning came fourth after research capability, critical thinking and discipline-specific knowledge.

This commitment to learning is partly generated by students' passion for history in the first place. Several respondents pointed out that the thrill of history was in discovery, in the ability to time travel, to hear and construct stories, for 'history is always fascinating' (Making Better Citizens, 2019). There is also a sense, however, that lifelong learning is a natural corollary of history's ability to teach students about the world and themselves. In the responses to why history makes for a more responsible citizenry, there was a strong connection between understanding the world and the forces that have shaped modernity and students' interaction with it, not just for now but into the future. In short, history empowers future citizens. In the words of one student, 'studying history gives me the knowledge and skills needed to help be a person who can contribute positively'.

Beyond this, we have anecdotal evidence that studying history makes alumni receptive to roles and work experiences in which they demonstrate a commitment to social justice. As one alumnus commented:

By spending time examining the origins of historical issues and the ways of interpreting the past, it is inevitable that history students understand membership of communities in ways that are unique to the discipline. Because we study how communities form and transform over time, we have a heightened awareness of what it means to engage as citizens (Making Better Citizens, 2019).

Teaching the kinds of units I do has made me particularly aware of the ways in which history majors take their knowledge and social justice awareness into their working lives. This is particularly the case with those students who are going on to be secondary school teachers. They take units in Australian history to facilitate their knowledge and in order to cover key aspects of the curriculum that they will have to teach. However, most students come to Australian history at university grudgingly. There is a universal view that the way it was taught at high school turned them off it (Clark, 2008). What they learn and how they learn it at university often changes this view. As one student noted on completing a unit on the origins of modern Australia, the connections drawn between Australia's origins and contemporary Australia demonstrated how issues relevant to historians are contemporary ones (O'Neill, 2019).

This is particularly the case with my unit on Indigenous history, which I now teach in a transnational, comparative frame. This frame not only allows students to see that Australia's colonial origins are part of a broader global story but enhances their appreciation of Indigenous historical experience transnationally (Holland, Hayward-Anderson, Mayes, & Sanders, 2018).

One student in the 2019 offering of the unit, who was in their final year before completing their education degree to become a teacher, made it clear how she intended to use her historical knowledge to improve what and how she teaches. It is worth quoting her comments in full:

The ability to think critically about the past is a key feature of citizenship. I look forward to applying and transferring the historical literacy skills that I have acquired over my degree to my future context of teaching History in secondary schools. I am aware that in the settler society of Australia, developments in the school curriculum have occurred against the backdrop of Indigenous peoples' ongoing grievances and struggle for self-determination. Despite efforts to provide Indigenous students with the opportunity to reclaim their history through storytelling and the sharing of culture in the classroom, there exists an underlying dilemma in that the forces of a Eurocentric curriculum still work to colonise these students. With this in mind, I intend to navigate my way around the systemic disadvantage that is embedded in the system of education by grounding my instruction in historical thinking and empathy when teaching history, so as to equip students with the intellectual tools as active citizens to negotiate disputed claims to historical truths (El-Kabbout, 2019).

Some alumni, who completed the unit in the past were already practising this. Just recently, one contacted me to let me know how she was using Professor Lyndall Ryan's massacre map in the secondary classroom (Ryan, 2018). I had used this as a teaching resource when examining Australia's frontier wars. It is one of the most powerful teaching tools because of its visual resonance and its rigorous historical method. Like the student quoted above, this student left university the previous year telling me that she intended to take what she'd learnt to teach Australian history differently. In a subsequent email, she wrote of her experience with using the map in

a classroom. Excitedly she said, 'I thought you might like to know that her (Ryan's) truly excellent research is being shared with a whole new generation'.

I have written references for students who, on completing the unit, apply for an Aurora Internship which is an internal scheme designed to give Indigenous and non-Indigenous students a four-six week placement in an Indigenous sector organisation involved with native title, justice, community development, policy, human rights and the like. This agentic disposition was also exemplified in the last honours student in modern history. She was doing a double degree in arts and law and, before completing the law component undertook a history honours thesis. Her project was on Indigenous land rights of the 1980s, and she was specifically interested in exploring a particular commission of inquiry conducted under Neville Wran, then premier of New South Wales (Lynch, 2012).

She topped the year, went on to finish law and became a lawyer in private practice in Sydney. However, early in 2019, she contacted me to update me on her career. She had moved from private practice to a community legal centre called Justice Connect, a not-for-profit organisation where, as she put it, she now worked 'as a Law Lawyer AND a Local Aboriginal Land Council Lawyer!' As she noted, she seems to have found her fit. She had also sent me a copy of an article she wrote for the Internet Law Bulletin on racism and the internet (Lynch, 2018).

Teaching students aspects of Australia's environmental history seems to have engendered a similar spirit of educating the community beyond the university's walls. As one student who had completed the unit remarked:

> The contemporary Anthropogenic challenges facing Australia's environment (and globally) is becoming increasingly essential in the practice of daily life. These challenges are especially relevant to the current situation faced by our rural farmers in this time of intense drought conditions. It is vital that all Australians have a working knowledge of the unique, beautiful, ancient and dry continent on which we live ….I'm motivated to continue learning and reflecting on the issues Australia's environment and the population will face into the future (Anonymous, 2018).

Students sometimes reflect on the way they take their studies into their homes and social spaces. Over the years I've heard students reflect on discussions, they've over-heard in the pub, for example, about Indigenous people, issues or history. They tell the class about their desire to interrupt and educate members of the public who, they acknowledge, often show much ignorance and/or racism about Aboriginal people and the history that they are learning. For others, it is about educating the family not only on the facts but towards a more empathetic view of events in the past. One student summed this up:

> Without the interruption of an evidence-based argument which the study of history provides I would have lost a certain empathy when it comes to understanding current day issues, lapsing into silence when the racist family member blurts out a judgement on a particular community, which sounds like a strange thing to value. I recall a very painful exchange with a family member turning from adversarial to genuine interest when they initiated an argument with another family member about the 'war' on ANZAC day. Had I not been completing a unit on the subject over that summer, I certainly would have lacked the confidence to constructively contribute to countering the erroneous judgments from both the sides in my own little family 'war' during Christmas lunch that year! (Making Better Citizens, 2019)

13.5   Good Citizens

Related to the issue of history beyond the ivory tower is the question of what kinds of citizens history teaching produces. If, as Einstein once said, education is not the learning of facts but the training of the mind to think, as the foregoing discussion suggests, the study of history produces citizens who actively think about, and make sense of, the world we live in with all its complexities with knowledge, perspective and analysis. As two current 300-level students reflected, 'history is not about exporting formulaic solutions' in the words of one (Anonymous, 2019). Viewing it as a 'handbook', according to the other, neglects the reality of the historian's experience that allows us to feel. She added, 'we must acknowledge the past and interact with it in a way that moulds the way we, as individuals and as historians, behave and carry ourselves as citizens in the twenty-first century' (Morrison, 2019). In short, being a historian is a prized contribution that students understand they make to the citizen store which is of unique value to society at large. In the survey, students responded unanimously that studying modern history impacts the way they interacted with the world, think differently about contemporary problems, and made them more empathetic, socially aware and responsible.

On a very broad level, citizenship is the quality of belonging to a nation. Views as to what constitutes 'good' citizenship vary. According to the author, activist and entrepreneur, Eli Pariser, to be a good citizen it is important to be able to put yourself in other people's shoes and see the big picture. History students have a special facility for doing this, not least because students understand the importance of historical imagination in the stories we tell. As one current 300-level student reflected on her historical literacy, it has engendered in her 'more compassion and empathy for the marginalised and given me greater appreciation for the culture in which I live'. As another student reflected 'historical imagination is important in studying the past, but also in navigating the present'. This, she said, is directly related to one's participation in society: 'The ability to empathise is useful in fostering one's readiness for participation in society as a critical citizen who can think independently, and evaluate competing claims of historical truth' (Making Better Citizens, 2019).

In terms of student reflections on this question, former secretary-general of the United Nations, Kofi Annan's comments seem highly pertinent. He maintained that 'no-one is born a good citizen; no nation is born a democracy. Rather, both are processes that continue to evolve over a lifetime' (Annan, 2015). In the previous section, we saw how the idea of lifelong learning imbued student and alumni reflections about majoring in history. As one student noted, history students recognise that history is not an abstract concept separate from ourselves. Quoting from John Tosh, she acknowledged that 'we are part of a trajectory that is still unfolding', and 'we can use this knowledge to enhance our present and our future' (Anonymous, 2019). More than that, according to one student, gaining historical literacy has actually enriched her own civic life. (El-Kabbout, 2019).

In the survey I conducted, students were asked what attributes they thought a good citizen should have. From a list of 12 including tolerance and historical sensibility, the top 4 qualities students nominated (in order) were responsibility, ethical behaviour and practice, understanding and, tied in fourth place, environmental and social awareness, and compassion. When asked, in a separate question, whether the study of modern history made students more responsible citizens all respondents agreed in the affirmative. For one student, this translated as civic engagement and responsibility in the context of contemporary threats to democracy:

> Citizens, now more than ever in recent history (the challenges to liberal constitutional democracy) ought to be critical yet empathetic with our history if we can act responsibly. See Chapter 8—Civil Education, in Soutphommasane's 'The Virtuous Citizen'. I quote at length from p 187: 'Obviously this will require a measure of historical sophistication - an ability to make sense of contradictions between principles and practice, ideals and reality. When confronted, for example with the fact that slavery existed in the [US] in spite of the [Declaration] proclaiming that it was 'self-evident' that 'all men are created equal', an American has two options: either to believe that the original document was written with the intention of excluding slaves, that it represents an expression of racism…; or that the text of the Declaration should serve as a reminder of the gap that exists between what Americans are and what they might be at their best' (Making Better Citizens, 2019).

This student understood responsibility in terms of emotional intelligence, what they termed 'emotional generosity', which they said 'demands from citizens not merely an effort to comprehend cultural diversity but also to make sense of what it reveals about one's own tradition' (Making Better Citizens, 2019).

When asked what historical sensibility was in the context of good citizenship students demonstrated its embeddedness in these other categories. It was broadly about awareness and self-awareness, at the collective or national and individual levels, as well as understanding, empathy, curiosity and appreciating the contexts of your time and place. This included understanding your nation's history and the role of the state, and understanding social and environmental issues such as Aboriginal dispossession, the contested nature of citizenship, struggles for social justice, the role of trade unions and human impacts on environments. It is about understanding the historical origins of a lot of contemporary issues and concerns and about having the capability to research and comprehend contemporary problems when you don't understand them.

For one alumnus, historical sensibility was connected to citizenship. It was understanding that citizenship has been contested and constructed. This student said that we need to appreciate that citizenship is not static but evolving and changing. Rather than appreciating what history reveals about one's own tradition, for this alumnus, historical sensibility 'draws our attention away from the culturally specific context of our own communities and shifts it to others. Rather than understanding it as something exclusive, an historically informed view of the world compels us to see the interconnections and links between communities and their environmental contexts' (Making Better Citizens, 2019).

Out of the survey responses came the sense that history study is tied to ethical practice because it allows for discernment and gives one an appreciation of context

and perspective. Having a historical sensibility helps navigate contemporary problems and living in the world with an informed approach. Included is the ability to think deeply about the root causes of issues and problems and look for explanations beyond the superficial cycles of news, social media feeds and the like. For one student this is not only what sets history graduates apart but what ultimately makes for a more informed, compassionate, citizenry:

> A non-historian would assume a direct position on any issue facing the world. They would hear some news or a story from a friend and would assume a position. Whereas, historians are taught to be open and aware of other perspectives. This helps with the hard-non-factual news and stories being flooded through our minds, and I believe that these can often make the world more divisive than unified (Making Better Citizens, 2019).

In some ways, this is related to critical and analytical thinking. It was a view summed up by a modern history alumnus who noted that 'many people see current critical challenges as being spontaneous and difficult to understand', what the alumnus termed 'evolving situations'. This ex-student went so far as to suggest that, by contrast, reflexively looking for origins, counterexamples and analogies was a compulsion for those who study history. This ex-student reflected other student views in saying that the study of history furnished them with 'a vocabulary of examples and analogies that I can contrast with current critical challenges', adding: 'As a history graduate, I am always sceptical of claims that there are no parallels or no antecedents that can explain critical challenges as they exist today' (Making Better Citizens, 2019). This demonstrates Lee and Shemilt's point that the specific contribution of history education to a critical and rational citizenry is the development of a historical consciousness that can inoculate students from the trap of presentism (Lee, & Shemilt, 2007, p. 18).

Several students also reflected on how the study of history instilled an awareness of individual and collective agency. The idea that history students and ex-students have of human complexity and of contestation in the past means that they understand something of their own agency, that they are not merely cogs in something bigger than themselves, as is reflected in this alumnus's comment:

> I admit to there being forces that are beyond the control of nations acting alone, and it follows also for individual citizens. However, human qualities are all we have to work with just as in the past. We must be engaged; we must offer advice if it seems required. In one sense we must question media reports and also question where our taxes and other investments are channelled. I will not be working in a business or organisational area to do with making change. As an individual citizen I will use the ballot box as effectively as possible (Making Better Citizens, 2019).

Even more importantly studying history appears to give students some sort of mooring. It is about individual and collective identity and place in the world. It allows us to see that 'we are only a fraction of the story of humanity' (Making Better Citizens, 2019). One alumnus looked to historical figures with which they felt an affinity to draw inspiration (Making Better Citizens, 2019). For another, 'even though history doesn't cure diseases or create new inventions it can change people's lives, help people understand who they are and where they have come from' (Carter,

2019). For one student responding to the question of how history helps navigate contemporary critical challenges, the answer was that it gave them hope. They added: 'The computer age and the perceived threat that it has given to unemployment is no greater than the industrial age and the threat it gave to agriculture and artisans … human beings will adjust and create as they have in the past' (Making Better Citizens, 2019).

In an era where STEM subjects are increasingly prioritised as those needed to meet the challenges of the fourth industrial revolution (internet, AI, robots), this student's reflections were particularly apposite. Without making an explicit connection between the importance of historical study and human adjustment to change, this student was speaking to the importance of the humanities in terms of human well-being and resilience. This is beginning to be realised more broadly. The World Economic Forum, for example, has pointed to the importance of the humanities in preparing people for the changes and dislocations caused by technology and automation. Studies like history provide civic and ethical frameworks to allow humans to wield these with wisdom, perspective and due regard for the well-being of others: 'for technology to deliver on its promise of human benefit it needs a cultural and moral compass' (Vestberg, 2018).

13.6   Conclusion

In a critical essay on educating for an inclusive democracy, Dudley et al. (1999) called for the fostering of critical citizenship literacy in young people. They defined this as fostering social and cultural awareness and respect of difference, of understanding that citizenship is negotiated and dynamic, and an appreciation of the importance of flexibility. While they acknowledge that historical understanding is valuable to this process, 'history does inform civic understandings, whilst citizenship is always located in historical specificities', citizenship education required something more than a 'passive knowledge of the past'. For the authors, critical citizenship literacy is about equipping individuals with agency. Active citizens are social agents able to negotiate the terms and practices of citizenship (Dudley, Robison, & Taylor, 1999, pp. 436–37).

This chapter has demonstrated that, far from creating passive citizens, the study of modern history builds individuals with critical citizenship literacy too. At its most basic students of modern history understand that it teaches them about what it means to be human. This related to a 'more nuanced understanding of the ways individuals interact with one another interpersonally, socially and institutionally'. It is about 'empathy for past generations and different cultures', it 'allows us to consider the importance of life and or personal experiences and stories', it 'develops greater compassion towards one another' and requires 'me to interact and relate to others in tolerant and inclusive ways' (Making Better Citizens, 2019).

We have seen examples of history students' agentic qualities in this chapter, but they are also agentic thinkers. The training instils a habit of the mind which is active,

curious, questioning and agile as their reflections and survey responses epitomised. From not taking things at face value, to understanding complexity and messiness, to identifying patterns and context and to searching for alternative possibilities and explanations, students and alumni are imbued with historical mindedness. In short, history study makes individuals who act and think actively in the world. Several students commented that it made them a better person: 'Through improving my historical skills, I am able to critically think; communicate my ideas with others; collaborate with others to improve our potential and think creatively to solve problems. Studying history has improved my intellectual capabilities to such a high degree, it's hard to think about what type of person I would be if I hadn't chosen this major' (Anonymous, 2019).

The final comment is from the student whose family said that her BA was as useful as a piece of toilet paper. In her reflection on historical literacy for the capstone unit, she noted:

> Degrees are a lot more than marks and assignments. They are also about growth: learning how to balance conflicting responsibilities, how to 'adult', how to communicate, how to formulate ideas and support them, how to find information and analyse it, how to think critically about the world, how to be self-aware and how to be flexible in your thinking. Completing the capstone has shown me that many of the skills I just listed are actually skills of historical literacy, a unique superpower of a history student. Far from being that useless piece of toilet paper my BA (Modern History) has shaped my world view in a way that will continue to inform my life, career and future studies (Peattie, 2019).

Clearly, history students do, indeed, leave university more informed and potentially better-performing citizens. They are sophisticated critical thinkers, empathetic and socially responsible members of society who are capable of personal and professional judgement and who bring considerable knowledge and civic awareness to the social store. That unique superpower—historical literacy—is a quality of significant social and cultural capital which we diminish at our collective peril.

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Chapter 14
Pandemic

Katie Barclay

Abstract COVID-19 transformed everyday life for millions of people globally in a remarkably short period of time. The social, economic and political effects of this pandemic are still uncertain, but as historians and teachers, we are faced with responding to this situation in our classrooms and with our students. This chapter explores how history teaching can provide a space to respond to pandemic for and with our students. It reflects on the new conditions of teaching during a pandemic, how history courses might address key questions raised by these conditions and online teaching as a site where such emotional–intellectual labour might be performed. Drawing on the concept of a pedagogy of vulnerability, it suggests that such teaching requires a mutual openness to conditions of uncertainty.

14.1 Introduction

At the time of writing, around 311,000 people globally had died from COVID-19, a novel coronavirus whose combination of virulence and impact on the body has marked it as a significant threat to humanity. Efforts to contain and occasionally eradicate this virus have led to widespread lockdowns, restrictions on movements, closures of borders and curtailment of economies as governments attempt to save lives, or at least reduce pressure on health care services. As any historian can tell you, it is not the first pandemic, even in the last century. Since the Spanish Flu in 1918–20 that killed 50 million people worldwide, flu pandemics have relatively regularly killed thousands, sometimes millions of people—death tolls that have been contained not only with local lockdown measures but underlying immunity from previous outbreaks and the relative ease of producing flu vaccines. Some pandemics we have lived with for some time. AIDS continues as a significant threat for some groups and to particular geographic regions, but as a blood-born disease has been more easily contained without significant transformations to the living conditions of the general public, at least in the West. COVID-19 is the first virus in a century

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that has required large groups of people across the globe to 'stay home' to reduce the spread of the disease. As a response, it is far from novel. Tabulating numbers of deaths for particular regions, moving as far away from those regions as possible, locking down the borders of your community and staying home has been the solution to plagues and pandemics for millennia. Our tests may be more accurate now, but the solutions remain well worn.

Placing COVID-19 in its historical context is perhaps the instinct of the historian; certainly, there is no shortage of op-eds at the current moment seeking to do just this (Turner, 2020; Brock, 2020). But moving into the classroom with a history of plagues and pandemics in the aftermath of COVID-19 raises a range of interesting issues. As we are reminded every day, those 311,000 dead are not just numbers but people who lived and who loved, whose lives intersected with those of others, not least ourselves and those of our students. Historians of plagues, as well as significant wars or genocides, have highlighted the impacts on populations of mass death, from personal trauma to collective grief (Tanner, 2006; Hunt, 2010; Hutchison, 2016; Kujipers et al., 2013; Confino, Betts, & Schumann, 2008). A scholarship on teaching 'difficult histories' has recognised the challenges that historical knowledge brings to individuals and groups as they seek to negotiate different visions of our pasts and to acknowledge the ongoing impacts of such knowledge today (Epstein & Peck, 2018; Witcomb, 2015). If plague, as COVID-19 has made particularly clear, does not impact all groups equally, the difficulties of such a history are perhaps less of trying to reconcile different understandings of the past than in making sense of a difficult present through historical knowledge, and of doing the 'emotion work' of dealing with a collective trauma in the classroom.

Like many historical researchers, my response to a pandemic was to do the research that helped me understand how to make sense of this new experience, and so when our annual call for new courses coincided with our current peak in COVID19 cases, I put together a proposal for 'Plagues and Pandemics', an online second-year undergraduate course. This chapter explores some of the issues that thinking about this course has raised for me, reflecting especially on teaching during a pandemic as a difficult history; on history teaching as an opportunity for engaging with current events; and human absence and connection in online teaching. Across the chapter, I reflect on what a pedagogy for teaching plague in response to a pandemic might require of teachers and students, and how thinking through this context might provide some useful principles for history teaching that attends to the present.

14.2   Teaching During a Pandemic

How's your pandemic going? 'My pandemic' began with a curtailed research trip and rapidly booked flight home from the UK to Australia, as borders quickly closed around me. It was my first experience of our new surreal reality, sharing a 24-hour flight with people not just in face masks but full-body PPE. I returned to 14 days in-home quarantine, a home I shared with my husband who continued to go out to

work as a schoolteacher (schools had yet to close in South Australia); by the time I was officially allowed to leave the house, my university had moved entirely online and staff instructed to work from home where possible. My first trip out was to rescue what books I could from my office before the building closed indefinitely; the few people I saw were doing similarly, waved at from a distance. Like everyone else, I settled into work from home.

Within a few days of being home, my husband's uncle—his mother's brother—died from cancer. It was an expected death. This weekend—8 weeks or so later—was the funeral of my husband's aunt, the wife of another of his mother's brothers, also from cancer. In between, three of my husband's school friends—people that I met at parties, shared drinks with when we were dating—died of COVID, as did two of my grandfather's cousins, and the husband of my mother's friend, the latter someone she had known from school. Only three of this group were over 60. Death with little intermittence. Several of my friends and family have had or, in the absence of available testing, think they've had COVID-19, charting their symptoms on Facebook for an audience. My father, a Healthcare Director for care homes, reports comforting the managers of facilities where COVID-19 has contributed to the deaths of dozens of people in a few days. My sister-in-law, a nurse in bed ill with all the classic symptoms, tested negative for COVID-19 yesterday; it's probably a false negative she is told. The rest of her team at work have tested positive and all share the same symptoms. Her 6-year-old, relocated to my parent's home, is terrified she will die; living in lockdown conditions (wash your hands; don't visit grandma), the dangers of the disease have been pressed upon her. We comfort her with the idea that risk is low, but even the adults struggle to disguise their underlying anxiety.

As a historian of emotion and family life, mass death from disease and its various impacts is familiar to me. Only a few months ago, I was writing about an eighteenth-century father who had had a breakdown after two of his children were burned to death in a fire; in total, he had lost 12 children before adulthood. I have written of other parents who developed coping strategies to manage the loss of multiple children; the first death of a child for a parent provided mechanisms not for reducing the grief of the deaths of subsequent children but in providing a road map for how to manage the emotional onslaught that followed, lessons in death and in grieving (Barclay, 2016). I am familiar with a literature on historic responses to mass death from disease or war; from the stoic twentieth century where repression of emotion in the generation following World War Two fundamentally shaped the parent–child relationship (Mort, 1999), to a different form of stoicism after the Thirty Years War (c1618–1648) that manifested in witchcraft accusations, prophetic children and extreme asceticism, often amongst young people (Bonzol, 2011).

Death is usually accompanied by rituals. These vary by culture but are typically marked by a moment dedicated to a 'pause' in the practices of everyday life for a reflection of a life now gone. Many societies hold funerals or similar events that bring together the community to mark the passing of a loved one and to support the family (Rosaldo, 1984). One of the horrors of mass death in war or during epidemics is that such rituals cannot be performed (Seitz, 2018). Bodies are lost on battlefields, never identified or recovered. The close succession of deaths due to illness during plagues

and pandemics refuse the possibility of elaborate rituals, whether due to limits on gatherings or because the rapidity of loss makes final disposition challenging to manage. The horror at mass graves in the cultural imagination, both historically and today, is perhaps indicative of how such events disrupt the procedures through which we manage death (Riddle, 2018).

The funerals of all of the people above were not attended by my immediate family—none were close enough relatives to fall into the threshold for gatherings; some of us, living thousands of miles away, would not have been able to attend due to border closures. In the close-knit Scottish communities of my family, new rituals have emerged. Families and neighbours line the street, obedient to social distancing measures, as the hearse draws past, a final moment of respect for the dead. But afterwards, they return to lockdown in their own homes, isolated from both processes of normal mourning and the social connections that help mediate such feeling. For those further away, deaths are not so much marked as noted, a growing list.

Good history pedagogy is sensitive to the student body, acknowledging the skills and knowledges they bring to the room, as well as reflective of the intellectual and emotional work that education, and perhaps especially difficult histories, ask of learners (Beckerman & Zembylas, 2011, pp. 185–96; Tuck & Yang, 2018). What does it mean then when the 'skills and knowledges' students bring to a room are an experience of mass death, of a chronic anxiety of living in pandemic conditions, of the impacts of isolation, of living in 'unprecedented times' as so many commentators have described it? Positively construed, perhaps more so than several generations of historians in the recent west, we have a student body for whom some of the more 'foreign' dimensions of historic experiences will not simply be novelties, learned through an empathetic engagement with historic actors, but events that resemble their own personal histories (Connolly, 2020). More challengingly, although certainly not distinctive to this subject, teachers have to work with a body of students for whom such histories may act as reminders of traumatic recent experience (such as the death of loved ones) or—given this pandemic has not yet ended and may not for some time—of their ongoing anxieties and isolation.

Teaching students experiencing a mental health crisis is no longer an unusual experience, as numerous studies have shown in recent years (Kadison & DiGeronimo, 2005). In South Australia, the COVID-19 outbreak coincided with the start of first semester, but the previous year at our institution had seen an unprecedented demand for mental health services. There had been much discussion as to whether this was the start of a trend or an aberration. Supporting individuals in personal crises however is not the same experience as teaching a class of students. Moreover, if the emotion of individuals is often contagious and shapes group dynamics (Scheve, 2011), that is a different experience from working with a group living through a challenging historic event, where we might share some commonality of experience but also a variation of personal impacts.

COVID-19 has been an especially good tool at evidencing the differential impacts of poverty and political power on health outcomes; the side effect of this is recognising that such differential impacts will also be reflected in our student bodies. Some students will have lost more family members than others; some will have experienced

greater economic instability; some will have had less access to resources, such as wifi, a computer or a private, quiet space to work, than others. Moving into the future as the social and economic consequences of global shutdown emerge, many of our students may experience significant financial stress. Some may find it more challenging to find the work that supports them studying; they may experience new concerns and anxieties about their futures, potentially graduating into a global recession.

Of course, academics are experiencing these things too, not least as the size of the industry threatens to contract in the Anglophone world due to reduced international student numbers. Many teachers—those employed on casual or short-term contracts, some of whom are also our students—have lost their jobs; many institutions will have less capacity to work closely with their students, as course offerings reduce and individual class sizes expand. Teachers and students alike are tired, many are anxious, some are frightened. Teachers have a responsibility to their students to manage classrooms in ways that are productive, 'brave' in offering chances for people to have difficult conversations in supportive settings (Pawlowski, 2018). But the responsibility of students to their teachers has been less recognised in the academic literature, perhaps with the exception of work by disability rights activists whose health has required certain forms of disclosure to the student body (Kerschbaum, Eisenman, & Jones, 2017).

Institutions, often concerned for their brand, can be especially anxious about such vulnerabilities being explored publicly (Christensen, Gornitzka, & Ramirez, 2019). The 'difficult conversations' of the classroom are meant to locate the academy as an ivory tower, set outside of the 'real' that we prepare students to encounter. Difficult conversations about the academy must be suitably abstracted—in generic social critiques of the industry—not personal accounts of the conditions of work. The professionalism of the modern academic—a language so critical to the contemporary PhD student designed to think about their education in terms of lines on a CV, of transferable skills, of 'alt-ac' workplaces ('alternative-academic', Boden, Epstein, & Kenway, 2007)—includes a commitment to the institution that is less connected to a belief in our vocation than that we are the face of a customer-orientated business. Teaching evaluations thus cause anxiety not only because they reflect implicit biases against particular social groups and are nonetheless used to measure performance (Chávez & Mitchell, 2020) but also as they commodify learning environments, undermining the trust and mutual ethic of care that should mark a good teacher–student relationship.

In the last few weeks (through the marvels of technology), I've been involved in conversations with academics across the world concerned about upholding 'standards' in the face of remarkable structural challenges. Suggestions that some honesty with our students about the fact that rapid moves to online teaching or massive loss of staff might have an impact on the quality of education are often quashed, either through fear of retribution by the institution, by the threat of consumer-minded students who won't enrol in subsequent years, or because displays of such vulnerability are viewed as a failure in professionalism that we hold as dear as our employers. The question arises however as to whether we can continue to uphold such silences in the wake of pandemic, of a cataclysmic event that has opened up our present as a

moment of 'potential', of 'becoming', where what once was is uncertain and what is to be known is still to be negotiated.

Moving forward from this moment requires a pedagogy of pandemic, a learning experience that acknowledges where our students are but also where we are as teachers, as disciplines, as institutions. And it provides a space for us to have difficult—yes—but perhaps, more importantly, explorative conversations about what they as students and we as teachers need for the future and what the discipline of history, of what we as history teachers, can do to fill that need. I would suggest that this will require a new acknowledgement of our vulnerabilities and transparency of our circumstances, of the classroom as a space to work in a mutual production of past, present and future. I would suggest in an ideal world that this conversation would not be limited to teachers and students but to our institutions, who should take braver steps in leading a conversation of what a better future should be, rather than relying on only our graduates to do this work in the world.

14.3   Learning with History

As a historian of both family life and emotion and whose research-led teaching lies in those domains, one of the key 'lessons' that I hope students take from my courses is that experiences that they think are 'natural', 'universal', 'normal' are in fact culturally and historically specific. Both the family and emotion, and sometimes familial emotions, are concepts that until quite recently were represented in public discourse as relatively unchanging, or—such as in the case of political calls for 'family values'—where a contemporary change in family form is situated against romantic visions of an imagined 'traditional' family. That family and emotion are unchanging are claims that do certain forms of political work for social groups (Barclay, 2020). This is not least the case for our students, many of whom have relatively few encounters with very different family forms from that in which they are raised, let alone have encountered the idea that what they feel might be unique to our current context. As well as providing access to the latest historical research on the history of the family or emotions, one of the key educations that students gain in my classroom is that the nature of their personal relationships, of their reactions to particular phenomena, can be rethought and thus that, if even things that seem so fixed can change, that they can be part of a refiguring of the world. I and others suggest that emotions and family might offer particularly fruitful ground for contributing to historical change because the transformations required begin with the personal and the local, not the seemingly larger challenges of mobilising the group or the global (Evans, 2011).

As I have argued elsewhere, one of the key contributions of the discipline of history, and the thing that makes it so significant to so many dimensions of human experience, is that it provides the 'common sense' knowledges through which we encounter the present, interpret the 'now', and enable decision-making for the future (Barclay, 2019a). Many historical knowledges are taught in families as a form of

family memory, something that for many people naturalises those histories, and the past extends from there to the public sphere—where it sometimes encounters alternative histories and leads to 'difficult' conversations. New historical research, therefore, plays an important role in helping people refigure these common-sense, and sometimes significant, ideas about how individuals think about themselves, their pasts and their futures.

When something as significant and world changing as a pandemic occurs, history thus becomes a critical resource for helping people to negotiate their personal experience. Situating current events against past knowledges is not necessarily designed to enable people to learn lessons from the past in some immediate or path-dependent form (the Black Death does not necessarily offer a model for the twenty-first century—for a debate on this topic see Apocalypse then and now, 2020). But it provides people with a set of narratives through which to voice their personal experience and comparative examples that can act as nodes through which contemporary events are explored and assessed. This is not least the case for the emotional experience that arises from a pandemic, for which discourse offers not only a name for often amorphous feeling but also a set of resources about how to manage and respond to such feeling (Reddy, 2001).

Being able to respond rapidly as teachers to an event like a pandemic by providing students with both the resources and space to explore their experience can offer not just responsive histories but a critical opportunity for enabling students to process their present and make decisions for the future. We may even consider such work as providing a key form of care for students who wish to do this intellectual and emotional work—for which, of course, not all students (or staff) may be ready. Reflecting on my personal research expertise and interest, when designing a course on this topic I considered there to be four critical areas for exploration that might help students think during, and within a pandemic. The first was some basic information about previous pandemics, such as their scope, impact and how people responded; here we might include suspected origins, numbers of cases and death rates (those remarkable figures that offer a sense of control over an ineffable event), how the disease spread across space and time and how humans sought to manage contagion (e.g. Bulmuş, 2012; Finger, 2012). This is designed to give students a framework to interpret the scope and scale of contemporary disease and how the present experience relates to historic experience.

Secondly, and indicating my background as an emotions historian, I wanted to explore how people responded emotionally to pandemics—to investigate the anxiety, panic, fear, grief, uncertainty, loneliness and isolation that is so often linked to such events (Peckham, 2015; Marshall, 2016). I would suggest this is an especially important theme as while not everyone will become ill or lose a loved one, almost everyone 'feels' a pandemic. Despite this and reflecting the prominence of psychological approaches to the self within Western culture that individualise feeling, there has not been significant public conversation around how emotion can become a form of contagion too and that such feeling has social, economic and political impacts (Ahmed, 2004). If the word anxiety is often used in contemporary media, some emotional responses to pandemic have been harder to articulate—can we call my

household's response to eight deaths in 8 weeks 'grief' if it is not marked by the rituals and responses we associate with such death in pre-pandemic conditions? We might also wish to ask what medieval Europeans felt in response to plague before the concept of anxiety existed, and if the emotional responses they had access to might have altered their experience and response to living in pandemic conditions (Boquet & Nagy, 2018).

Thirdly, I suggest that a key topic to explore is 'what happens next'. Past pandemics have not only had significant social and economic consequences but fundamentally changed how people thought about the nature of self and society (e.g. Herlihy, 1997). Contemporary prophets—holding on to such changes—suggest that post-COVID-19 might offer a progressive moment, a response to a society with growing economic inequalities, racist nationalism and so forth. Others are less optimistic, not least many historians who are aware that if pandemics have led to change that it has not always been progressive, and even where it was, it was almost never painless. Nonetheless, pandemics that close down the world do offer potential for an alternative form of re-opening and one thing that history is good for is explaining that change is not inevitable but bound up in the choices of individuals and groups. Offering our students an opportunity to explore how people have reorganised their worlds following significant cataclysmic events can therefore prepare them for making similar decisions in the years ahead of them. If no individual can control the future, nonetheless students can be enabled to recognise the forms of agency that are available to them and the possibilities of action (Sternberg, 2016). In a time where the future looks especially uncertain, an awareness that you are not alone in this experience and that others have negotiated similar change might offer a precarious hope.

Finally, I made the decision to make this course on plagues and pandemics comparative (Lange, 2012). Comparative history has become topical in the history of emotions as part of explorations of the cultural and biological boundaries of phenomena that have so often been associated with a universal body (Prestel, 2017; Dixon, 2015). When trying to define and categorise the ineffable, comparative examples have enabled a more robust analysis of what is being observed in particular contexts, denaturalising emotion and drawing attention to novel or repeating features. As with all comparative work, such scholarship requires an acute sensitivity to context and to categorisation as an imperfect human activity (what does it mean to say emotions share similarities or differences? Can we really compare anger with *ire*?). The goal for most scholars doing this work has less been to produce 'universal' or causal explanations of human experience (Levine, 2014) than to provide new lenses for analysis and to help us recognise the features of what is being observed. Comparison helps draw attention to what might otherwise go unseen, unspoken or unnamed. If this is important for interpreting complex structures such as emotion, it is equally significant for understanding the 'now' in its capacity to direct people's attention to what might matter and to give them a language to articulate what they observe.

In my course rather than concentrating on, say, the Black Death or Aids, I instead opted to provide students with comparative medieval, early modern and contemporary examples. When encouraging students to engage with historical knowledge as useful in interpreting present experience, enabling students to make comparisons

between contexts, including an assessment of the possibilities and limitations of such knowledges, seemed pertinent. My course was therefore designed to model comparative history for students and to encourage them to take the next step in making such comparisons with their own personal experiences, without directly teaching contemporary events. This is aided by a current proliferation of historical resources—from online lectures to podcasts to articles to blogposts—that are also making these comparative analyses for the public and which can be used to support more traditional teaching resources, such as primary sources and academic books and articles. Learning in this area is also supported by assessment that includes a reflective diary that provides students space to process their learning as they proceed through the course (Hosein & Rao, 2017; Guthrie & McCracken, 2010).

If this course then hopes to give students an education in the history of plagues and pandemics, it aims to do this in a manner that activates history as part of how we interpret and produce our contemporary experience. It thus aims for a history teaching that is responsive and produced for our present student body, including acknowledging that many students will come to this course as actors for whom such experiences, if never the same, have a certain comparative potential. As noted in the previous section, I suggest that as well as our student body inflecting on the type and form of history that we teach, we also need to be responsive to the climate of uncertainty and vulnerability that is the new stage for education going forwards. For this course, I decided that the site of engagement between staff and students would be online, with all the requisite benefits and challenges that arise in that form.

14.4 Overcoming Isolation in Online Teaching

When I mentioned to a colleague that I was offering this course online, he laughed and said 'are you trying to replicate pandemic teaching conditions'? The rapid move to online teaching that so many of us have experienced in recent weeks has certainly brought the virtues and vices of the medium to our attention. The reasons for choosing to go online however were more prosaic. Having moved to a 'flipped classroom' model some time ago, I was already operating a hybrid model in several courses, where students completed tasks, often online, before attending class; and using 'active learning' techniques in the classroom that are similar to those recommended for online formats (Keengwe & Onchwari, 2016). Moreover, in an institutional context where we are exploring methods for 'building load' (attracting new students to our subjects), this seemed a good moment to explore whether an online market existed for our undergraduate courses and so whether it would be useful to extend the provision in this area. If the reasons for choosing an online format were not directly motivated by a particular teaching strategy, this is not to say that I did not attend to the ethical and pedagogical issues that teaching difficult and responsive histories online raise.

Perhaps rather naively for someone who has taught students on how emotions are mediated in a range of genres, not least on social media (Benski & Fisher, 2013; Garde-Hansen & Gorton, 2013), I do—and this possibly unscientific feeling remains

even after research—think that being 'in person' offers a particularly valuable space for 'difficult' conversations. Research on providing an effective environment for such work has attended to the significance of building strong personal relationships, developing trust and a feeling of security and providing space to acknowledge both our 'shared vulnerabilities' and 'shared complicities' in the histories that we explore (Zembylas, 2018; hooks, 1994). The teaching space should be a site of 'affective solidarity' (Zembylas, 2018). Producing a space that can enable such relationships appears more straightforward in person (at least for the neurotypical), where we have access not only to what our students' say, but their facial expressions, body language and the 'affective atmosphere' that groups produce (Barclay, 2019b; Anderson, 2009). In-person discussions also seem desirable in providing teachers with more opportunity to manage 'inappropriate' contributions, redirecting conflict or offering timely corrections during an exchange. Not least—if class attendance is mandated—in-person classes allow the teacher to encourage contributions from those who are less engaged. In-person pedagogy also helps model certain skills we value in history, whether that is the ability to synthesise and argue that we perform during the lecture, or how to debate a case effectively and productively in a tutorial (Webster, 2015).

Yet, if in-person teaching does have some advantages, the online space is neither without emotion nor an ineffective site in which to build relationships. Interestingly, if work on how to teach difficult histories has situated the teacher as a significant tool in aiding learning, the educational experience itself has been framed as an emotional–intellectual experience of transformation, which does not necessarily have to happen in the classroom. Teachers and museum curators who have explored teaching challenging topics have often put less emphasis on the exchange or dialogue than the personal and intellectual labour individuals perform as they change their opinions or open up to new ways of thinking. Pedagogies of discomfort (Boler, 1999), brave spaces (Pawlowski, 2018), even the desirability of 'enthusiasm' and 'engagement' (Su & Wood, 2012), indicate that learning requires a shift in an emotional state, but do not necessarily note that such a state be produced in a collective or in-person environment. A compelling key reading consumed at home might have similar pedagogical impacts to a lecture or debate in a tutorial if it offered the student the appropriate tools to do the required thinking and feeling. That this is the case is an important reminder that not all teaching is required to centre the teacher.

Having said this, online teaching does not rely on students to perform such labour alone but provides a number of opportunities to build effective student–teacher relationships and to enhance the emotional solidarities and vulnerabilities necessary for teaching in pandemic conditions. As Gilmore and Warren (2007) note, online spaces provide a new communicative context that reorders the 'feeling rules' that govern human engagement, but that nonetheless these can be managed effectively in a teaching context. Within their own study, they emphasised that the 'chat' space that they used as an alternative to an in-person tutorial provided students with a new set of engagement opportunities. If some students find communicating in writing, especially rapidly, produces its own challenges, many others seemed to thrive in this environment freed from the embarrassment of talking 'in public' or having to

interrupt more dominant members of the group. The additional time taken for typing allowed some students more opportunity to express more substantial contributions to the discussion than sometimes occurred in person.

Online groups develop their own forms of intimacy, producing new rules for encounter and even enabling the spread of contagious emotions within the group (Garde-Hansen & Gorton, 2013; Cleveland-Innes & Campbell, 2012). Virtual personas provide students the opportunity to make themselves in different ways from how they present in person, offering some freedoms and opportunities as well as constraints (Barbour, 2015). Chat functions that included time for personal sharing and exchange in the group, and which might involve wordplay or similar humorous opportunities, enable people to build relationships with a larger group than in-person exchanges where interpersonal dialogue tends to focus on those sitting near each other or in pre-existing friendships (Gilmore & Warren, 2007). The online environment also enables new forms of access, such as for disabled users who can utilise communication technologies more readily, and they allow for different types of collaboration—perhaps encouraging group annotation of a document or producing collective resources—than a more traditional seminar (Major, 2015). Even the online lecture can offer some advantages, both by allowing interactive activities more readily than in large lecture theatres, and enabling students and lecturers to view each other more closely than in a large room.

The significant takeaway here is that online environments may operate to different feeling rules, but they can nonetheless be used to enable effective learning engagements between teachers and students, and among the student cohort. Within the framework for a pedagogy of pandemic, the online space may also offer some particular advantages. If heated exchanges happen online as in-person (and indeed online distance may exacerbate some forms of hostility—Garde-Hansen & Gorton, 2013), online exchanges can allow some critical distance from the material explored, a moment to pause, reflect, collect oneself if the material is especially challenging. Such reflection might be encouraged by teachers, both through the tasks they provide for students and in how they model and monitor online exchanges.

Here providing a model of authentic but context-appropriate vulnerability is significant, where—as in discussions of other 'difficult knowledges'—teachers do not seek to avoid challenging conversations or moments of disclosure but seek to meet students in a process of 'mutual openness' that acknowledges where we are and our current context (hooks, 1994; Zembylas, 2018). Thus, a conversation about anxiety during the plague might begin by acknowledging that this is a shared experience that many have felt recently (or indeed at the present time) and that, even if our intention is not to talk about our own feelings, that our experience might shape how we approach our research. If appropriate, such a conversation might also include the teacher exploring how their anxious experiences have shaped their engagement with the historical record or enabled particular forms of historical analysis (Barclay, 2019c). Such moments of vulnerability have the benefits of building student trust and encouraging engagement with the material but also in enabling an encounter with historic material that acknowledges our current conditions. The latter thus supports more 'responsive' history teaching but also a reflexive engagement between the self

and the historical record (subjectivity) that we often teach more formally at higher levels.

A final benefit of the online format for a pedagogy of pandemic is that with its move away from the formal lecture and tutorial to a broader range of active-learning activities—the move from 'sage on the stage' to 'guide at the side'—students are allowed greater ownership of their new knowledge—to recognise their expertise. Such an approach helps build confidence in students that their educations can be deployed by them in the every day, even if just as an aid to helping them understand themselves. This can be viewed as a valuable 'graduate attribute' in applied learning but also as part of an ethic of care, where history is designed to equip students to live with and after difficult conditions.

Such an approach to online teaching, especially for a novice online teacher, may well be more aspirational than achieved. Yet, here too I hope that some pedagogical benefits may emerge. The future following pandemic is uncertain; we walk on new ground and need to equip our students for a world as yet unformed. Providing space for students to participate in a conversation about educational provision, what works, what doesn't, and what might need to change along the way as we respond to our changing environment, might be construed as less an experiment on the way to the 'perfectly designed course' than a pedagogy of its own. Here, we recognise that if teaching and learning are predicated on the teacher–student relationship then a new cohort of students and a new set of current conditions may require a process of continual evolution in our teaching practice and in the histories we teach, that we are imperfect but brave in our attempts may offer its own model for students whose application of learning might be similarly experimental.

14.5   Conclusion

A pedagogy for a pandemic is not a radical departure from a range of current practices that seek to centre student knowledges and expertise, to refigure the classroom as a moment of mutual vulnerability between teacher and learners and to recognise that learning should not be abstracted from but engaged with current conditions and learning environments. But it perhaps takes on a new urgency due to the scale of disruption, its widespread and immediate impact, and as it has destabilised the ground on which our selves, disciplines and institutions stand. Part of that urgency I would suggest will require historians to attend to not just what (and what authors) they teach but to engage with students about why their subject matters and to acknowledge the political work that such history is doing. History is never just neutral knowledge, but becomes political as it is taught, as it is learned, and as it is applied.

Historians, perhaps more than practitioners of most disciplines, are sometimes reluctant to frame past knowledges in such urgent terms. That the past is a foreign country, that it might be engaged with for its own sake and not just that of the historian, is a call still heard within the field. Yet a pedagogy of pandemic does not argue that the purpose of history is a utilitarian knowledge, but rather acknowledges that

our histories play a critical role in how we understand ourselves, interpret present conditions and make decisions. Given this, history teachers have a critical role to play in equipping students to respond to 'big events' and current crises and challenges. Importantly, if teaching a history of plagues and pandemics in response to a pandemic might seem like an obvious response, it is certainly not the only knowledge necessary for preparing students to respond to COVID-19 or our future environment. Indeed, as this pandemic is driving home, the key work of history is not simply the 'skills' in critical thinking, research and communication that it offers students but that historical content is critical to our present and future. Moving forward, the benefits of such 'content', of the knowledges and research we produce, should be given more emphasis as valuable in their own right (and not simply a 'case study' through which skills are practised).

The historical knowledges needed for the future will be varied, and—like all blue sky research—the value of some might not be immediately apparent. Rather than a pedagogy of pandemic foregrounding certain historical knowledges over others, it asks how such knowledges are made accessible for students living in uncertain conditions and how they might contribute to our flourishing, both as individuals and as groups. Research-led teaching is significant here, both in providing students access to cutting-edge knowledges and debates that they will use in their lives and in modelling the reading and research skills that students will need to equip themselves as they leave universities and apply their knowledges. COVID-19 itself may not provide students with a new way of understanding the past (although the shared experience of pandemic conditions by students with historical actors might be productive), but its destabilising effects in an already fragile context has perhaps required that the history classroom can no longer be a place of complacency about the present if it wants to equip students for tomorrow. Today as I finish writing, 345,000 people are confirmed to have died from COVID-19.

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Part IV
Beyond the Academy

Chapter 15
Workforce Preparation and Employability

Nathan Wise

Abstract Ongoing changes in the Australian higher education sector are increasing the pressure on institutions [and more directly, on teaching staff] to improve graduate workplace readiness and employability. At present, however, the quantifiable measures by which staff and institutions are assessed [typically 'rate of graduate employment'] fail to take into account long-term employment and satisfaction. Instead of simply preparing graduates for 'the modern workplace', higher education institutions should be building student agency and independence via authentic student-centred and community-oriented learning that encompasses all forms of post-graduate life. By building student agency, independence and a critical approach to the future, we can forge empowered students who are best prepared to make informed decisions about their lives.

15.1 Introduction

Within the Australian higher education sector, pedagogical practices constantly change in tune with student demographic changes. Over the past 10–15 years, we have seen gradual increases in the participation of students from both low-socioeconomic backgrounds and from non-traditional learning contexts (such as those balancing full-time work and family lives with study) (Parr, 2015; Reed, Wise, Tynan, & Bossu, 2013, p. 288; Tones, Fraser, Elder, & White, 2009, pp. 505–529), and a stronger shift towards online and distance learning (Harasim, 2000, pp. 41–61). Amidst this change in student cohorts and modes of learning, there are ongoing changes in popular pedagogy. There is also a greater emphasis on the need to prepare students for the workforce, and pedagogical discourses have subtly shifted to give greater emphasis to quantifiable workplace skills and employability. However, historians have tended to approach those employability measures with a healthy degree of caution. Because historical skills are so versatile, historians are often teaching many different cohorts of students who are heading down many varied paths. In that diverse and rapidly

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changing climate, one of the best ways that historians can support their students, and in the process enhance their employability in fulfilling occupations, is to support student diversity, agency and individuality. Rather than a cookie-cutter approach that seeks to mould students to government-designated 'priority' jobs, we should be fostering a student-centred and authentic pedagogy that empowers our students to harness their individuality to make positive changes to their world.

15.2   Employability

Perhaps the most common definition of employability throughout the scholarship comes from Michael Yorke, who argued in 2006 that employability is 'a set of achievements – skills, understandings and personal attributes – that make graduates more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupations, which benefits themselves, the workforce, the community and the economy' (Yorke, 2006, p. 8). Dacre-Pool & Sewell (2007, p. 280) also offered a similar definition, emphasising 'skills, knowledge, understanding and personal attributes' (see also Boffo, 2019, pp. 11–23). However, despite a general scholarly consensus around this definition, higher education institutions have often struggled to understand and quantify their students' employability. In an attempt to gauge their students' employability, institutions are placing greater attention on graduate learning outcomes (Munslow, 2005, p. 499), rates of graduate employment and graduate salary rates (Harvey & Shahjahan, 2013, p. 5). In order to improve their success (according to those often self-defined measures), higher education institutions have introduced a range of measures, such as employing dedicated employability staff and careers advisors (who often work in dedicated employability centres/programmes), developing dedicated 'work-readiness' units and by supporting work-integrated learning (Bennett, Richardson, & MacKinnon, 2016, pp. 33–35). Many of the general institution-wide efforts aim to prepare students for the job market. They help students assess employment opportunities, build an attractive curriculum vitae and then support work placements within relevant workplaces. These can certainly help to make graduates more competitive on the job market, and secure some form of employment, but, as Neale-Shutte and Nel (2013, pp. 437–453) cautioned, 'employability should not be narrowly equated with graduate employment'. Instead, scholars must pay greater attention to the importance of fulfilling forms of employment. Indeed, in his seminal 2006 paper, Mantz Yorke (p. 6) dedicated a section to an area titled 'Employability is not the same as employment' while also respecting other forms of postgraduate engagement and non-employment options. Furthermore, scholars have argued that institutional understandings of employability are either ineffective or are at odds with employers' understandings (Bennett, Richardson, & MacKinnon, 2016, p. 9; Harvey & Shahjahan, 2013, p. 5), while student understandings and self-perceptions are either at odds with both (Harvey & Shahjahan, 2013, p. 5), or they are left entirely out of these conversations. In one example, Speight et al. noted that the University of Nottingham struggled to understand the relationship between 'academic learning and learning for

employability' (Speight, Lackovic & Cooker, 2013, p. 113). At a discipline level, scholars are even more reticent, even resistant, of employability measures; Harvey and Shahjahan (2013, p. 6) recently argued that scholars 'object to focusing on the development of students' job skills but believe their role is to educate students so they become good citizens which will, in turn, make them employable'.

Beyond institutional measures, Australia has also recently seen intervention from the Commonwealth Government. The 2020 'Job-ready Graduates Package' has ostensibly been designed to 'deliver more job-ready graduates in the disciplines and regions where they are needed most' (Department of Education, Skills and Employment, [1] 2020a). As part of this, a 'National Priorities and Industry Linkage Fund' [NPILF] (Department of Education, Skills and Employment, [2] 2020b) has three focused priorities:

- Increase the number of internships, practicums and other innovative approaches to work-integrated learning.
- Increase the number of STEM-skills graduates and improve their employment outcomes.
- Support universities to develop partnerships and collaboration with industry.

The practical elements of this package include reducing the Commonwealth contribution and increasing the maximum student contribution for SHAPE-related disciplines (such as History) while increasing the Commonwealth contribution and decreasing the maximum student contribution for STEM-related disciplines[1]. This will make SHAPE courses (those disciplines that help us understand our world) more expensive and for low-SES students in particular, less enticing, while making STEM courses less expensive; and, while the effect is yet to be seen, it is designed to funnel students away from SHAPE and towards STEM. This is despite the fact that the Australian Arts and Recreational Services Industry was one of the fastest-growing industries in Australia over the past decade (Australian Jobs, 2020).

Amidst this climate of direct government intervention, scholars vary in their assessment of the value of measures and where the emphasis should lie in terms of employer needs versus student needs. Speight, Lackovic and Cooker cautioned that overly 'narrow interpretations of employability' cause unnecessary anxiety to stakeholders' (Speight, Lackovic & Cooker, 2013, p. 112). Too often those discussions glance over the importance of fulfilling employment, and of non-employment graduate options. For example, it is often enough to qualify as 'employed' regardless of how satisfying, secure, long-term or degree-relevant that employment is, and yet recent institutional measures rate that employed student above students who leave to pursue graduate research, volunteer community service or engage in unpaid self-driven research. This is where we need to think more broadly about what our students value, and how we support that.

My particular views on work-integrated learning and the issue of employability stem from the career uncertainties I had during my undergraduate studies. Pressured

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[1]STEM: Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics, SHAPE: Disciplines that help us understand the world such as history, philosophy and sociology, SES: Socio-economic status.

by the belief that I 'had to have a job in mind', I spent several years studying a double degree in history (for fun) and engineering (for a job), before building the courage to drop my engineering studies and pursue my passion for history, wherever it would take me. My teaching today inadvertently reflects the pressures that I once faced as a student, and is also influenced by the increased discussions around employability that we have encountered in academia. While I try to build similar courage among my students to pursue their passions, my foundation unit, 'HINQ100: What is History?', nonetheless begins with a discussion of the value of history in those familiar employ-ability terms. I note the rapidly growing 'Arts and Recreational Services' industry, highlight the work-relevant skills historians develop (with a longing gesture towards the Threshold Learning Outcomes), and discuss formidable history graduates from the world of politics, business and entertainment. Indeed, part of the reason for this early emphasis on employability is to dissuade any fears and dispel the old myths that history graduates are unemployable (a fear once held by myself as a young under-graduate). Thus, I make it clear that history graduates are highly employable, not because of any particular work readiness themes or skills that we address (although they may help), but because of the fundamentally broad relevance and value of histor-ical literacy to many areas of our social and working lives. From the outset then, the 'value' of history is evident, and throughout the unit, I highlight the postgraduate paths (both career and otherwise) available to history graduates. This is also coupled with ongoing discussions about the broader scholarly and public value of history (the second half of the unit focuses entirely on non-scholarly forms of historical representation), and indeed, another early myth dispelled in that first seminar is the idea that one needs a degree (or indeed a job) to practise history.

Within the discipline of history (and more broadly, the arts and humanities), the gradual incursion of work readiness and employability measures has been met with some uncertainty and reluctance. David Nicholls' 2005 study, *The Employability of History Students*, and a companion paper, *The Employment of History Graduates* (Nicholls, 2005a, b), while focusing on the British education system, remains a relevant and important general text in the field. Of particular value, Nicholls (2005a, pp. 33–34) explored the history of the shift towards skill-focused teaching and the emphasis on employability and argued that, while more could still be done, history's traditional emphasis on reading, writing and 'high level pedagogic capabilities […] underpin [students'] ability to adapt to new circumstances and challenges and grow with and mould change'. More recently, David Dowling, Samantha Rose and Éidín O'Shea explored the changing nature of the Australian higher education sector (and increased government interest in employability among graduates) and argued that a new approach was needed to assess and strengthen the employability of humanities graduates (Dowling, Rose, & O'Shea, 2015, pp. 52–6).

While Nicholls saw that ability to adapt to change as a value, and Dowling et al. suggested a new way of assessing employability, other scholars have resisted and argued that students should be more critical of that change. In 2006, Alun Munslow argued for a 'more flexible approach to training historians – but a flexibility that allows for disobedience as much as conformity. The reason is because I believe the

outcomes/employability tail is wagging the academic freedom dog' (Munslow, 2005, p. 501).

Indeed, for many scholars, the increased emphasis on workplace skills and employability is unsettling. Munslow (2005, p. 498) asked, 'Does this agenda for making historians employable have the consequence of reinforcing a conception of historical thinking and practice effectively de-legitimising fundamental debate over the nature of what history is?'. In particular, Munslow (2005, p. 499) expressed concern that the shift towards employability could be hazardous by producing 'a plug and play historian who only thinks in "proper" epistemological ways'. More recently within Australia, Forsyth and Evans noted the 'troubling' alignment of authentic assessment 'to the interests of business', and expressed concern at the 'potentially propagandistic interests' of connecting assessment with 'workplace skills' (Forsyth & Evans, 2019, p. 751). Similarly, Ian Roderick argues that the careless promotion of active learning environments can inadvertently serve 'as an apparatus for normalising precarious forms of labour' (Roderick, 2019, p. 2). Mark Donnelly and Claire Norton, also writing from a British perspective, were recently critical of these incursions into the discipline of history, and argued that:

> The current cognitive conventions of historical research and university history teaching through their normalisation of teleological and identitary thinking produce and compel complacency, affirm social conventions and instantiate dominant ideologies. A more radical education would encourage our students not simply to acquire work-based skills, but to challenge normative customs and reified practices and to ask not how society got the way it is, but how we can change society and make it better (Donnelly & Norton, 2017, p. 653).

Rather than moulding our students to adjust to change, we may serve them better, and effectively enhance their postgraduate paths (including employability in fulfilling occupations), by encouraging them to challenge the changes that they are not comfortable with and to assert their individuality.

15.3 Student Diversity

Two of the key challenges in this changing environment are the diverse nature of student cohorts and the tenuous links between historical practice and communities (within which we may include workplaces). Across the many units, we teach (at UNE, a 'unit' is a 6-credit point, 150-hour programme of study, typically undertaken over a single 15-week Trimester) different pedagogical approaches are adopted to suit both the nature of the unit content and the nature of the student cohort, and there is no 'one size fits all' approach (Collins, 2015, p. 224). Students of history rarely have a clear career trajectory in mind and, in the early stages of their study, are often uncertain about what life opportunities historical study can open for them. To prepare those diverse student cohorts for their postgraduate lives, we need to respect that diverse student cohort and students' varied postgraduate trajectories while also encouraging agency and resilience among them. Within the discipline of history, this philosophy can be implemented by bringing together established pedagogical elements—such

as work-integrated and service learning (including work- and community-placement opportunities) and student-centred and authentic learning. Student-centred and active learning environments have the potential to foster a more engaged and critical cohort of graduates. Roderick urges that a 'critical rather than instrumental approach to pedagogy is necessary to afford students the space to articulate their own "yet to be voiced" consciousness of the power relations bound up in neoliberal employability regimes' (Roderick, 2019, p. 13). But at the forefront, an approach that empowers this critical student agency and independence must emphasise respect for the diverse nature of student cohorts. At the University of New England (UNE), we have a large cohort of students who are not pursuing education for long-term career benefits. Many students of history pursue their studies for other reasons: to keep their minds alert and active, to contribute to their communities, to be part of a learning community and to have fun. Thus, the following discussion factors in the diversity of our student cohorts and the many varied reasons students engage in higher education and further emphasises the importance of respect for that diversity.

The following discussion also reflects primarily on teaching experiences with a particular student demographic—that of UNE's history students (or more accurately, students enrolled in history (and history-related) units at UNE. It is also informed by previous experiences teaching diverse cohorts of students at the University of Wollongong, the University of New South Wales and Monash University. While the sector as a whole has seen a steady increase in students from low-socioeconomic backgrounds and from non-traditional learning contexts, UNE, with its long history of, and a strong reputation for, online and distance learning, has experienced those changes to an even greater magnitude. For example, in 2018, of UNE's 23,799 enrolled students, 18,393 of these (or 77%) were aged 25 and over. In addition, 13,834 (58%) of those students were studying part-time (University of New England, 2019a, b). Compared to metropolitan universities, relatively few of UNE's students are school leavers. Only 1,214 (5%) of UNE's 2018 enrolments were under the age of 21 (University of New England, 2019a, b), and within the discipline of history, students are overwhelmingly studying online and via distance, rather than on-campus and face to face. Many history students, particularly at the postgraduate level, are already employed on a part-time or full-time basis, often in areas relating to the study of history (such as museums, art galleries or heritage and conservation fields), and many of them are based in regional areas. They are, in general, more susceptible to the 'fluctuations in economic buoyancy' cautioned by Yorke (2006, p. 6). Then, of course, there are many students who are interested in using their historical training for a related career but are unsure of their postgraduate options. Thus, while this discussion is critical of employability measures and the idea that we should mould students to the modern workplace, it is also nonetheless inspired by a desire to address socioeconomic imbalances in workforce employability and agency, and, in particular, to ensure all students have equal access to information and skill development regarding workforce preparation (Forsyth & Evans, p. 751; Richardson, Bennett, & Roberts, 2016, pp. 4–5). In effect, this comes down to balancing the needs of all students carefully and empowering them to determine their own futures. Recognition of students' broader work and family life is an important element of this pedagogical philosophy.

As noted earlier, students may be engaged in work that directly relates to their studies and may be looking to up-skill or revise their workplace tools and techniques; others may be either looking to transition to a field relating to their studies, or to enter the workforce for the first time in the field, while many are looking to make contributions to their communities.

As a final caveat before moving on, it must be acknowledged that the individual elements of the philosophical approach discussed below are not new. As noted above, over the past 10–20 years, the international pedagogical discourse has shifted to place greater emphasis on student work readiness and employability. Within these discussions, elements such as student centredness and active learning have been identified as features of a pedagogical approach that improve student employability (Roderick, 2019, p. 1–14; Sweeney, 2018, pp. 254–255). However, each of these features is typically discussed separately, and scholars rarely consider how they reflect a broader all-encompassing philosophical/pedagogical approach towards students. Within the field of history pedagogy, much of the scholarship has focused on teaching standards and best teaching practices, including assessment development (Forsyth & Evans, pp. 748–761; Nye, 2015, pp. 91–104) and achievement of learning outcomes (Clark & Nye, 2018). This chapter seeks to build on this established work by arguing for a pedagogical approach that emphasises the role of an independent, active and critical student learner connected to their community. These informed and empowered students are then best prepared to determine their postgraduate future, be it further study, a shift in their current employment, a move towards entering the workforce for the first time or any other option.

15.4 Student-Centred and Authentic Learning

One of the best ways to build student agency and independence, whether in a work- and service-learning unit or a traditional content-driven unit, is to enhance opportunities for student-centred and authentic learning. Student-centred learning involves designing and facilitating units that have the ability to respond to the needs and interests of the student cohort, while authentic learning within a unit involves making connections between the subject matter and communities. When carefully integrated into learning programmes at an early stage, such approaches help students to become active learners and establish the importance and practical implications of a historian's agency.

These are far from new concepts, but there is still much resistance to their implementation from both staff and students (Lea, Stephenson & Troy, 2003, pp. 321–334; Hockings, 2009, pp. 83–98), and the principles are not without some downsides and criticism. Boucher and Arrow (2016, p. 605) noted some concerns that students may 'opt out of their side of the educational bargain while still expecting to garner the full "value" of their learning', while Mayer has been critical of what he termed the '*constructivist teaching fallacy'* (Mayer, 2004, 2009, p. 184) and emphasised the need

to balance passive and active learning techniques to use 'prime appropriate cognitive processing during learning' (2009, p. 195). In addition, many students prefer teaching-directed instruction and perform worse in student-centred environments (Luo, Yang, Xue, & Zuo, 2019, p. 828).

As far back as 1975, Malcolm Knowles urged scholars to think of themselves not as teachers but as learning facilitators who work with students in a 'warm climate' of 'mutual respect' and 'mutual trust' (Knowles, 1975, pp. 10–11). Within the discipline of history, this approach can help empower students to think of themselves as independent practitioners who can contribute to a diverse discipline. All of our students have engaged in some mode of historical research and representation: they have visited museums, they have spoken to family members about their past, they have watched and scrutinised historical films and documentaries, they have created and shared blogs about historical sites, many have even published scholarly papers and manuscripts on aspects of their work. Student-centred learning promotes an environment where these interests, and where students of all academic levels and social backgrounds, can be supported, and students consequently become empowered with a sense of agency.

At a basic level, student-centred learning can be as simple as providing students with some degree of flexibility in determining the direction of their assessment projects. Even if teaching staff want to assess student knowledge on a particular topic, that small degree of flexibility—perhaps in chronological scope, geographical boundary or thematic focus—enables students to pursue particular areas of interest within a specific subject area. For example, at UNE in 'HIST331/431: War and Australian Society in the Twentieth Century', students are asked to complete a 'biographical study' that focuses on the experiences of an Australian individual during the First World War. The idea here is to immerse students in the broad primary source material that is available from this period, such as newspapers from Trove (Online Australian database), service records from the National Archives of Australia and war diaries from the Australian War Memorial. But within that broad remit, students can select any individual, such as a soldier, sailor, nurse, politician or any other civilian. Many students see this as an opportunity to explore the war experiences of a particular family member in more depth, and the revelations can be both surprising and rewarding. As with our experience with WORK300/500 students, a number of our HIST331/431 students have gone on to develop papers around aspects of their biographical studies, or to use them as a basis for future research (Matthews, 2013, pp. 4–12).

Various models, techniques and variations of student-centred learning have been discussed by scholars over the years (O'Neil & McMahon, 2005, pp. 27–36; Rogers, 1983). They include promotion of peer-to-peer learning as a way to build community and independent approaches to learning (Guldberg, 2008, pp. 35–49; McLoughlin & Lee, 2010, pp. 28–43); formative learning, as a way to encourage students to reflect on their own competencies (Cizek, Andrade, & Bennett, 2019); and long-term engagement with student cohorts to encourage students to reflect on their agency and engagement with the discipline (Kember, 2009, pp. 1–13). These elements will work differently with different cohorts and in different contexts, but at their core, they

revolve around greater levels of respect for students, and a corresponding shifting of the agency from teaching staff onto those active student groups. However, emphasis must be placed on the careful integration of these tools, and the context is key. Knowles (1975, p. 15) warned that 'Students entering into these programs without having learned the skills of self-directed inquiry will experience anxiety, frustration, and often failure, and so will their teachers'. Mayer also emphasised the importance of balancing active and passive learning and instruction (Mayer, 2009, pp. 186–195)). As scholars have noted, student-centred learning is not always practical nor desired (Garrett & Shortall , 2002, pp. 25–57). Many students, particularly in the early stages of their study, need clearer guidance and direction (Knowles, 1975, p. 15). They need to understand what it means to be an active learner, and they need help developing the skills to engage in independent learning and research. In the HIST331/431 offering in 2018, one student responded by noting that the second assessment questions 'were all very open questions along similar lines […] and would have preferred a wider variety of topics for the essay with more specific questions' (UNE Student Unit Evaluation, HIST331: War and Australian Society in the Twentieth Century (External), 2018). Similarly, in an earlier offering of HIST331/431 in 2016, another student expressed concern that their independent learning in this biographical study did not test 'the knowledge I gained from the facts and information I was taught, I felt the assessment were assignments that could have been completed without even learning the unit information' (UNE Student Unit Evaluation, HIST331: War and Australian Society in the Twentieth Century (External), 2016). Both of these pieces of feedback reflect students who preferred the older style of assessment, where they wished to be tested on their knowledge of the facts as presented.

At UNE, the importance of acquiring active learning skills is established from the first moments of our foundation history unit, 'HINQ100: What is History?' Instead of traditional lectures, classes revolve around carefully structured interactive seminars and activities that encourage students to think of themselves as empowered historians and agents of both their learning and historical representation. Each of the ten topics within the unit is carefully designed and structured to convey key concepts to students, and the seminars are carefully designed to develop students' understandings of those concepts, but within all of this, students are given regular opportunities to test and reflect on their understanding of these concepts via practical activities. The benefits of implementing this approach at this foundation level can be seen long term in the independence and sense of agency our students bring to their studies.

Student-centred learning also demands a greater grasp of the subject matter from teaching staff and examiners, as students can take the subject in many varied directions (McCabe & O'Connor, 2014, pp. 350–359; Sweetman, 2017, p. 47). And yet, our experience at UNE has been that the diversity of responses from students makes the examination process (i.e. marking papers) more interesting and engaging. The biographical studies in HIST331/431, noted earlier, recounted stories of individuals who had previously made little to no mark on the historical record. It can be rewarding to see the innovative approaches students adopt when given some liberty in their approach and scope, all the more so when small essays and research projects develop, via empowered students, into larger postgraduate projects and publications.

Scholars have remarked on the long-term educational benefits of this approach; it promotes student engagement with the learning content and often sets students up well for independent research and further postgraduate study (Wise, Roberts, & Barker, 2018, pp. 275–6). Of particular pertinence to the broader discussion, several scholars have argued that student-centred learning also improves employability in graduates (Geven & Attard, 2012, pp. 153–172; Richardson, Bennett, & Roberts, 2016, p. 6). Considerations of student-centred learning should also be paired with considerations of authentic learning. By encouraging agency and independence among our students, we can also encourage them to think about their communities, and how their study and practise can be connected to, and contribute to, the 'real world' (Nye, Hughes-Warrington, Roe, Russell, Deacon, & Kiem, 2011, pp. 763–780). For example, teaching staff can design units that encourage students to reflect on their experience engaging with history in their communities, we can encourage them to talk to people and groups within their communities to assess their needs, and we can facilitate the development of authentic assessments that address those needs and contribute towards those communities.

15.5   Work-Integrated Learning and Service Learning

One of the ways we can facilitate that closer engagement between students and their communities is through work-integrated learning and service learning. Work-integrated learning (WIL) involves combining educational activities with paid or volunteer working experiences, while service learning involves educational activities/experiences that meet community needs and enhances students' sense of civic responsibility (Bringle & Hatcher, 1995, pp. 112–122; Clinton & Thomas, 2011, p. 52). While often oriented around employer and institutional needs, WIL and service-learning units have the potential to empower students and help them make more informed decisions about their future directions. In line with those objectives, within the discipline of history at UNE, the process of finding a student a work placement begins with a discussion around the objectives of the placement. Teaching staff often liaise with local community groups and employers to identify opportunities for our students and to see if student interests align with those opportunities. More often than not our students pursue these opportunities either to understand more about 'what happens behind the scenes' of their desired occupation or to contribute to the perceived needs of local community groups. Thus, there is a clear sense that students become more informed and empowered by their experience. Discussions between teaching staff and students also extend to the nature of the assessment work that accompanies the unit and, in short, we work closely with students to develop unique and authentic assessments that both reflect their experiences with the work completed, and, as is often the case, that can be utilised in future work or study experiences. In one example, a student provided an assessment of the difficulties regional museums and archives face in adhering to best practices and standards in curating

material; and in another example, a student worked with a local community museum to help evaluate and then redesign their interior layout and presentation.

The bulk of the research indicates that WIL units, particularly those that incorporate paid work, greatly enhance the employability of students. Richardson, Bennett, and Roberts (2016, p. 6) argued that 'graduates who undertook paid work in the final year of study were much more likely to be employed than those who did not'. Indeed, work-integrated and service learning are broadly recognised as being 'instrumental' in equipping students with skills that they can implement in the workplace, and in building student confidence in their workplace capabilities (Clinton & Thomas, 2011, pp. 51–66; Jackson, 2015, pp. 350–367). As a result, opportunities for students to engage in work-integrated and service learning are now standard throughout the Australian higher education sector. While the concepts of WIL and service learning are not necessarily new, the increased emphasis on work-readiness and employability means that institutions are encouraging students to participate in WIL as part of their regular study (Orrell, 2018). Most Australian institutions have dedicated WIL units available for students and work placements typically form the central focus of student commitments within those units. In many cases, these units are generic 'shell' units that are administered and coordinated by staff outside the discipline of history, or, at times, by academic and professional staff based in the area of business, human resources, and recruitment. Students who enrol in these units are typically required to take the lead in organising both a place of work (including a work supervisor) and an academic supervisor (largely to facilitate their assessment within the unit).

However, in circumstances where WIL is presented via optional/elective units, student enrolments are relatively low compared to other content-driven history units. At UNE, for example, while we typically have total annual enrolments across our History units well over 2000, our annual WIL history students typically number less than 10. This is approximately 0.005% of our annual enrolments. Note that this does not include other (non-history) students; this just identified students who take on an academic supervisor from the Discipline of History at UNE. Common barriers to these dedicated WIL units include the added work pressure they create alongside study and the difficulty in finding and negotiating a work placement, particularly if students are looking for paid work placements. For many students who are familiar with history units, the practice-oriented nature of WIL is often outside their comfort zone, or impractical given their broader circumstances. This is all despite the overwhelmingly positive experiences students tend to have in these units, and the long-term benefits they gain from their experiences. For example, the bulk of the WIL students I have supervised have used their experiences as the basis for further research and/or employment opportunities.

Teaching staff can also create opportunities for work-integrated and service learning within content-driven units. For example, many of the students in my unit History and Museums are currently employed in the museum sector. The unit design provides opportunities for those students, and those wishing to work in the museum sector, to reflect on workplace practices and experience, particularly around the idea of 'object-based learning' (Hannan, Duhs, & Chatterjee, 2013; Hess, Garside, Nelson, Robson, & Weyrich, 2017, pp. 349–354). Both assessment pieces within

the unit provide opportunities for the students to blend their work and study practices together, such as by providing a 'Significance Assessment' of an item in a museum's collection, or by assessing the practices around documenting, caring for, and processing an item in a museum's collection. In these examples, many students typically focus on items within their current area of employment.

One downside to the integration of these activities within a content-driven unit was that many students who were not looking for those work-oriented experiences felt disadvantaged. For example, in response to the question 'What aspects of the unit are most in need of improvement?', one student responded, 'Subject seemed more focused on informing museum professionals and volunteers than students of history' (UNE Student Unit Evaluation, HIST337: History and Museums, 2019). As noted earlier, not all students are studying to improve their employability, and the integration of such work-oriented tasks within this unit was disliked by some among this cohort.

Another variant of these units can be seen at the Australian Catholic University (ACU), where service learning opportunities form the core of a third-year capstone unit, Making History. Hannah Forsyth and Jedidiah Evans reported on their experiences in teaching this unit in a 2019 paper, where they noted that students were required to 'approach an organisation they cared about and negotiate a history-based task that was valuable to the community group they selected' (p. 752). As Forsyth and Evans reported (2019, p. 752):

> Students selected diverse organisations, including local historical societies and libraries, community and church organisations related to ethnic cultures (e.g., Croatian, Turkish, Lebanese), schools and day care centres focused on provision to particular communities (e.g., one Italian-speaking, one supporting Muslim women's opportunity to work), volunteer organisations such as Scouts, local Fire Services, and activist groups such as the Redfern Aboriginal Tent Embassy. Some students completed their project in connection with ACU's Institute for the Advancement of Community Engagement, on programmes in Timor Leste.

A key advantage of the HIST308 offering at ACU is that, as a compulsory capstone unit, it serves as a final important reminder of the links between historical practice and communities instead of a sole focus on 'workplaces'. This further facilitates what scholars refer to as congruent or authentic learning and assessment (Forsyth & Evans, 2019, p. 750), and places student agency and community needs at the centre of the learning and assessment process. Indeed, in many WIL units throughout the Australian higher education sector, student agency and community/workplace consultation are the two core factors shaping the nature of the learning activities.

15.6   Conclusion

While scholars have expressed concern about the paradigm shift that has placed greater emphasis on student employability and work readiness, there is also an equity issue that encourages us to prepare all of our students for their postgraduate futures, whatever directions they may take. That preparation for student futures

is best approached when performed in a student-centred, community-oriented, and authentic manner that encompasses all forms of postgraduate life. By building student agency, independence and a critical approach to the future, we can forge empowered students who are best prepared to make informed decisions about their lives, including, as Roderick (2019, p. 13) suggests, that 'consciousness of the power relations' that they may encounter in the workplace. WIL has long been seen as a core part of that development, and there is ample evidence that this supports the employability of students, but, if we factor in the broader postgraduate futures that our students are heading towards, a more effective and empowering variant is the use of carefully designed authentic and service learning that fosters closer links between our students and their communities. Indeed, the key advantage of the pedagogical philosophy outlined here is that, contrary to Commonwealth Government pressure, it does not necessarily direct students to one particular career or occupation, or indeed, to a paid career at all. The essentially student-centred nature of the approach enables students to develop agency in their learning and skill development which, while certainly of relevance for their employment prospects, will also serve them well in their futures regardless of their chosen direction.

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Chapter 16
What Really Matters: A History Education for Human Possibility

Alan Booth

Abstract This chapter draws upon academic historians' representations of their ambitions for students to explore an everyday discourse of pedagogic purpose that turns around a specialised identity formation and, more broadly, human possibility and growth. It employs the work of 'capability' educators and particularly the research of the educational sociologist Basil Bernstein on 'pedagogic rights', to examine survey and interview data from historians on issues of purpose and the possibilities that a history education provides for human flourishing. Using this Bernstein/capabilities approach, the chapter provides a lens through which history educators might review their teaching and express their transformative ambitions for students and present their curricula in ways that honour the discipline itself and amplify its educative possibilities and value.

16.1 Introduction

This chapter derives from the findings of an inquiry into academic historians' representations of history teaching 'at its best'. It involved a UK-wide survey that elicited responses from over 200 participants and more than 60 short informal, semi-structured interviews with the UK, North American and Australian historians. The lecturers shared their thoughts on the purposes and aims of history teaching, effective classroom strategies and their role and development as academic educators (Booth, 2014). What follows focuses upon their ambitions and desired outcomes for students: on what really matters in terms of student development. It traces hopes, values and a strong positive sense of value alongside a shared current of unease that is illustrated in the remarks made by the following participants.

> I am extremely concerned that policy-makers and university managers will opt for the measurable - student satisfaction, employment, contact hours, timeliness of feedback - and ignore the less tangible, in particular the development of students as critical and independent learners.

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> I believe we need a lot more discussion of history's 'way of thinking' - the particularity of the kind of people (as employees, citizens, social and psychological subjects) that a degree in history can (and does) produce.

Analysis of the survey responses reveals the many tensions in teaching history in the conditions of contemporary higher education. In relation to the present chapter, there is particular dismay at the effects of instrumental measures of the quality of teaching provision and with decontextualised approaches to skills development. The lecturers express their concern that aspects of teaching and learning that are not readily quantifiable or fail to fit neatly into official tables of performance or lists of measurable skills are all too easily marginalised or ignored. More broadly, they point to the need to reach beyond transactional, compartmentalised models of educational value in which the study of humanities subjects is vulnerable to criticism by policy-makers as a personal indulgence and of little wider significance or utility in contemporary society.

In seeking to justify tuition fee levels to parents and wider public and emphasise the need for national economic competitiveness, it is perhaps understandable that governments and university managers have in recent decades chosen to prioritise a conception of 'graduateness' that heavily weights the role of students as future employees and consumers. In the accounts of pedagogic practice provided by the historians surveyed, however, we catch sight of a larger and richer vision of the curriculum and of higher education that turns around a specialised identity formation and, more broadly, human potential and growth. This often informal and conversational pedagogic discourse goes beyond a version routinely seen in pragmatic responses to the demands of regulators, policy documents and league tables and represents and expresses a transformative vision of history education rooted in passion for the subject (for discovery; for learning through history; for shaping students as historians and individuals) that educational researchers suggest is a major driver of the will to learn (and teach) (Marton, Hounsell, & Entwistle, 1997; Day 2004; Rowland, 2000; Palmer, 1998; Anderson & Day, 2005; Nye et al., 2011). In this narrative of pedagogic purpose, students are not units of production or consumption or accumulations of discrete skills but people with possibilities: complex human beings with particular knowledge and know-how that equips them successfully to navigate and contribute effectively to the world. This pedagogic discourse underlines the importance of discipline-focused study and is beneficially aligned to the needs of students in living a meaningful life, making a living and making a difference to society in the twenty-first century.

What do these historians' accounts of pedagogic purpose and value tell us about the sort of pedagogic identity that results from a high-quality university history education? What kinds of people can history teaching 'at its best' nurture? In addressing their reflections, a flexible, inductive approach to the survey and interview data has been adopted, influenced by grounded theory (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, 1997; Smith, 2004) and oral history (Thompson, 2000; Abrams, 2010). The work of a number of educational researchers has been particularly important in shaping the analysis. Pre-eminent among these is the educational sociologist Basil Bernstein whose work

provides a framework that connects curriculum, democracy and social justice. The philosopher and educationist Martha Nussbaum offers further important insights into the purposes of education and student learning expressed in terms of human development and capability. A number of educational researchers have built upon this work specifically in relation to higher education, most notably Monica McLean and Melanie Walker, and their research has been influential in interpreting the data.

16.2 Pedagogic Rights and Capabilities

In the introduction to his final book, *Pedagogy, Symbolic Control and Identity: Theory, Research, Critique* (2000, xx–xxi), Bernstein proposes that education systems should institutionalise three interconnected 'pedagogic rights' that students (should expect to) gain access to from their studies and which, he suggests, constitute core conditions for the operation of an effective democracy and a more just society.

Throughout his research Bernstein's concern is how the distribution of knowledge in a society reflects its hierarchies and how education acts powerfully to shape human possibilities. Whilst education, he argues, often serves to limit people's choices, notably those who are less powerful or more disadvantaged, when it gives access to horizon-expanding knowledge it can help students to grow as people who feel they have the capacity and freedom to act; are able to take responsibility for their actions and contribute positively and fully to society. The pedagogic rights he identifies as core conditions of this process are:

1. **The right to personal enhancement**—in his words, 'a condition for experiencing boundaries (intellectual, social, personal) as tension points condensing the past and opening possible futures. Enhancement … is the right to the means of critical understanding and to new possibilities. I want to suggest that this right is the condition for *confidence*'.
2. **The right to inclusion**—'to be included, socially, intellectually, culturally and personally … Inclusion is a condition for *communitas*' (a sense of belonging and relationship to/with others).
3. **The right to participation**—'to participate in the construction, maintenance and transformation of order. Participation is the condition for *civic practice*, and operates at the level of politics'.

The specific gains that students can make through these pedagogic rights acquire greater clarity and force when filtered through the lens of 'capabilities' education, an approach developed with particular insight in a humanities context by Martha Nussbaum (1997, 2010) and in the higher education sector by Melanie Walker (2006; 2009). This approach focuses on the (moral) purposes of education as human development and concerns the capacity and freedom of individuals to act and make sound choices about what they want to do and to be. In her book *Cultivating Humanity*, Nussbaum (1997) proposes three main capabilities for human flourishing: a critical examination of self; the narrative imagination (being able to enter into others' stories);

and seeing oneself as a global citizen. In a later text *Not for Profit: Why democracy needs the humanities* (2010, pp. 45–6) she expands on these, emphasising the importance of educational institutions in cultivating the ability to see the world from other's viewpoints; fostering attitudes towards human weakness that promote cooperation and reciprocity; developing genuine concern for others; promoting truthful and honest communication, not least about other (minority) groups; treating each student 'as a responsible agent' and making efforts to 'vigorously promote critical thinking'. And she emphasises that this agenda 'must be addressed not only through educational content but also through pedagogy'.

In a number of articles focused upon research in undergraduate sociology education, Monica McLean, Andrea Abbas and Paul Ashwin have brought together these approaches to educational purpose and outcome (McLean, 2015; McLean, Abbas, & Ashwin, 2013a, 2013b, 2015). They emphasise the importance of the contribution of discipline-specific study to developing capability, arguing that undergraduates gain access to pedagogic rights 'and associated capabilities' through the formation of 'a specialised pedagogic identity' grounded in their subject of study and its discourses; an identity that has curricular, personal/social and performative aspects (McLean, Abbas, & Ashwin, 2013a, pp. 4–5). This configuration of the outcomes of university education connects with revisionist thinking on the importance of the disciplinary context of what are routinely considered generic skills (e.g. Jones, 2009; Andrews, 2010) and with a growing body of literature in the scholarship of teaching and learning in history. In the last two decades, history educators in universities have explored how teaching history demands a particular focus upon disciplinary attributes, not least the nature of historical thinking and the norms, values and beliefs in the discipline that help form what Shulman (2005) calls its 'signature pedagogy' (e.g. Wineburg, 2001; Pace & Middendorf, 2004; Seixas, 2004; Hughes-Warrington et al., 2009; Kelly, 2013; Pace, 2017; Clark & Nye, 2018).

The features of the pedagogic identity formed in undergraduate history programmes are explored below using lecturer accounts of their ambitions for students and the capabilities they want to help them to access, viewed through the lens of Bernstein's three pedagogic rights.

16.3 Personal Enhancement: Bernstein's First Pedagogic Right

In what the historians surveyed and interviewed say they value as educators, there is a notable emphasis on the knowledge that students gain in terms of personal identity. They are learning about themselves through their experience of studying the subject.

> Well - at its best - history teaching can change your whole world view. It can make you think about people and the way they interact with the world around you in a whole new way.

> At its best history teaching tells us about who we are, but it also provides a vast array of materials from which students learn about themselves. History widens students' perspectives and understanding, rather than narrowing them.

> I like the way in which the best teachers force students to question their assumptions about the world and the way the subject broadens their horizons and sense of possibility and enables them to embark on pathways of enquiry they would not have previously considered or thought possible.

And the range of personal dispositions they identify as being developed can be seen in this summary of the survey responses (the descriptors are derived from the words used by respondents). History graduates:

- *Display an understanding of society (and self) in broader/deeper/longer perspective*—see in 3D; with expanded terms of reference.
- *View society in multi-perspective, interconnected terms*—consider economic, political, social, cultural, etc. aspects; possess a holistic study of the world without being beholden to any particular theory.
- *Are sensitive to the strangeness of others*—as different and ultimately unknowable but also human; are sensitive to very different frames of reference and able to see the world from a perspective that is not their own.
- *Display alertness to the complexity of structures, events and circumstances*—to the dynamic nature of society; constant change/flux; the messiness of events.
- *Are attentive to contingency*—the contradictions, illogicality and unpredictability of individuals' decisions and the influence of these; see that nothing is inevitable.
- *Are attuned to the particularity and contextuality of information and knowledge*; of evidence and explanatory models; of traditions and the taken-for-granted; to grappling with competing truths.
- *Are sensitive to the complexity of making judgements*—to considering multiple and often conflicting perspectives; to grappling with uncertainty; to the play of language; the need to connect evidence to context; display a reluctance to rush to judgement.

These disciplinary dispositions together constitute a historical–critical mindset (one participant calls it 'learning to think in time') that fosters confidence: a growing sense of possibility that is mentioned by many of our historians and that research by Nye et al. (2011) suggests many undergraduate history students share.

There is a gain in personal independence of judgement that at best leads to a sense of purpose and agency in which cognitive attributes foster and reinforce actions and are reinforced by them. In subject terms, this arises from a growing understanding of key procedural concepts such as causation, change and continuity, significance and historical interpretation, and from drilling down into the multiple, tangled, layers of primary and secondary evidence that all history students encounter on an iterative basis. It involves a 'disciplined' approach to learning. The two comments below echo many similar responses:

> History students gain the understanding that every world view (political position etc.) is informed with a view of the past and historical development that underpins it. They gain the ability to think independently, not taking things (like newspaper content etc.) at face value and coming to their own informed opinion.

> Students at best get knowledge of the subject: genuine reflective changes in knowledge which suggests that they have re-thought their own ideas. This gives them a confidence about

themselves, their abilities and an understanding about themselves and hopefully others that is connected to maturity and change on a personal level.

Bernstein (2000) emphasises that students need to come up against boundaries: tension points in their learning that lead them into new ways of thinking about what is possible. For him, the most important gap lies between what he calls horizontal discourse (everyday meanings) and vertical discourse (abstract, systematic, principled and, in this case, located in the specialised languages of the disciplines). Bridging this discursive gap, as Wineburg (2001) has pointed out in a history education context, does not come easily to many students facing the contradictions between normal, common sense thinking or everyday knowledge and the ways that historians deal with evidence and argumentation. This is a particular challenge for first-year undergraduates facing confrontations between more rigorous demands concerning evidence-handling and the provisionality of historical interpretation and their desire for 'fact' accumulation and the security of 'truth-seeking' and requires careful guidance (Pace, 2017). At the same time, students must connect their study of history to their lives (make the past present), the issues of relevance and significance that historians like Erekson (2011a, 2011b) and Sendziuk (2012) identify as central to student engagement and have suggested teaching strategies grounded in personal and family history and the exploration of place and community.

In sum, through practising history in a quality learning environment, students open themselves to new possibilities; they acquire new ways of seeing and imagining their own lives and so, ultimately, more fully inhabiting them. This involves developing qualities of mind but goes beyond this. One important aspect of this educative process involves a relationship with others.

16.4   Social Inclusion: Bernstein's Second Pedagogic Right

This relates to students as social beings and the particular ways in which they experience others as individuals and as part of common humanity: a condition of 'belonging' or 'communitas' in Bernstein's terms. History teaching at its best, the historians maintain, challenges students' expectations not only of themselves but of others. They learn to become more aware of different frames of reference; more attentive to how others tell their stories. They are able to see the world from perspectives that are not their own: to learn to view the past on its own terms; stand in others' shoes. We might regard this as a condition for empathetic understanding and foundation for the development of social responsibility.

Empathy is a slippery concept and its public value remains the object of debate (Bazalgette, 2017; Bloom, 2017). In history education, it has been assailed by right-wing critics of skills-based curricula in the schools' history controversies of the 1980s, by left-leaning objectors to its perceived emotional identification with people in the past and by postmodernist inclined historians critical of the possibility of seeing the past on its own terms. Yet it has also experienced something of a revival

as a cognitive outcome of a history education (see Harris & Foreman-Peck, 2004; Yilmaz, 2007; Brooks, 2009; Endecott & Brooks, 2013). Pickles (2011, p. 59) argues that a sceptical, empathetic understanding of context, not least of source contexts is an essential, if underplayed, component of historical reasoning: an activity involving subject knowledge, perspective taking and self-awareness grounded in careful attention to the available evidence and appreciation of context. As a school educator, she advocates more forms of the assessment of historical reasoning that reward as a core element the extent to which students have 'demonstrated empathetic understandings in their inferences, showing an awareness of distance from their own society, exploring alternatives and exercising judicious caution'.

Whilst empathy is certainly a concept that requires sensitive handling, this kind of reasoned yet imaginative exercise encapsulates a capability that participants in our survey suggest is an educational objective and outcome more than ever needed in the contemporary world. The following comments provide an illustration of this:

> I think one of the most important things students get [from the best history teaching] is to see the world from someone else's perspective. That is such a crucial skill in the world in general but particularly right now and it gives them a safe practice space for them to go. Because people in the past are different from what they are and for me the most important skill in history is learning to reconstruct someone else's perspective and to recognise that people can be in a struggle with each other in the past and that you can understand why both of them did what they did.

> Students learn in class to present their views and work with others. But what they get from history in particular is a chance to expand their terms of reference, to get to grips with other times and places, to get a much better grip on the world they live in and its cultural diversity. They become far more open-minded by having to deal with others' arguments that challenge their perceptions and values, and by taking on both sides of every argument.

> Students get a good capacity to empathise as it were and put themselves into the situation that they're reading about in the past and when they go out they can actually understand or have at least a fighting chance of understanding what somebody else is like and what motivates them. At best it can encourage them to be less selfish.

The sense of connectedness emerges most strongly from the responses of those lecturers who emphasise that at its best the undergraduate learning experience in history provides a potent human-centred global perspective: a deep sense of belonging to larger humanity; to the commonality of human beings. It enables students to see others as themselves, to find a common core of humanity in ourselves and others, beyond physical or national borders or social and cultural tribes and norms. One declares that 'the humanities are the things which teach us what it means to be human - that is why history is crucial'; others that:

> Students get the realisation that they are heirs to a vastly complex and messy thing called humanity. Maths and philosophy might teach logic and reason but history gives students the understanding that humans are irrational and illogical.

> The best history teaching gives a way to make sense of ourselves and where we come from. It gives a person perspective and also humility about human potential, and allows us to escape the curse of presentism and narcissistic self-regard.

> At best, history teaching gives unparalleled insight into the practicalities of human existence, and the highs and lows we are collectively capable of. No-one can predict the future, but we can learn to manage it somewhat, and cope with it.

This exploration of others' lives and heightened appreciation of what one lecturer calls 'humanity's highs and lows' and what connects us as human beings, Nussbaum (2010, p. 109) argues, is a vital component of an effectively functioning democratic society. It emphasises human choice, the role of contingency and the common fragility of human beings and is 'an antidote to the self-protective fear that is so often connected to egocentric projects of control'. It reminds us of the smallness of ourselves and allows for a space in which we can get beyond (our own) preconceptions to engage with others in discussion and debate. In broad terms, it transcends borders between us and others in ways that help to develop a sense of inclusivity or commonality (of 'communitas') essential to self-awareness, confidence and agency.

16.5   Participation: Bernstein's Third Pedagogic Right: 'To Participate in the Procedures Whereby Order is Constructed, Maintained and Changed' (2000, ix).

The history lecturers place considerable weight upon teaching that encourages and prepares students to play an active role in civic life. Many mention the acquisition of an expanded frame of reference and a questioning stance to public information. Some go further and argue that at its best history teaching provides the resources to talk truth to power and equips students with the cognitive and behavioural capabilities to confront abuses. The following comments illustrate this activist sense of civic mission:

> History teaching contributes to the functioning of democracy. It gives citizens the power to challenge the (often spurious) precedents cited to support particular policies.

> Students learn to mistrust and challenge any public figure who tells them that history will be shown to have been on their side or who makes reference to their 'legacy'.

> History students gain knowledge and confidence to resist, or at the least to subject to scrutiny, some of the more objectionable historical myths that underpin the current government's policies.

This is what Bernstein calls a 'prospective pedagogic identity' (2000, pp. 66–8). At its best, history learning does not just involve a disciplined inquiry into past events but enables students to apply their disciplinary learning to the practical demands of the present and future. It offers an applied education that fosters, as one lecturer puts it, 'critical understanding of the world around us and what we might do to understand it better and change it'. The following two quotes from the survey reinforce the conviction of history lecturers that their teaching can promote hope for a better world and the intentionality to act on this.

> Students gain a healthy and liberating awareness that the present is not the inevitable, pre-determined outcome of the past: it could have turned out completely differently. The shaping

> circumstances of language, accepted norms etc. etc. are constantly evolving and nothing is fixed forever, and we can help to make change happen.
>
> History teaching at its best offers an education in how to be a well-informed citizen, aware of our own humanity, our flaws, our agency and our responsibility to making a difference in the world.

This impetus to hope, to transcend, to transform is at the heart of what it means to be human, and it embodies an agency or participation in the creation, maintenance and changing of the social order that opens up possibilities in a number of spheres that do not exclude making a living.

In the fluid conditions of the contemporary graduate workplace, many currents are continuously at play, shaping and re-shaping the work environment. Leading employers are under threat from global competition, public organisations are shrinking and opportunities for graduates are changing. Most evidently, there are fewer salaried jobs in the large corporations and public services as employees but growing opportunities for work as freelancers and consultants who, individually or collaboratively, provide services to organisations. In part this is due to the rise of new technologies as a consequence of which significant amounts of professional work are being routinised: traditional information management jobs, law, even public policy work can be undertaken more quickly and accurately using big datasets and algorithms (Avvisati, Jacotin, & Vincent-Lancrin, 2013; Susskind & Susskind, 2015; Frey & Osborne, 2015). The new opportunities opening up demand practices and qualities that are least able to be replicated by machine intelligence. Graduates need the ability to adopt approaches to data that consider the complexities of context and, importantly, to connect to people in sensitive and empathetic ways. Here understanding of key procedural concepts in the discipline such as causation, contingency, significance and the ability to interrogate historical evidence and human actions in the past critically and imaginatively, are important means of nurturing the kinds of people required.

Viewed through a Bernstein/capabilities lens, the employability agenda in higher education can transcend a compressed notion of instrumental skills to encompass a much larger educational territory that involves the capacity to live a meaningful life: that sees society and employment in far more than economic terms. Its focus becomes not merely upon gaining employment or acquiring technical skills but involves issues of purpose and ethics: a whole orientation to work and life. It involves cultivating dispositions of engagement and thinking through the subject that enables students to approach work and life in less dualistic ways, considering not only how they will make a living (effectively) and the part they play but also how they will make a difference and contribute to the maintenance and changing of the social order. In broad terms, to achieve such a critically reflective, imaginative and activist outcome, graduates need to possess confidence, empathy and agency, exactly those qualities prominent in the accounts of the historians in this study.

16.6   Conclusion

It is easy to see why the dominant discourse of higher education quality and perfor-mance sits awkwardly with the ambitions for their students of the history lecturers in this study. Fundamentally, it fails to capture the spirit and deeper educative rationale of what they want and try to do with students and is incapable of expressing adequately why history teaching really matters. What we see in these lecturer accounts is a richer narrative that closely aligns to Bernstein's conception of pedagogic rights and to the interlocking human capabilities that graduates in the twenty-first century need and history lecturers want to help students to access. This discourse of identity formation and personal transformation through the subject recognises that for all students it is far easier to learn by studying something (a subject) you love or are fascinated by; something that is a shared passion (between tutors and students). Such intrinsic motivation generates an energy that is essential to what Ronald Barnett (2007, 2009) has called 'the will to learn' and is a public good as well as important to employment.

The reflections of the historians cited here suggest that through their experience of practising the discipline students develop what, with McLean, Abbas and Ashwin (2015), we might call a specialised or subject-based pedagogic identity. In the context of history education, we might identify in summary form a number of interconnected and overlapping elements in this. Students:

- *Gain specialised content knowledge.* This is not about simply accumulating more information but interrogating and transforming it. It involves understanding core concepts that give shape to the discipline like causation, change and continuity; that explains how societies work, like monarchy, trade, power; and that help historians organise the past, like the Renaissance, the Enlightenment and the Industrial Revolution. And students learn how these concepts have been used, change and continue to change in historical writing.
- *Develop discipline-based procedural knowledge.* This involves understanding the nature of historical evidence, the process of historical interpretation and judge-ment and practical subject-based procedures such as researching (in archives, for example), critical reading (of primary and secondary sources) and writing effective historical accounts. They become better able to pose the sorts of ques-tions historians ask and use their knowledge to ask new questions. They act like historians.
- *Are inducted into a discipline knowledge community* and its norms and procedures, not least by how historians shape their curricula and organise their teaching, and the particular constellation of behaviours and habits of mind they think most important.
- *Come to feel part of a trained group of people* with a historically informed knowl-edge of how the world works and how change happens and are able to connect through this to their own lives and the lives of others. As students practise their discipline they come to understand themselves, others and their world in more complex ways. They appreciate that human beings see in time and place and in

the context of their own lives. They bring a historical gaze to bear that enables them to think differently about the present and the future.

This is both an education in history (in a particular discipline) and an education through history. Students gain 'powerful knowledge' that enables them to grow as people with a fascination for history and the capabilities required to navigate the challenges and possibilities that face them in the twenty-first century. This involves both disciplined critical inquiry and what, with the history educator Christine Counsell (2002), we might call 'the cultivation of humanness'.

A specialised but expansive education is integral to how students might access pedagogic rights. Its efficacy, however, turns upon what counts as legitimate as historical knowledge (what Bernstein calls 'classification') and the means by which this translates into pedagogic practice: the how of pedagogic decision-making ('framing'). For lecturers, framing involves choices about a wide variety of curricular and classroom issues including selection of content, sequencing, pacing and assessment, as well as what Shulman (1986) calls pedagogical content knowledge: how teachers bring together their subject matter knowledge and pedagogical knowledge. Delivering a higher education that fulfils the promise of students and enables access to pedagogic rights is undoubtedly challenging, no more so than in mass systems of higher education; in tightly regulated, standards-based curricular regimes; in environments where teaching performance is evaluated in narrow, instrumental terms. There is insufficient space here to address these practical curricular and classroom challenges, but there is plentiful evidence available of the kinds of discipline-led approaches that can foster the desired outcomes in a university setting (for trends, see Sipress & Voelker, 2011; Nye et al., 2011; Booth, 2003, 2014; Clark & Nye, 2018). And there are imaginative and suggestive examples of pedagogic thinking and classroom practice that engage students in historical thinking and enable them to appreciate the difference they can make in society as well as in their own lives (e.g. Clark, 2009; Jones, 2011; Chamberlain, 2013; Macleod & Chamberlain, 2012; Pace, 2017).

Recent empirical research on undergraduate sociology education by McLean, Abbas and Ashwin (2013a) has directed particular attention to the importance for students of the pedagogical relationship with lecturers in learning and to the significance, they assign to dialogue and discussion and encouragement to make an effort. Research on UK history students' perceptions has similarly pointed out the value students (increasingly) attach to the quality of their relationship to lecturers and in particular to the commitment of teachers to them as (developing) individuals (Skinner, 2014). In an analysis of the challenges of twenty-first-century employment, Frey and Osborne (2015, p. 91) emphasise that personal interaction will become an even greater issue in higher education despite the rise of online learning. 'Physical interactions between students (and between students and teachers)', they suggest, 'are likely to become even more important, as social, creative and problem-solving skills will be essential in most developed labour markets.' This personal interaction can be facilitated in a variety of ways, not least through feedback mechanisms and personal tutor systems and, more broadly, through the creation of a supportive

yet challenging learning environment that includes a learning-focused departmental ethos. The historians in our study emphasise the need to focus on strategies that deliver the outcomes that really matter: that genuinely improve learning, not simply those that can be seen to meet externally-driven performance or quality assurance targets.

In sum, a Bernstein/capabilities approach directs attention to a fundamental but neglected dimension of educational purpose and outcome. It offers a pedagogic focus that stands in contrast to the more utilitarian orientation of regulatory approaches and speaks to important drivers for academic teachers and students: passion, professional idealism and human possibility. It emphasises that to teach (and learn) history fundamentally concerns human growth and involves a discipline-centred approach to understanding self, others and the world that is, at best, transformative. Finally, it offers history educators a powerful lens through which to review their teaching and curricula and reflect on ways forward: to consider what they do and why they do it and construct pedagogic narratives that express fully their avowed ambitions for students and the value of history education in the world.

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Chapter 17
In and Beyond the Now: A Postscript

Adele Nye and Jennifer Clark

> What are the words you do not yet have? What do you need to say?
> Audre Lorde, *The Transformation of Silence into Language and Action*, (2001).

Abstract We never would have imagined a world so changed, such an uncertain and precarious future, nor such a watershed as 'now' has become. The responsibility of this time weighs heavily on the academy and the disciplines within it by implication. In this chapter we assert that historians are known to embrace interdisciplinary thinking and critical epistemologies, and to stretch boundaries and are therefore well placed to forge ahead into an uncertain future.

We never would have imagined a world so changed, such an uncertain and precarious future, nor such a watershed as 'now' has become. Barnett (2020) tells us that 'From now on (the first quarter of the twenty first century) the world falls into two temporal categories, BC and AC – before Coronavirus and after Coronavirus'. He asks us to consider the interconnectedness of the world, humans and technology, economies, nations, values, knowledge systems and surveillance, and of course, he argues, 'implicated' in them all, is the contemporary university (Barnett, 2020). With interconnectedness comes vulnerability and if COVID-19 has done anything, it has exposed those vulnerabilities and created fissures, pauses and folds for reflection. Barnett ends his blog post with the stark announcement, that this is the time for 'a completely new theory of the university.' '*All* has to be rethought', he declares. Barnett and Bengsten (2017, p. 8) even call specifically for epistemologies to be reconceptualised and argue for a 'speculative epistemology'. 'We suggest', they say:

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that a 'speculative epistemology' and speculative thinking more generally will enable the emergence of "knowledge, [which] does not merely relate back to socio-political and cultural events and meanings, but also derives from much deeper ontological strata and reservoirs within the university itself".

The responsibility of 'now' weighs heavily on the academy and the disciplines within it by implication.

The work of the historian seems more important and urgent than ever before in this watershed moment. Pietsch and Flanagan (2020, p. 255) see 'the urgency of our times as pressing on historians in a different way – a way that speaks not only to the content of what they teach and research, but also to their epistemic orientation: the way they face the work and the ways they seek to orient subjects towards certain ways of seeing, understanding and acting'. The breadth of this view is also represented in the chapters of this volume, where authors have explored a range of approaches to contemporary issues. What they all have in common is that same sense of doing things differently, and the recognition that how we teach history in the contemporary classroom must take account of the unique expectations, concerns and demands of our times. The rapidly changing COVID climate has made the imperative to act quickly and decisively even more apparent. There is a sense that we are teaching about the past in response to a present that is tumbling into an unimagined future. With that in mind, the Australian Historical Association (AHA) conference for 2020 was prophetically focused on urgent histories. The subsequent edition of its journal, *History Australia*, explores the professional obligation to respond. Rees and Huf (2020a, p. 228; 2020b p. 275) write about the 'current moment of urgency' and the way 'historical scholarship looks less like retreat and more like urgent political work'. The way things are done cannot remain the same. As evidence, Pietsch and Flanagan (2020, p. 254) admit theirs 'is not a conventional research article, but more a kind of improvised reckoning'. They explain that 'answering the call of our times will mean doing some things that are uncomfortable or unfamiliar' (Pietsch & Flanagan, 2020, p 270). Rees and Huf (2020b, p. 277) go even further. They envision historians creating 'new narratives about human (and non-human) existence that offer fresh ways to think about and respond to the fraught present' which will be part of 'an entirely reimagined political, social and economic order'. 'These are formidable KPIs', they declare. At a time when governments dismiss history as not part of the job-ready agenda, the discipline has carved out for itself an urgent, demonstrative role that is nothing short of revolutionary – charged with contextualising, narrativising and historicising the reconceptualisation of our society and using collegiality, inclusivity and interdisciplinarity as the key principals in forward-looking succession in the academy (Rees & Huf, 2020b, p. 285).

If the sense of urgency is there, and the acknowledgement that, perhaps, we even stand at a point of no return, what will be the intellectual drivers for teaching history in the post-COVID world? What lies beyond the now and the knowledge that the discipline must be part of re-imagining the future by re-working the past. One of the biggest questions for the future must be the nature of truth and the value of trust in expertise.

Concepts of contested truths, truth-telling and post-truth have marked scholarly (and political) discussions, challenging structures of power and hegemony that shape 'common sense' (Clayton-Dixon, 2019; Gapps, 2018; Gudonis & Jones, 2020; Mencevska, 2020). Historians are pivotal to compiling the trustworthy histories of global, national and local communities. These will provide the grounding for the pub tests of the future, the public narratives, the lessons in the history classrooms and exhibitions in museums – the stories that are accepted as true. Yet in these times the impact of post-truth has been troubling, most notably writ large in the international arena through the public utterances of President Trump and his followers. Indeed, post-truth was the Oxford Dictionaries Word of the Year for 2016, the same year as Trump's election (Oxford Languages, 2016; Black & Walsh, 2019, p. 2).

Just as we finalise this book, Gudonis and Jones published *History in a Post-Truth World*. They define post-truth history, even though they recognise post-truth itself is a disputed concept within the pages of their own volume, as:

> the communication of false information on a historical phenomenon that appeals to emotion and personal belief, where both the purveyor and recipient are indifferent to the historicity and contemptuous of expert opinion that contradicts it, and where the underlying objective is ideological, especially in support of collective identity or a political program (2020, p. 1).

Because history is an interpretative discipline which often selects and discards sources in search of evidence for an argument, there has long been a fine distinction between history and fiction. Curthoys and Docker (2010, p. 3) said they found that problem so complex that they devoted a whole book to addressing it. History is more important than ever in a post-truth world because the interpretation of the past that privileges analysis, investigation, questioning and exploration over fabrication, emotion and unsubstantiated belief is essential to our rational knowing and engaging with the world. The key question that Gudonis and Jones (2020) ask, and it is important because of the values layered within it, is whether history is 'better than footnoted fiction?' For better, we could also read 'more'. As we go deeper into the mire that is post-truth, experts will need to assert their authority in new ways to reach an audience increasingly disrespectful and disparaging of that knowledge, while equally oblivious to their own ignorance. Nichols (2017, n.p.) declared that the United States 'is now a country obsessed with the worship of its own ignorance'. The endpoint is that the historian has a professional expectation and perhaps even a moral duty to explicate the past using the ethical methods of the discipline in the public interest, that most contestable, but nonetheless democratically laden term. Political commentator, Waleed Aly (2020) has written about Trump and post-truth explaining that: 'The point isn't that he misrepresents facts. It's that facts are just irrelevant. All that matters is the narrative and how you feel about it.' The end result, cautions Aly, is that 'What we might be about to discover is that it's a very short trip from post-truth to post-democracy'.

Those who entreat historians to become public intellectuals see a future that is precarious for truth and place hope in those who are prepared not just to reassert the primacy of facts, but to negotiate a transparent space where interpretation, based on evidence, can be publicly encouraged (Rousso in Gudonis & Jones, Foreword,

2020). In other words, the historian in the urgent, post-COVID, post-truth age is still an activist. Activism and forms of public engagement are, like most aspects of our lives, transforming under COVID conditions. The opportunity to blog, join online conferences and create panels for public podcasts has been something historians have embraced with enthusiasm. Online engagement has been transformative and liberating especially for those of us living in rural and regional areas. Some of us have been able to attend gatherings, conferences and book launches that distance would usually have precluded. Access to the history community in such contexts has increased dramatically. The work of the Australian Centre for Public History at the University of Technology has proved to be a leader in the online spaces with their *Public History Hour* (2020). Other groups such as the Sydney Feminist History Group and the multiple 'Friends of' history departments have brought together large gatherings online for lectures and panels. We see an important opportunity into the future for such unprecedented access to be continued – even once gatherings begin to occur again on university campuses. The electronic connectivity that has been forced upon us in lockdown will surely be an enduring expectation of academic life as a gateway into public debate and commentary. That opportunity will also be there for our students whose study of history may very well also include the study of history under siege. In COVID times our communities have been fractured, locked down, interconnected, and forward-looking. The entanglements of historical scholarship take on a Baradian space–time–mattering form, where space, time and matter are so entangled and ongoing (Barad, 2011).

The challenges for historians in the future are immense. There will be new issues to explain, new questions to ask and new knowledge and perspectives to share. We could speculate on what they might be, Indigeneity, online spaces, 'planetary stewardship'(Sterling, 2020). We note, for example, the recent public interest in the Spanish Flu as we try to make sense of the present pandemic. Past President of the Australian Historical Association, Joy Damousi, explores the emergent 'fault-lines' in our present by drawing comparisons with 1918–1919. She wrote of three: 'the federal system; transparency and openness in crisis; and the economic management of such moments in time' (Damousi, 2020, p. 219). There was a minimal public interest in the Spanish Flu until we were faced with our own lived experience. Neither, for that matter, do we know much about the history of the North Head Quarantine Station in Sydney. Perhaps there will be more interest now to respond to the request for information on their website to help flesh out the long history of suppressing contagion in Australia (Q Station). But there will always be the surprise, the shock and the unexpected that will demand a reset. Rees and Huf (2020b, p. 270) conclude that 'when the next fires come – as we know they, or something like them, will come – it will mean being ready'. What do we do now to be ready then? How can we ensure that we can respond to the future student's needs and aspirations? We are reminded of Davies' work on emergent listening. Davies describes it as 'slow ethical listening, it requires us to dwell in the moment of the pause before difference emerges' (2016, p. 74). As the universities shift and transform under the new conditions we need to be listening closely (and ethically) to the students of the future and to the historians that shape the discipline. It will be essential for the cartographies of the discipline

undertaken by Miller and Peel (2005) and Crotty and Sendzuik (2019) to be revisited in the coming years to track the impact of the changes on staffing and subjects.

This volume has explored history teaching in the contemporary age, but as we know, 'now' is far from static and tomorrow's 'now' will have its own demands. The history discipline occupies a unique position in global and local debates within the academy. The agile manner in which historians are known to embrace interdisciplinary thinking and critical epistemologies, and to stretch boundaries means the discipline is especially well placed to forge ahead in these uncertain futures. We have argued elsewhere that 'History is both "sure footed" as well as "light on its feet". It is poised to respond' (Clark & Nye, 2020). Surely that is the key message for our classrooms and our students.

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