ANALYSING AUSTRALIAN HISTORY
Creating a Nation
1834–2008

**Richard Broome, Jess Chamoff, Graeme Davison
and Marian Quartly**

Series editors: Richard Broome and Ashley Keith Pratt

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About the cover

Pictured is the painting *Collins Street, town of Melbourne, New South Wales, 1839*, attributed to William Knight, 1839.

In this book you will study the ways in which immigrants and their Australian-born children transformed themselves into a nation. They debated how was a nation to be forged and who was to be included in that nation. According to historian Gary Presland, Aboriginal peoples have lived in Victoria for over 50 000 years. *Collins Street, town of Melbourne, New South Wales, 1839*, depicts the original inhabitants of the land – the Wurundjeri people – observing the transformation of the land through colonisation. At this stage, Melbourne was only four years old as a city, having been founded in 1835. You will note that the title of the painting alludes to the fact that Melbourne, and the colony of Port Phillip, was originally considered part of New South Wales. This was so until 1851 when Victoria became a separate colony.

About the Indigenous Reading Project

All students, regardless of their background, need literacy skills to learn and grow as individuals. Indigenous Reading Project aims to improve the reading ability of Indigenous students through working with school communities and families across Australia. For various reasons, the reading achievement gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students is still significant in Australia today. We want to change this. If you'd like to learn more about our work, please visit us at https://irp.org.au

For the life of the *Analysing Australian History* series, the authors of the books will be donating their royalties to this very worthy cause, and Cambridge University Press will be matching this donation.

The Indigenous Reading Project acknowledges this generous support.

Foreword

History books, like all books, are creations that have their own history. This series began in Melbourne in September 2020 during the COVID-19 lockdown. It came out of a desire by some teachers, academics and publishers at Cambridge University Press to create a series of textbooks for the new VCE Australian History Study Design – due to start in 2022 and until September 2020, having no prospect of textbook(s). A rescue operation began to create four books to inform the four study investigations of the Study Design. Tight deadlines were needed to have the books designed, printed and distributed to be in students' hands for the start of 2022. All the books have been written with a heavily source-based approach so students can learn the craft of historical investigation and historical thinking.

Books owe many debts, and these are no different. Many historians gave permission for their words to be used as sources in the series. Newspaper organisations, publishers, and libraries also gave permission to use words and images in these textbooks. All are acknowledged in the appropriate places. The fifteen authors who worked on the series must be thanked for their creativity, hard and indeed excellent work in creating these magnificent textbooks. Two-thirds of the authors are practising teachers, as their biographies will show. No authors have received remuneration for this project, which they have done willingly, to assist the understanding of our history in this country. Indeed, the authors' royalties are being donated to the Indigenous Reading Project, to be matched by Cambridge University Press. Indigenous Literary Day is 1 September.

Special thank you to the following expert reviewers of the individual volumes, for their excellent and honest feedback.

From Custodianship to the Anthropocene: Ms Alison Quin & Professor Katie Holmes.
Creating a Nation: Dr Andrew Lemon & Dr Gwenda Tavan.
Power and Resistance: Professor Sean Scalmer & Professor Lynette Russell.
War and Upheaval: Hon. Assoc. Professor Judith Smart, Dr Bart Ziino, Mr Aleryk Fricker, Professor Noah Riseman & Ms Briony Parker.

Publishers Nick Alexander and Cameron Pikó must be thanked for all their enthusiasm and guidance for this project. The management at Cambridge University Press in both Australia and England must be thanked most profusely for supporting this project with no great immediate prospect of a financial return.

Richard Broome and Ashley Keith Pratt, May 2021

Contents

Series introduction

AUSTRALIA'S REVOLUTIONARY HISTORY

When societies transplant themselves to new lands these fragments of the home societies are inevitably reshaped. The Romans in Britain or in Constantinople became different from those back at home in Rome. Likewise, from the fifteenth century onwards, after Europe began the process of colonisation during the Age of Exploration, the people and their ways of life in the colonies also changed from those at home. European peoples in these new lands were transformed by different environments and by clashing with original owners.

Australia's history is monumental because of how these transformations played out. It is also full of tragedy and drama, because these European immigrant peoples invaded new places with existing societies, except for the Pacific, far older than European agrarian society. In the case of Australia, the Indigenous population has been here since at least 60 000 BCE and scientific knowledge keeps pushing the date back. Many Indigenous people consider that they have always been here.

European colonists misread or misrepresented the facts before them and argued First Nations peoples were not owners, were without religion or culture, were impoverished because of their lack of physical possessions; and did not even deserve to own their land. The newcomers did not realise for generations that they were meeting a culture ten times older than their own agrarian societies, and one shaped by deeply spiritual ideas about custodianship of land.

The past is not one story, but many stories, interwoven and entangled. Misunderstandings, the injustices, the violence, the removals and dispossessions that took place for First Nations peoples created massive traumas, wrongs and human suffering that Australia is still addressing to this day. However, this European offshoot in other ways developed a magnificence of its own, which will be explored as well in this series.

Our history is not dead and gone but alive with the past, and it is this history that we must understand if we are truly to know ourselves. It is a history that must be studied by someone because of its importance in the human story – and if not by we Australians, who else then on this Earth?

This series, *Analysing Australian History*, investigates through documents the key themes in our past.

From Custodianship to the Anthropocene: 60 000 BCE to 2010 explores the ways humans have shaped, and been influenced by, the Australian landscape over tens of thousands of years. It investigates how peoples with very different ideas of the world clashed over the use of land and resources, which are the basis of all wealth and the source of our survival into the future. It also investigates how differences over the use of the environment have become a key theme of Australian society into the modern era.

Creating a Nation: 1834–2008 examines the ways in which immigrants and their Australian-born children transformed themselves into a nation. They debated how a nation was to be forged and who was to be included in that nation. These questions still play out today in a deep and often tense manner.

Power and Resistance: 1788–1998 investigates how power was wielded in the emerging Australian society. It explores how ideas of freedom and democracy played out (and continue to play out) in Australia, and the implications for an imperfect society as groups struggled against those in power for justice and to be recognised as equal parts of the nation.

War and Upheaval: 1909–1992 investigates why and how Australia has been drawn into global conflicts throughout the twentieth century, as alliances shifted and new perceived threats to regional security emerged. It also explores how being drawn into these global conflicts has often led to turmoil and division within Australian society.

The four investigations in this series each have two halves: Foundations and Transformations. This recognises that Australia was settled by First Nations peoples in ancient times, then much later by colonists from Europe and in recent times immigrants from other continents. These foundations were transformed by interactions between people and land, and by the struggle by and between groups, to realise their ideas and ambitions.

Australian history is clearly revolutionary in several ways. The land was transformed by the presence of humans, both First Nations peoples and then Europeans and other newcomers after 1788. The British government usurped Aboriginal sovereignty and power after 1788, the consequences of which are still being resolved. Settlers forged a democracy, which was advanced in world terms. It was an imperfect democracy, created by ideas of the day, but one forced to be more inclusive by the actions of women, by newcomers from different backgrounds to the first colonists, by First Nations peoples, and by other groups seeking inclusion.

These are some of the great dramas of our history. They are astonishing stories of struggle, trauma and transformation that should not be missed or forgotten!

Richard Broome and Ashley Keith Pratt
Series Editors

A NOTE ON AUTHORS

The authors, a quarter of them retired academics and teachers, and half of them practising teachers, are all non-Indigenous Australians, mostly of Anglo-Celtic descent. In these histories of Australia, the authors must write about all Australians, of all descents. They have tried to do this fairly and using historical methodology, which enjoins historians to try to understand, not judge, those in the past. The effort to understand others, to stand in their shoes so to speak, is done by seeking their voices in historical documents, if they can be found. The volumes are documentary based, so where possible the voices of First Nations peoples, immigrants and Australians of diverse backgrounds have been presented to readers. The authors have tried to be aware of their own ideas and values, and where possible to allow students to find their own meanings in the documents through questions and learning activities. Each volume has been reviewed by First Nations educators.

The Victorian Year 12 Study Design 2022–2026, to which these volumes are closely matched, was devised by an expert educational team and checked by many people, including the Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Inc and teacher forums.

A note on terminology

How people are defined or define themselves changes over time and within different context. We need to understand which terms to use and when. The four texts in the series *Analysing Australian History* will use 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' (as in the Victorian Curriculum Assessment Authority History Study Design 2022–2026), where appropriate. However, in the nineteenth century few Torres Strait Islander people lived in mainland Australia, and less so in southern and western parts of the continent. They are more present in the second half of each book. Other words for Indigenous peoples will also be used in the books.

Local words: The original owners will be referred to where possible by their own local language group names that stem from traditional times, such as Eora, Wiradjuri and Woiwurrung. This is the preferred position, but of course the spelling of these names varies. Also, local names will be used that have been acquired, employed and accepted by Indigenous people since colonial contact, often from names of places where they have lived – for instance, Coranderrk, La Perouse or Palm Island people.

Regional words: When the need arises to describe those in wider regions, Aboriginal names that are widely, but not universally, accepted by original owners since contact may sometimes be used. These include names such as Koori, Murri, Yolgnu, Nyoongar and Nyungah for those of the south-east, north-east, north, west and southern parts of the continent respectively. Those in Tasmania now refer to themselves as Palawa.

National words: When all original owners are referred to, which is necessary in a continent-wide study, we must use European-derived words. No Indigenous word existed in pre-European contact times for all traditional owners across the country, as groups had no need for one.

Therefore, these books will use interchangeably: Aboriginal peoples, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, First Nations peoples, Indigenous peoples, original owners, traditional owners, Aboriginal Australians and Indigenous Australians, where the context is appropriate, to describe all those whom Canadians succinctly refer to as 'First Nation' or Aboriginal peoples. Aboriginal people also sometimes refer to themselves as blacks, blackfellas or people of colour. However, some of these terms may be considered offensive by First Nations peoples if used by non-Indigenous people.

A NOTE ON THE WORDS 'ABORIGINAL/ABORIGINE'

A frequently used term in these texts is Aboriginal people(s). The word 'aborigine/ aboriginal' comes from the Latin phrase *ab origine* (meaning 'from the beginning'). It emerged in seventeenth-century English to mean 'the original inhabitants of a land'. As an English word of that era, it also became a colonial word to mean Indigenous people, as opposed to colonists.

The words 'aboriginal', 'aborigine' and their plurals did not become common until the 1840s and existed along with 'blacks' and 'natives' (see next page). The word 'aboriginal' and its other forms did not overtake 'native' in common usage until the late nineteenth century.

For much of its usage life, the word 'aboriginal' was used without a capital 'A', which gave it a derogatory edge. However, it has been capitalised conventionally since

the 1960s, revealing a new respect. It is now embraced by most Indigenous people, especially its derivative form 'Aboriginality', which relates to the politics of identity. 'Aboriginal people(s)', which is used most often in these texts, is now the preferred term over 'Aborigines' or 'Aboriginals' and is used interchangeably with 'First Nations' or 'Indigenous Australians'.

The word 'indigenous' means 'originating from' so anyone born in Australia is indigenous to the country. The capital 'I' is used to refer to First Nations Australians.

'NATIVE' AND OTHER UNACCEPTABLE WORDS

The word 'aboriginal' was not at first used in Australia. The English discoverer of the east Australian coast, James Cook, who claimed the continent for Britain in 1770, called the original owners 'natives' and occasionally 'Indians'. On 4 May 1816, a government proclamation used all three terms 'natives', 'black natives' and 'Ab-origines' in the one document, probably the first use of this last term. 'Native' came from the Latin word *nativus*, meaning an original inhabitant of a place. Early colonists mostly used 'natives', although 'the blacks' also came into use on the frontier, as the language of race intruded.

The word 'native' became derogatory but remained in common usage until the middle of the twentieth century, even in legislation. Like other unacceptable words, such as 'half-caste', it is deemed offensive today. The word 'native' will only appear where necessary in this book to show the language used and attitudes held by settlers, and only in historical sources quoted in the book. We need to see 'native' and other such words and ideas as settler terms of abuse, used to denigrate and silently argue settlers' claims to Australia.

There are other derogatory words that have been used against other minority groups in Australia, especially towards immigrants, which are also avoided in these books, except if necessary in a historical source to show attitudes. They are also terms of abuse used to assert dominance. The changing use of words reveals the journey all Australians are on to a more tolerant and accepting future.

WORD USE FOR NON-INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Those who came to this continent (called Australia from about 1813) to colonise will be called colonists or settlers, immigrants, whites, non-Indigenous people, Europeans, Asians, Africans, South Americans, or the name specific to the country from which they came, for instance British, Italians, Chinese, Sudanese and so forth, as the context demands.

The AIATSIS map of Indigenous Australia

Beneath your feet are layers of history. We all stand on the traditional lands of First Nations peoples, which were never ceded. This map shows the groups of custodians for all local regions across Australia.

→**Source:** David R Horton (creator), © AIATSIS, 1996. No reproduction without permission. To purchase a print version visit: www.aiatsis.ashop.com.au/.
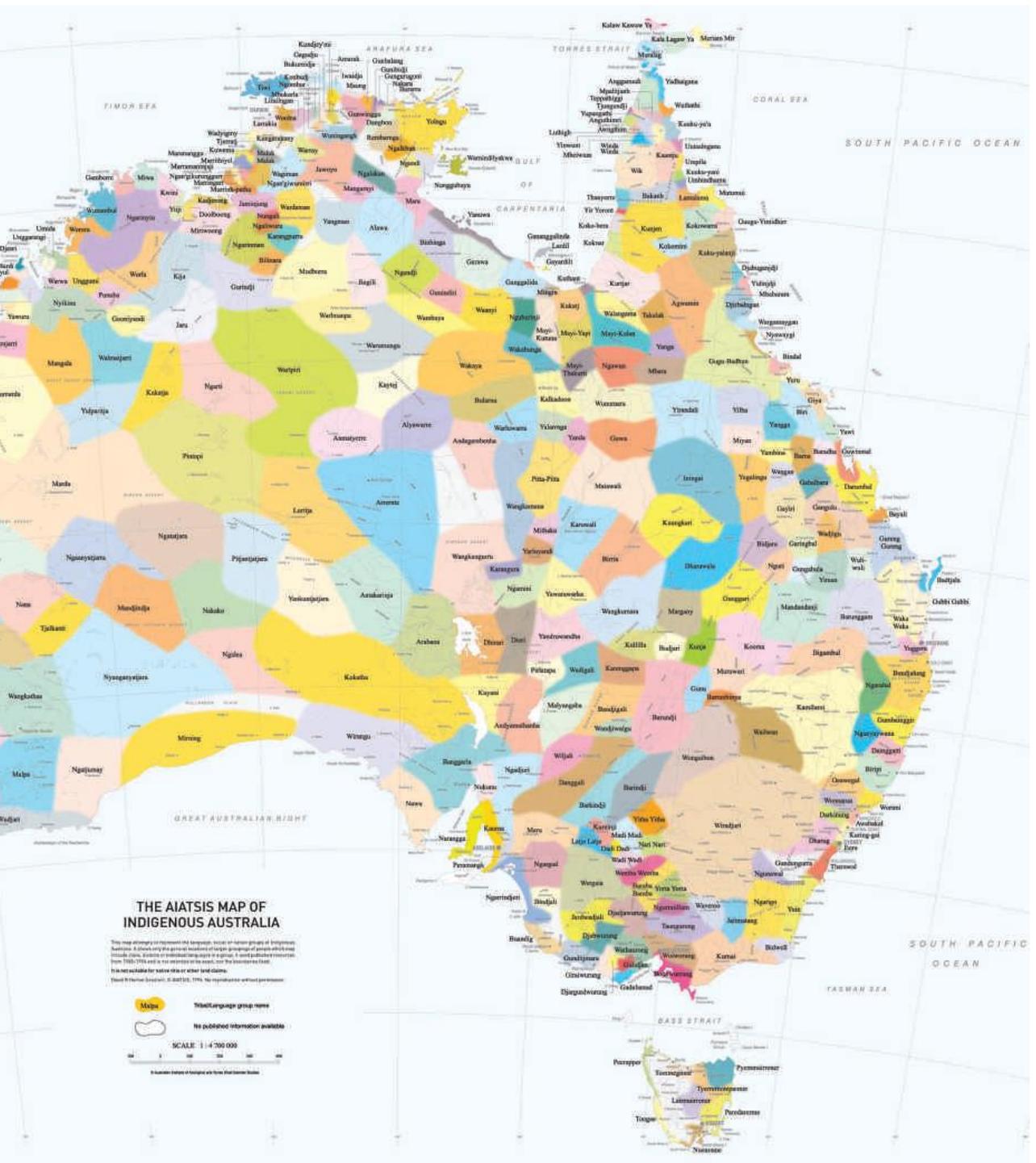
This map attempts to represent the language, social or nation groups of Aboriginal Australia. It shows only the general locations of larger groupings of people which may include clans, dialects or individual languages in a group. It used published resources from the eighteenth century-1994 and is not intended to be exact, nor the boundaries fixed. It is not suitable for native title or other land claims. David R Horton (creator), © AIATSIS, 1996. No reproduction without permission. To purchase a print version visit: https://shop.aiatsis.gov.au/

About the authors

RICHARD BROOME (*author and series editor*) AM, FAHA, FRHSV is an Emeritus Professor in History at La Trobe University and president of the Royal Historical Society of Victoria. He has authored fifteen books, including the award-winning *Aboriginal Victorian: a history since 1800* (2005), and the bestselling *Aboriginal Australians: a history since 1788* (5th ed., 2019). Richard, patron of the History Teachers' Association of Victoria (2013–2022), has lectured to Year 10+ teachers and students since 1974, also writing the VCE text *Colonial Experience*, published in four editions (1998–2016). He served on the VCAA's revision of the Study Design in 2013, which became the 2016–2020 Study Design.

I thank my creative fellow authors, the very professional team at Cambridge and my wife, Margaret Donnan, and family for their patience and support.

ASHLEY KEITH PRATT (*author and series editor*) is a passionate history educator with extensive experience teaching history in addition to senior curriculum leadership roles. Ashley has completed postgraduate research in history education at the University of Melbourne and has contributed to curriculum design in Victoria through VCAA review panels for VCE History. Ashley is vice-president of the HTAV, a contributor to the HTAV journal *Agora*, a VCAA assessor for VCE History exams and a previous author for Cambridge University Press for Years 7 to 10 humanities projects.

Firstly, I would like to thank my co-editor Richard Broome for his enthusiasm, generosity, and passion for this project. I would also like to thank the entire team at Cambridge University Press, especially Nick Alexander and Cameron Piko, without them this project would never have happened. Finally to my family, their support makes these small contributions I can make possible.

MARIAN QUARTLY (*author*) has taught and researched Australian history for the last 50 years. Her most cited works are the feminist history of Australia *Creating a Nation* (2006) and the bicentennial history *Australians 1838* (1987). She has recently completed a history of her own family that contributes to both family history and South Australian history.

GRAEME DAVISON (*author*) AO is Emeritus Sir John Monash Distinguished Professor of History at Monash University. He has been a teacher and writer of Australian History for over 40 years. His books include *The Rise and Fall of Marvellous Melbourne*, *The Use and Abuse of Australian History*, *Car Wars*, *Lost Relations*, *City Dreamers* and, as co-editor, *The Oxford Companion to Australian History*. He is a former president of the Australian Historical Association.

JESS CHAMOFF (*author*) has taught history, sociology and politics in public and independent schools for the past 17 years. Jess has designed and implemented a variety of history courses throughout Years 7–12, including VCE Australian History and VCE Revolutions. Jess has been an assessor for the VCAA and is passionate about getting students engaged in our nation's history. In her positions of curriculum leadership, she has sought to increase the visibility of Australian history and the complex issues surrounding this nation's past.

As a teacher of Australian History, it has been a privilege to work with Richard, Graeme and Marian. I thank them for collating and constructing this textbook. To Mike, Liam and Koby, thank you for always supporting all of my endeavours and a shout out to my Mum and Dad for the role they played in getting me to this point.

How to use this textbook

TEXTBOOK STRUCTURE

Each book in the series is closely aligned to the VCAA's VCE History: Australian History study design for implementation from 2022. The books are broken into two Area of Study sections, titled Foundations and Transformations. Chapters are presented in a chronological narrative format. Each chapter covers the Key knowledge from the curriculum, including the key events, ideas, perspectives and experiences specified in the study design. The final chapter of each Area of Study specifically covers the changes and continuities of the time period in question.

AREA OF STUDY AND CHAPTER OPENERS

Each Area of Study begins with an opener that contains an introduction and a timeline of key events. Chapters open with an introduction and timeline specific to the chapter.

NARRATIVE AND HISTORICAL SOURCES

Each chapter builds up a historical narrative for students. A wide array of primary and secondary sources are included throughout each book.

GLOSSARY TERMS AND ENDNOTES

Glossary terms are bolded in the text, and defined for you on the page in the print book. Endnotes are also included at the end of each book to give you additional information.

ACTIVITIES

Source analysis questions are provided for both textual and visual sources. Focus questions are included in the page margins to test student comprehension of the narrative by unpacking the content.

All activities within the book are available for download as Word documents.

CHAPTER SUMMARIES AND END-OF-CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

At the end of each chapter, you will find a dot-point chapter summary which outlines both the main ideas covered in the chapter and focuses on the various continuities and changes over the time period in question – a key theme of the study design. In addition, a range of activities which can be used for revision or assessment is included. A range of VCAA-style questions cover the curriculum's 'Key skills' list, which helps you to develop particular historical skills and your understanding of historical concepts.

All **End-of-chapter activity questions** within the book are available for download as Word documents.

DIGITAL VERSION

There is a PDF version of the textbook available. Additional content such as downloadable worksheets, a curriculum grid and weblinks are also available for this title and are downloadable from Cambridge GO.

Introduction

WHY STUDY IMMIGRATION IN AUSTRALIAN HISTORY?

Until the early nineteenth century few people in Europe and Asia migrated. Most people in agricultural societies stayed close to home, bound there by tradition and poor transport. Governments often banned external emigration, especially if people had skills. However, increased population, industrialisation and the growth of cities lured people to towns in western Europe after the 1820s. Some people moved further overseas to 'New World' destinations: the Americas, southern Africa and Australasia, lured by land and mining opportunities.

Immigrants to Australia and other lands believed they were entering new worlds, but in reality, these lands had been occupied by people indigenous to these places for millennia, and in the case of Australia 65 000 years! Thus, settlement of overseas lands by Europeans was in fact a process of colonial take-over. Each additional boat load of immigrants must have been viewed by First Nations peoples as just one more group of invaders.

International migration is a key to understanding global history and the history of those receiving countries. From the 1840s to the 1920s about 50 million Europeans emigrated, some of them bound for Australia. Mobility only slowed during wartime and economic downturns. In most years over the last century, about three per cent of the world's population was mobile – migrating beyond national borders. It may not sound a large percentage, but it amounts to well over a hundred million people leaving and arriving each year. Many of them now include skilled workers or students, who see a new globalised world as their place of living.

After 1945 emigration from Europe to Australia recommenced and gradually new sources of immigrants emerged, emigrants leaving Latin America, Asia and Africa as well. These movements of people were enlarged by those termed '**refugees**'. They were pushed from their homelands by war or famine. In the late 1940s people termed 'Displaced Persons' fled war-torn Europe, and from the 1970s others escaped upheavals caused by war and decolonisation in south-east Asia, the Middle East and Africa.

Such movements of people remake nations, posing the question: who is part of the nation and who is not? These debates create policies of exclusion or acceptance for particular groups.

refugee someone fleeing persecution or danger in their homeland and seeking refuge in another country

WHY STUDY HOW IMMIGRATION PRODUCED CONTINUITY AND/OR CHANGE IN AUSTRALIA?

In 1900, a third of Australia's population was born overseas. This dropped to 10% by the 1940s but steadily climbed back to about a third by the present. However, the source of emigration, which was largely from the United Kingdom and Ireland until 1950, shifted dramatically thereafter. The 2011 **census** recorded 289 different countries of birth, revealing how British colonies of the nineteenth century had been transformed into a modern multicultural society, one of the most diverse culturally in the world, yet with British institutions and the English language still dominant.

census the official count of the inhabitants of a country, done on a regular basis, each five or 10 years

Emigration is one of the most dramatic of human actions. Leaving one's home and family is difficult for most people, since emigration involves leaving all the familiar sights, sounds and smells of home, moving from one's familiar structures of work, education and the law. Richard Howitt, an English emigrant to Port Phillip (Victoria), wrote in 1845: 'There is scarcely any human act so important in its consequence as that of exchanging one country for another'. Howitt was leaving England for an English colony. How much more significant is a movement from Asia or the Middle East! For these migrants, they were being separated from their home language and cultural environment as well. Many immigrants feel alienated by most things around them. All is new and all is strange. Individuals are not quite like a fish out of water, but for many it must feel very similar.

Migration is a key to understanding changes in a nation: at an individual, group or societal level. Newcomers are not only affected by their move, but they also transform their new homelands. If they are coming to a place similar to home, they may perhaps reinforce continuities in the nation, although a new place is never the same as the old. However, in most cases migration leads to changes in the nation as the composition of the population alters and cultural influences vary. This can lead to tensions as the nation is created and continually recreated.

WHY STUDY IDEAS AND PERSPECTIVES?

By investigating people in the past, we seek to understand the ideas that shaped their attitudes and actions about issues like immigration. We need to investigate the historical contexts shaping these perspectives.

Analysing Australian History: Creating a Nation (1834–2008) examines the ways in which settler peoples transformed themselves into a nation and the key questions they faced: how was a nation to be forged and who was to be included in that nation? These questions still play out today in a deep and often tense manner.

Area of Study **1**

Foundations, 1834–1913

By Graeme Davison, Marian Quartly and Jess Chamoff
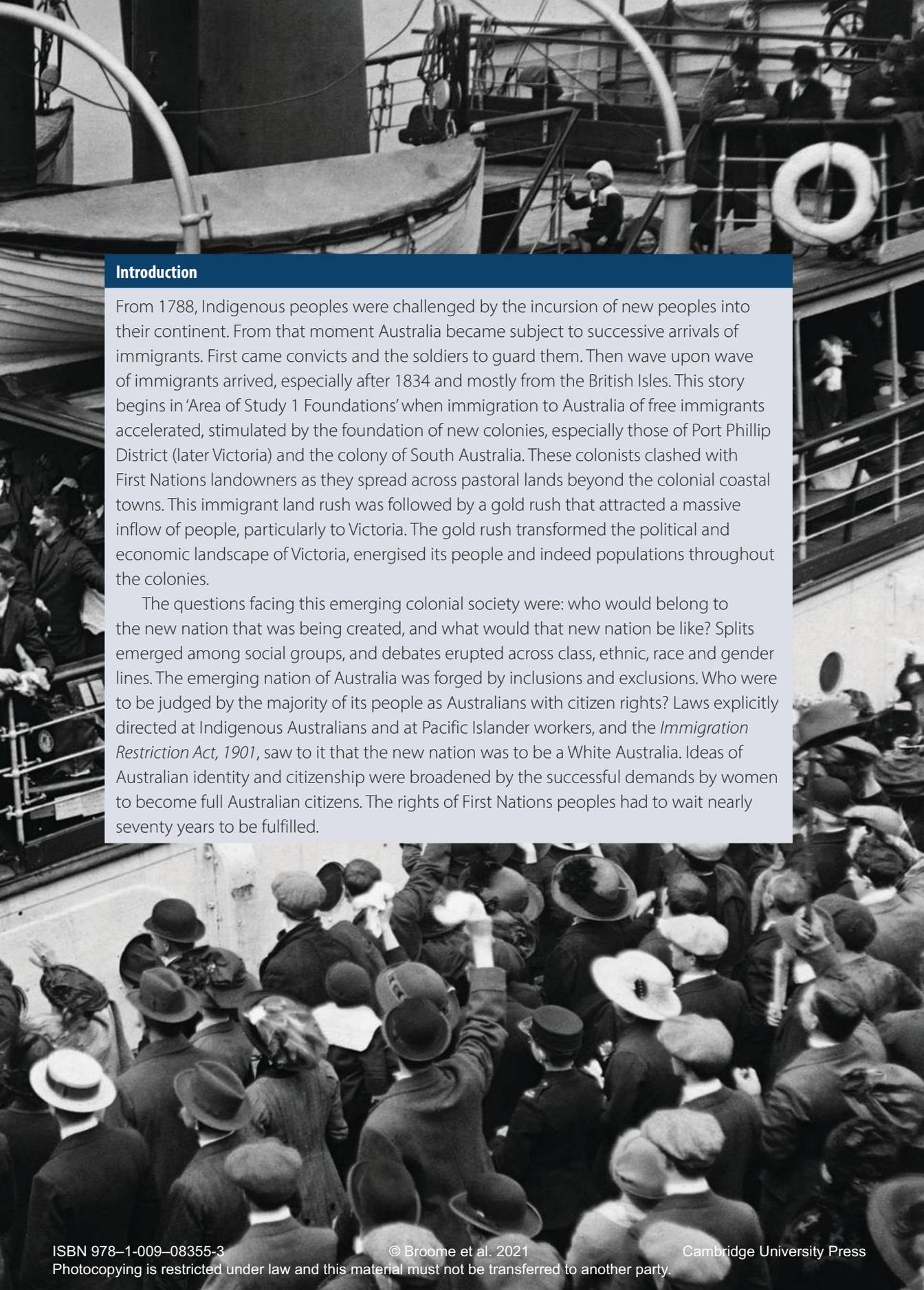
Introduction

From 1788, Indigenous peoples were challenged by the incursion of new peoples into their continent. From that moment Australia became subject to successive arrivals of immigrants. First came convicts and the soldiers to guard them. Then wave upon wave of immigrants arrived, especially after 1834 and mostly from the British Isles. This story begins in 'Area of Study 1 Foundations' when immigration to Australia of free immigrants accelerated, stimulated by the foundation of new colonies, especially those of Port Phillip District (later Victoria) and the colony of South Australia. These colonists clashed with First Nations landowners as they spread across pastoral lands beyond the colonial coastal towns. This immigrant land rush was followed by a gold rush that attracted a massive inflow of people, particularly to Victoria. The gold rush transformed the political and economic landscape of Victoria, energised its people and indeed populations throughout the colonies.

The questions facing this emerging colonial society were: who would belong to the new nation that was being created, and what would that new nation be like? Splits emerged among social groups, and debates erupted across class, ethnic, race and gender lines. The emerging nation of Australia was forged by inclusions and exclusions. Who were to be judged by the majority of its people as Australians with citizen rights? Laws explicitly directed at Indigenous Australians and at Pacific Islander workers, and the *Immigration Restriction Act, 1901*, saw to it that the new nation was to be a White Australia. Ideas of Australian identity and citizenship were broadened by the successful demands by women to become full Australian citizens. The rights of First Nations peoples had to wait nearly seventy years to be fulfilled.

Timeline

World events	Date	Australian events
	1830	
1833: Slavery Abolition Act bans slavery across the British Empire		**1832:** Female immigrants – first boatload of free women arrive in NSW
		1834: Henty family arrive – first permanent settlers in Port Phillip District (Victoria)
		1835: Batman's treaty – John Batman & Wurundjeri make an agreement
		1836: South Australia begins as a British colony
	1840	
1840: New Zealand founded, as the Treaty of Waitangi is signed by the Māori and British		**1840:** Transportation ends – Britain stops convicts to New South Wales
		1841: Immigrants Home opened in Sydney by Caroline Chisholm
1845–49: Irish Potato Famine		
1848: California, US, Gold Rush – gold discovered near Sacramento		
1848: *The Communist Manifesto* published		
1848: Revolutions of 1848 in Europe		
	1850	
		1851: New South Wales gold discovery – Edward Hargraves discovers gold near Bathurst
		1851: Victorian separation – in July Port Phillip District becomes a separate colony, Victoria
		1851: Victorian gold discovery – in July a squatter discovers gold near Clunes
		1852: News of Australian gold discoveries inspires rush of migrants from Britain

World events	Date	Australian events
1853: The arrival of US gunships in Edo (now Tokyo) Bay forces Japan to end its isolation and, in 1854, open ports to trade with the USA		
1853–56: Crimean War with Great Britain and Russia on opposing sides		**1854:** Eureka Stockade – police and troops attack protesting diggers in Ballarat
	1855	
		1855: Chinese entry tax – Victorian government imposes £10 entry tax on Chinese immigrants
		1856: *Victorian Electoral Act 1856* for new Victorian Parliament introduces secret ballot
		1857: Buckland river riots – diggers attack Chinese miners allegedly encroaching on their claims
1858: Start of 90 years of British Crown rule in India		**1859:** Select Committee on Aborigines recommends creation of reserves
		1859: Colony of Queensland separated from NSW
	1860	
		c.1860: Australia's population reaches one million
1861–65: American Civil War between the Union and seceding Confederacy		
1865: Slavery abolished in the United States		
		1868: Attempted assassination – Henry O'Farrell shoots Duke of Edinburgh at Clontarf, Sydney

World events	Date	Australian events
1869: Suez Canal opens linking the Mediterranean to the Red Sea		**1869:** Victorian Aboriginal Protection Board begins – Aboriginal Protection Act gives Central Board wide powers over Aboriginal residence and employment
	1870	
1871–1914: Second Industrial Revolution		**1871:** First association of native-born Australians founded – the Australian Natives' Association
		1877: First Test cricket match played between England v. Australia at the MCG
		1878: Seamen's strike – protests against Chinese employment and residence
	1880	
		1881: Coranderrk Petition – Kulin people appeal for secure tenure of their lands
		1886: *Amending Act of 1869 Aboriginal Act 1886* – the Act's white racial ideas of degrees of descent required 'mixed-descent' people to assimilate into European society
		1887: Queen Victoria's Jubilee – imperialist demonstrations spark republican protests in Sydney
		1888: Arrival of the ship *S.S. Afghan* sparks protests against Chinese immigration
		1889: NSW premier joins movement for Australian Federation when Henry Parkes gives his Tenterfield Oration
	1890	
		1891: First National Australasian Convention – delegates from colonial parliaments met in Sydney and drafted a Federal Constitution
1893: New Zealand becomes the first country to enact women's suffrage		
		1897: *Queensland Aboriginal Act 1897* – designed to protect and control Indigenous peoples

World events	Date	Australian events
1899: Aspirin patented		**1898–99:** Australians vote twice on Constitution Bill; first fails in NSW; more democratic version passes
	1900	
1901: Boxer Rebellion in China ends		**1901:** Inauguration of the Australian Commonwealth – First Commonwealth Parliament opened by the future King George V
		1901: *Immigration Restriction Act 1901* – Dictation Test used to bar 'coloured' immigrants from Australia – commonly called the White Australia Policy
		1901: *Pacific Islanders Labourers Act 1901* – managed their expulsion from Australia
		1902: *Commonwealth Franchise Act 1902* – gave women the vote and denied it to Indigenous Australians
		1904: NSW Royal Commission on the Decline of the Birth-rate declares contraceptive use in Australia equal to 'race suicide'
1905–07: The first revolution in Russia		
		1907: The Harvester Judgement – Justice Higgins sets a 'fair and reasonable' minimum wage for Australian male workers
	1910	
1912: RMS *Titanic* sinks in the Atlantic		**1912:** *Maternity Allowance Act 1912* [the 'Baby Bonus'] – Labor federal government gives £5 per child born to white Australian mothers

CHAPTER 1
Migration and settlement, 1834–1850
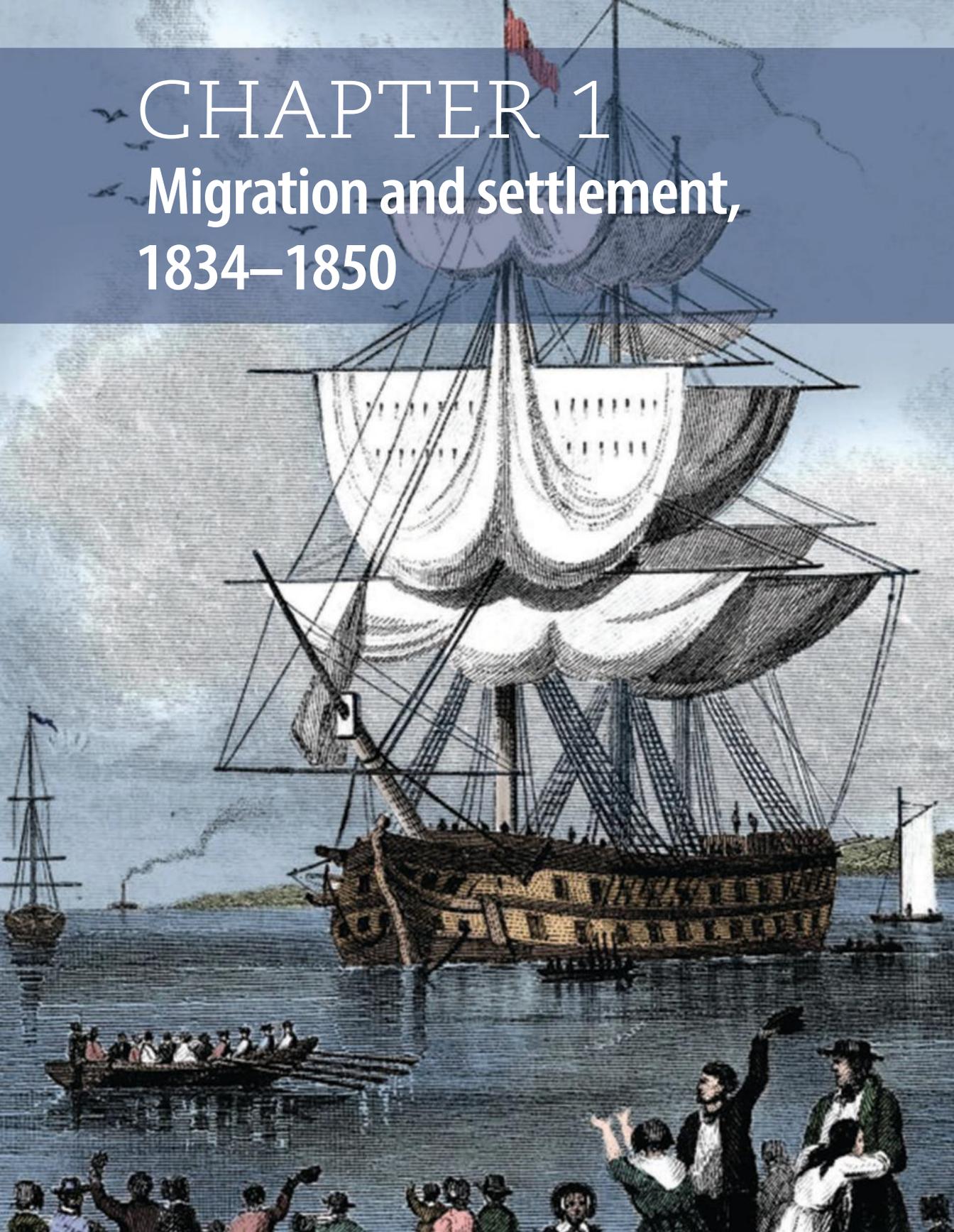
Source 1.0 'The Convict Ship', c.1820. Transportation of convicts from Britain to Australia, parts of which were used as a penal colony. Friends and relations are seen saying their farewells from the shore. Colourised black and white print by artist Henry Adlard.

Chapter timeline

World events	Date	Australian events
	1830	
		1832: Female immigrants – first boatload of free women arrives in NSW
1833: Slavery Abolition Act bans slavery across the British Empire		
		1834: Henty family arrive – first permanent settlers in Port Phillip District (Victoria)
		1835: Batman's treaty – John Batman & Wurundjeri make an agreement
		1836: South Australia begins as a British colony
	1840	
1840: New Zealand founded, as the Treaty of Waitangi is signed by the Māori and British		**1840:** Transportation ends – Britain stops convicts to New South Wales
		1841: Immigrants Home opened in Sydney by Caroline Chisholm

1.1 Introduction

INQUIRY QUESTIONS

- What kind of society was coming to an end in Australia in the 1830s?
- What kind of emigration had created this society?

Historians have described the Australian colonies in the 1830s as a kind of archipelago – no more than scattered islands of white occupation on the edge of the continent. Alan Atkinson and Marian Quartly wrote in *Australians 1838* that 'A map of the British presence shows a chain of "islands" strung along the eastern rim of the continent', while 'In the far west a cluster of pinpoints centred on the Swan and the Avon'.[1] The only substantial settlements were around Sydney and across much of Van Diemen's Land, as Tasmania was then called. In 1834 the colony of South Australia was still being planned and settlement in what became Victoria was unauthorised. The convict prison at Moreton Bay was the only white presence in what would become Queensland. The total white population across the continent was no more than 106 000 men, women and children, with 66 000 in New South Wales and 38 000 in Van Diemen's Land.[2]

→**Source 1.1** 'A Government Jail Gang, Sydney, NSW', c.1830, handcoloured engraving by Augustus Earle, *Views in New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land: Australian scrap book*, J. Cross, London
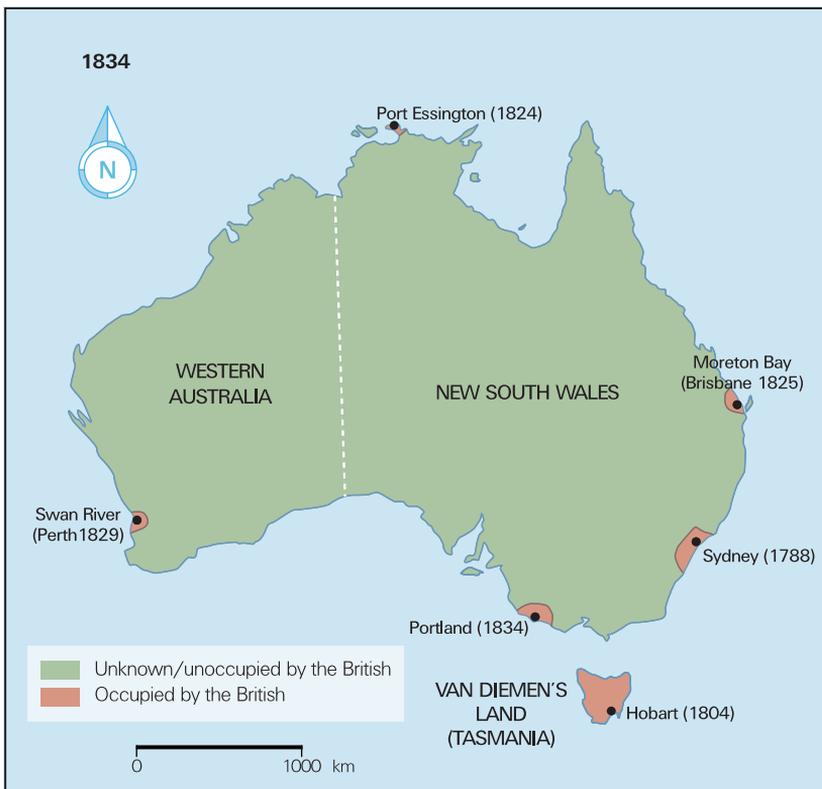
↑**Source 1.2** The Australian colonies in 1834

In 1834 the main use of the colonies was still as a gaol for British men and women sentenced to transportation. Only the tiny Swan River colony in the west was settled in 1829 by free emigrants. The great majority of the white population were convicts, ex-convicts or the descendants of convicts. A few were soldiers and gaolers in charge of convicts. A few were free settlers, who were mostly well-off men using convict labour as the keepers of their flocks and herds of sheep and cattle. These men occupied the best grazing country around Sydney and across the centre of Van Diemen's

Land, and they were beginning to push out their wandering stock beyond the official boundaries of settlement, becoming in the slang of the time 'squatters' on Crown land.

Many more men than women were sentenced to transportation. Of the 106 000 white inhabitants of the continent roughly 75 000 were males, men and boys, and 30 000 were females, women and girls, a ratio of 5 to 2.[3] Reformers in England, concerned at the 'unnatural' society created by transportation, had begun a program that assisted single women to emigrate to the colonies. Several hundred free and single women arrived in Sydney in 1832 and 1833, a tiny contribution towards solving a huge demographic problem.

In 1834 the 106 000 white inhabitants were almost certainly outnumbered by the Indigenous population still occupying the great bulk of the continent. There has been great debate between historians about the numbers of Aboriginal peoples occupying the land at the time of the British invasion in 1788. Estimates range from a maximum of 1 000 000 to a minimum of about 315 000.[4] Historians also disagree about the rate at which the Aboriginal population declined. Most Aboriginal nations still occupied their homelands in 1834, with the exception of the groups of Van Diemen's Land. These people had been almost entirely destroyed by the Black Wars of the 1820s. But population losses had also been great in the lands beyond the frontier of white occupation. In 1788 and again in 1828 smallpox epidemics raged through the Aboriginal peoples on the eastern seaboard and down the rivers of the Darling Basin, killing many thousands.

Another force for change was stirring back in London. A group of influential families – men and women motivated by strong Christian values – began pressuring government to end the transportation of convicts to the Australian colonies. The Clapham sect, as these families were mockingly called, had long been grieved by the treatment of British slaves. By 1833 they had succeeded in having slavery banned within the British Empire, and were turning their attention to what they saw as the curse of convictism.

> **FOCUS QUESTIONS 1.1**
>
> Describe the composition of the following segments of the Australian population in 1834:
> **a.** convicts
> **b.** free settlers
> **c.** Indigenous peoples
> **d.** males/females.

1.2 Significant events , 1834–1850

INQUIRY QUESTION

How did immigration change the Australian colonies between 1834 and 1850?

The beginnings of free emigration: population problems in Great Britain and Ireland

From the beginning of the nineteenth century, commentators began to observe that the lands ruled by the English Crown – England, Ireland and Scotland – had a population problem. The kingdom seemed to be producing more people than it could feed and employ.

In the countryside, agricultural labourers and their families could not live on the wages they earned and had to be supported from taxes paid by local landowners. In the cities, rural refugees crowded the slums and begged in the streets. From 1815 the end of decades of war with France meant the discharge of thousands of soldiers from British armies, which created mass unemployment. This together with rising food prices sparked urban riots and rural protests like machine-breaking across southern England.

Middle-class commentators blamed the poor, claiming they had too many children and they were too lazy to work. In fact, the poverty and unemployment were partly caused by the same process that made the rest of the nation prosperous: the Agricultural Revolution. From the first quarter of the eighteenth century – earlier in Ireland – small landholders had been driven from their holdings by landlords who were intent on growing cash crops for the European market, mostly wool and wheat. In Ireland and Scotland whole villages were uprooted by these forced 'clearances'.

In England, hundreds of 'Enclosure Acts' were passed by British Parliament, each denying small landholders access to land previously held in common by local communities: wood and swampland where families had hunted and gathered food and fuel to supplement what they could grow. Some clung to a precarious existence as seasonal and day labourers on the great farms; others found work – again often seasonal – in the workshops and factories of the growing cities. And many joined the ranks of the urban poor, begging and stealing to stay alive.

William Cobbett, a radical journalist and passionate defender of the poor, recorded the living conditions of labourers in the midland counties in the 1820s. In Lincoln, Cobbett observed:

Source 1.3

three poor fellows digging stone for the roads, who told me that they never had anything but bread to eat, and water to wash it down. One of them was a widower with three children; and his pay was eighteen pence a day; that is to say, about three pounds of bread a day each, for six days in the week: nothing for Sunday, and nothing for lodging, washing, clothing, candlelight, or fuel! Just such was the state of things in France at the eve of Revolution!

William Cobbett, *Rural Rides*, Everyman, London, 1912, pp. 253–4.

In the 1840s Friedrich Engels, a young radical from Germany, lived in the industrial town of Manchester. Engels's father, who owned cotton mills in Manchester, sent his son Friedrich to help manage the mill and to keep him from radical influences in Germany. Young Engels had an Irish girlfriend who showed him the slums of the 'other side' of life in Manchester. Engels was a colleague of Karl Marx, and like him he believed that the working class was oppressed by the system of capitalism. In 1848 Marx and Engels wrote *The Communist Manifesto*, which became the inspiration for the Communist movement.

↑ **Source 1.4** A portrait of William Cobbett painted c.1831 by artist George Cooke

In Leicestershire, Cobbett observed of the labourers' houses:

> Look at these hovels, made of mud and of straw; bits of glass, or of old cast-off windows, without frames or hinges frequently, but merely stuck in the mud wall. Enter them, and look at the bits of chairs or stools; the wretched boards tacked together to serve for a table; the floor of pebble, broken brick, or of the bare ground; look at the thing called a bed; and survey the rags on the backs of the wretched inhabitants; and then wonder if you can that the gaols and dungeons and treadmills [a punishment wheel] increase, and that a standing army and the barrack become the favourite establishments of England.

Source 1.5

William Cobbett, *Rural Rides*, Everyman, London, 1912, pp. 253–4, 266.

In 1844 Engels wrote about working-class living conditions among which he lived in Manchester (see Source 1.6).

> If we briefly formulate the result of our wanderings, we must admit that 350,000 working-people of Manchester and its environs live, almost all of them, in wretched, damp, filthy cottages, that the streets which surround them are usually in the most miserable and filthy condition, laid out without the slightest reference to ventilation, with reference solely to the profit secured by the contractor. In a word, we must confess that in the working-men's dwellings of Manchester, no cleanliness, no convenience, and consequently no comfortable family life is possible; that in such dwellings only a physically degenerate race, robbed of all humanity, degraded, reduced morally and physically to bestiality, could feel comfortable and at home. I am not alone in making this assertion …

Source 1.6

Friedrich Engels, *The Condition of the Working-Class in England in 1844*, Allen & Unwin, London, 1892, p. 63.

←**Source 1.7** An image of Friedrich Engels

1. Using the sources and text to this point, draw a table with two columns and include in one column the signs of poor living conditions and in the other column what factors caused these problems.
2. Read and consider Source 1.6. Would Engels be a reliable source for information about working people? Give reasons to support your answer.

Political economists in Britain began to change their minds about emigration. Previously they had believed that a wealthy, powerful nation needed a large population. Historians Eric Richards and Deborah Oxley wrote that by the 1820s 'It was now becoming clear that population could outstrip resources and that a nation might benefit from the wholesale export of men, women and children'.[5]

Statistics of European immigration and population

Colonies and nations are created by people, of course, so we must look at some statistics.

immigrant one who *arrives* to settle in a new country, whereas an emigrant is one who leaves their home country

The table in Source 1.8 shows the numbers of people arriving in the various colonies across the period 1831–1850, both as convicts and as free **immigrants**. The table in Source 1.9 shows the total population by colony, 1835–1850. The table in Source 1.10 shows the ratio of men to women* in the different colonies across the same period.

→**Source 1.8** (1) Immigration to the Australian colonies, 1831–1850

	1831–1840	1841–1850
NSW & Port Phillip District**		
convict	31 200	3340
free	40 300	76 650
TOTAL	71 500	79 990
SA		
free	13 400	24 900
VDL***		
convict	19 490	29 810
free	11 700	4900
TOTAL	31 190	34 710
WA		
convict		175
free	1000	2500
TOTAL	1000	2675
AUST		
convict	50 690	33 325
free	66 400	108 950
TOTAL	117 090	142 275

Although transportation ended in 1840, 3340 'exiles' who had served part of their sentences in England were sent to NSW and Port Phillip District

Charles Price, 'Chapter 1 – Immigration and Ethnic Origin', in *Australians: Historical Statistics*, Fairfax, Syme & Weldon, Sydney, 1987, pp. 291–2.

Population by sex, state and territories, 1835–1850

		1835	1840	1845	1850
Males					
	NSW	51 949	85 560	113 739	154 976
	SA	..	8272	12 810	35 902
	WA	1231	1434	2689	3576
	Tas.	28 749	32 040	43 921	44 229
	Australia	81 929	127 306	173 159	238 683
Females					
	NSW	19 355	41 908	74 179	111 924
	SA	..	6358	9650	27 798
	WA	647	877	1790	2310
	Tas.	11 423	13 959	20 370	24 641
	Australia	31 425	63 102	105 989	166 673
Persons					
	NSW	71 304	127 468	187 918	266 900
	SA	..	14 630	22 460	63 700
	WA	1878	2311	4479	5886
	Tas.	40 172	45 999	64 291	68 870
	Australia	113 354	190 408	279 148	405 356

Statistics for Victoria and Queensland are included in totals for NSW. These figures do not include Indigenous Australians.

*Note: Demographers calculate the sex ratio in any population by dividing the total number of males by the number of females and multiplying by 100. Thus, in NSW in 1835 there were 51 949 males and 19 356 females, meaning that there were 268 men for every 100 women.
**Note: Port Phillip District was later renamed Victoria when it separated from NSW in July 1851.
***Note: VDL is short for Van Diemen's Land, which in 1856 was renamed 'Tasmania' to escape the bad reputation of having been a convict colony.

Sex ratio, states and territories, 1835–1850

	1835	1840	1845	1850
NSW	268	204	153	139
SA	..	130	133	129
WA	190	164	150	155
Tas.	252	230	216	180
Australia	261	202	163	143

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Australian Historical Population Statistics

USING HISTORICAL SOURCES AS EVIDENCE 1.2

Use Source 1.8 for questions 1 to 4.

1. Examine the population of each colony closely. Calculate the percentages of free people and convicts for each district in each of the two periods. For example:

NSW	1831–40	1841–50
Convict	43.6%	4.3%
Free	56.4%	95.7%

2. What are the most distinctive features of each of the territories? Research reasons for these features.
3. Which Australian colony benefited most from free emigration between 1831 and 1850? There is more than one possible answer to this question. Give reasons for your answer.
4. Which Australian colony benefited least from free emigration between 1831 and 1850?
5. Using Source 1.9, which colonial population grew most rapidly across the period 1835–50?
6. Using Source 1.10, in which colony was the sex ratio unbalanced? In which colony was it most balanced? Can the results shown in Source 1.8 help to explain these sex ratios?
7. Overall, based on the tables in Sources 1.8–1.10, was the policy of assisted free immigration a success in transforming Australia from a gaol to a settler society?

Aboriginal population

This increase in population through immigration and births within the colonies increasingly dominated First Nations populations. Between 1824 and 1850 the white frontier moved steadily inland from the eastern seaboard and the south-eastern coast. The squatters' flocks and herds fouled Aboriginal waterholes, and competed with native game for pasture. Conflict between Indigenous people and stockmen who worked for the squatters escalated into sporadic warfare in a battle over the land.

There are no accurate figures for the Aboriginal population before 1861 when governments first began official counting. However, in Port Phillip District it is estimated the population, which was probably about 50 000 at 1788, was halved and halved again by two waves of smallpox in the 1790s and 1828. Then the approximate 10 000 survivors of smallpox in 1834 were reduced by 80–90% by 1850 through disease, killings and the cultural rupture of colonisation.[6]
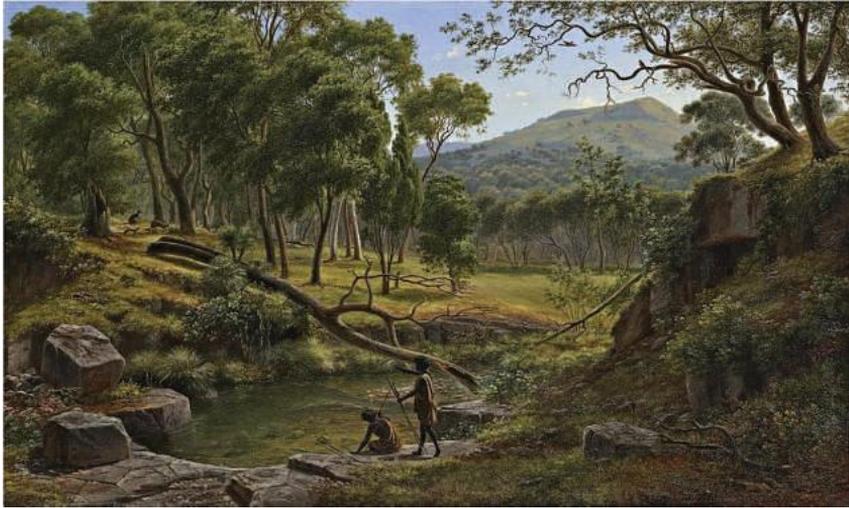
↑**Source 1.11** The Aboriginal population in Port Phillip District was devastated by various diseases brought by the Europeans including smallpox. Pictured is the painting *Warrenheip Hills near Ballarat* by Eugene von Guerard, 1854.

The settlement of Port Phillip District

The first two attempts at British occupation in the area around what would become Melbourne were government ventures driven by strategic concerns in London. In 1803 on the windswept shores of Port Phillip Bay, and again in 1827 in Western Port Bay, parties of convict men and women were set to build huts and plant gardens in order to deter possible French land claims. Both settlements were abandoned within a few months.

The permanent occupation of the Port Phillip District was the result of internal migration within the Australian colonies. Parties from across Bass Strait acted without the consent of Governor Richard Bourke in Sydney, who wanted to limit settlement to the area already under his authority. British capital was flowing into Van Diemen's Land, attracted by the profits to be made from wool, but land on the island was in short supply. A Hobart newspaper reported in 1835 that:

> For some time back, landed property in the interior has advanced in price beyond all bounds, owing in some measure to the increased profits derived from sheep-grazing, not only on account of the wool, but the carcass – to the great neglect and injury of agricultural pursuits. Estates which five years ago would not fetch five thousand pounds have recently realised nearly double that amount … rents the most fearful are now demanded – indeed in many instances so very unreasonable as would ruin any tenant [renter of land] by taking them …

Source 1.12

Bent's News (Hobart Town), 2 April 1836.

Capitalists in Van Diemen's Land had been looking hungrily at the 'unoccupied' acres across Bass Strait for almost a decade. A group in Launceston sponsored one of their number, John Batman, to explore Port Phillip District and to attempt to purchase land from Aboriginal people.

Batman reported that the land around Port Phillip Bay was the 'most beautiful sheep pasturage I ever saw in my life'. He did not know that the open, park-like landscape so suitable for sheep was the result of many years of fire-stick farming by the local Kulin nation.

Source 1.13

> I went on shore to look at the land, which appeared beautiful, with scarcely any timber on. On my landing I found the hills of a most superior description – beyond my most sanguine [hopeful] expectations. The land excellent, and very rich – and light black soil, covered with kangaroo grass two feet high, and as thick as it could stand. Good hay could be made, and in any quantity. The trees not more than six to the acre, and these small sheoak and wattle. I never saw anything equal to the land in my life. I walked over a considerable extent, and all of the same description.

John Batman's Journal, Saturday 30 May 1835, cited in James Bonwick, *Port Phillip Settlement*, Sampson Low et al., London, 1883, p. 180.
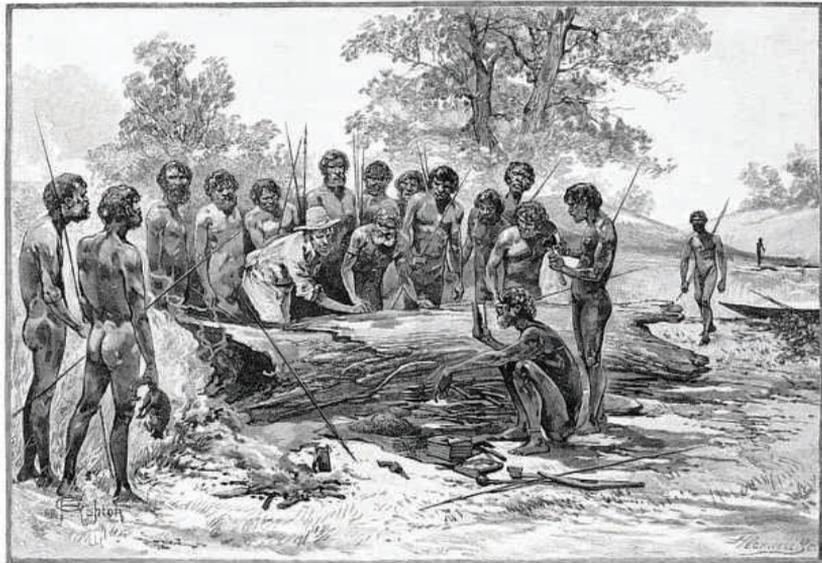
BATMAN TREATING WITH THE BLACKS

↑**Source 1.14** Melbourne started as an illegal settlement. Despite opposition from the government in Sydney, sheep farmers from Van Diemen's Land (Tasmania) crossed Bass Strait in search of new pastures. *Batman Treating with the Blacks*, 1835, drawn by George Rossi Ashton fifty years later in 1886, from *Picturesque Atlas of Australasia*. In 1835 pastoralist John Batman signed a treaty with the Wurundjeri people of Port Phillip District, but this was later annulled by the colonial authorities.

A clergyman visiting from Sydney observed the impact of Batman's report on Van Diemen's Land.

> Mr Batman's report … was in the highest degree favourable, and … the result was as if the whole colony of Van Diemen's Land had been suddenly electrified.* I happened to visit that island, on a clerical tour from New South Wales, in the months of October and November 1835, when the excitement was at its height; and on traversing the island, to and fro between Hobart Town and Launceston at its opposite extremities, I found almost every respectable person I met with preparing, either individually, or in the person of some near relation or confidential agent, to occupy the Australian El Dorado …

John Dunmore Lang, *Port Phillip or the Colony of Victoria*, by the author, Glasgow, 1853, p. 26.

Source 1.15

* The observant reader might wonder whether Dr Lang did use the term 'electrified' in 1853, given that electric power was not widely used to create light until the 1880s. But the *Oxford English Dictionary* records the use of 'electrify' as early as 1765 to mean 'To subject (a person) to an electric current or an electric shock for therapeutic purposes' – as in the sentence 'Being electrified morning and evening, my lameness mended'.

USING HISTORICAL SOURCES AS EVIDENCE 1.3

1. Using Sources 1.13 and 1.15, describe the factors that led to the settlement of the Port Phillip District.
2. Compare and contrast the motivations for 'internal' migration with those emigrating from Britain. Refer to at least two sources from this chapter within your response.

Hundreds of colonists and their sheep arrived from Van Diemen's Land in late 1835, forcing Governor Richard Bourke to declare the Port Phillip District officially part of New South Wales. He sent Captain William Lonsdale in 1836 to oversee the settlement and arrived in 1837 to officially name it Melbourne. The Port Phillip District always boasted it was a free colony, unlike convict New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land. However, some convicts to New South Wales were sent from Sydney to labour on public works in Melbourne.

DID YOU KNOW?

A note on the wool industry: Wool, being light, of high value and able to be grown successfully on the sheep's back on the grasslands of inland Australia, became the main Australian export until the discovery of gold in the 1850s.

1.3 Influential ideas, 1834–1850

INQUIRY QUESTION

What were the influential ideas from 1834 to 1850?

Historians have long debated the motives for migration. Were the voyagers to the colonies pushed from home or pulled to the new destination? Was their decision forced upon them by adversity at home – poverty, political or religious oppression, or family or ethnic conflict? Or were they inspired

by the promise of a better life in the new land, held out by **emigration agents** or fellow countrymen who had gone before them?

The historian James Belich has summarised the push and pull factors that other historians have suggested as explanations for the great increase in emigration from Britain in the nineteenth century.

Source 1.16

Naturally, the fiftyfold increase in British and Irish immigration in the nineteenth century has generated numerous attempts at explanation, most emphasizing either 'push' or 'pull' … Sheer want has long been the most obvious push theory and is still going strong. Dire poverty was clearly at work during the Irish famine emigration of 1846–50. But mass Catholic migration from Ireland began earlier … 'Intolerable social conditions' did play a large part in driving migration from Ireland and Highland Scotland, but are much less use in explaining emigration from England and lowland Scotland …

The classic pull theory assumes that emigrants were well-informed 'rational actors', pulled to new countries by their known economic opportunities. Such views currently have an edge on push theories, at least among economic historians … This is one context in which rational actor models should not be dismissed too readily: migrants had brains and used them; nobody intentionally migrated to be worse off. One key 'pull' for working people was the notion that the newlands had better real wages than oldlands … [Another pull factor was] the notion of a special Anglo desire for freehold farms … The desire for freehold was certainly an important motive, but [British immigrants] were often surprisingly ready to lease or rent farms, and they were sometimes reluctant to go on to farms at all …

As the best migration scholars concede, an element of mystery remains … There is still a missing piece, a very large one, in the Anglo migration jigsaw puzzle. It is to be found in that most difficult of historians' terrains, in the inside of people's heads.

James Belich, *Replenishing the Earth: The Settler Revolution and the Rise of the Angloworld*, Oxford Scholarship Online, October 2011, DOI: 10.1093/acprof: oso/9780199297276.001.0001, pp. 128–32.

FOCUS QUESTIONS 1.2

1. Belich suggests that other factors beyond those discussed here might have moved people to emigrate from Britain. Can you suggest other possible reasons for emigration during this period?

2. Historians write from various points of view. How might the account of British emigration in the nineteenth century written by an Australian historian (a 'newlands' historian) differ from that written by a British ('oldlands') historian? Which historian would be more likely to use push factors as an explanation, and which to use pull factors?

↑**Source 1.17** *Second Class – The Parting* by Abraham Solomon, 1855. A young boy is shown being comforted by his mother while a relative looks on. The text of the posters in the background implies that he is either joining the merchant navy or emigrating to Australia. Would this be a push or pull situation, do you think?

1.4 Perspectives, 1834–1850

INQUIRY QUESTION

What do perspectives from 1834 to 1850 reveal about female immigration?

We will examine different perspectives of immigration to the colonies.

The first assisted immigrants: unmarried women

By the 1830s parliamentarians and lobbyists were pressuring the British government to change the way labour was supplied to the Australian colonies. The 'Clapham Sect', also mockingly known as 'The Saints', were evangelical Christians, influential men and women committed to the moral reform of British society. They had worked for many years to abolish slavery within the British Empire. In the late 1820s they also took up the twin causes of ending the transportation of convicts to the Australian colonies and assisting the emigration of free labour. In 1831 the governor of New South Wales was instructed to direct the proceeds of land sales to cover the cost of assisted immigration, and from 1832

a steady flow of assisted emigrants arrived in New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land: emigrants selected by agents in Britain and Ireland according to criteria set by the British government.

At first, the chosen emigrants were mostly single women. Historians Eric Richards and Deborah Oxley write that 'In its first five years of operation, the scheme helped 2503 women, and 475 men, to migrate to New South Wales, and similar numbers to Van Diemen's Land'. They argue that the emigrants were sent in an attempt to overcome what were seen as the evils arising from 'the great deficiency' of women in the convict colonies: 'evils' which were 'code for homosexuality, bestiality, prostitution, and also the denial of marriage and family life'.[7] But the scheme was criticised, both at Home and in the colonies.

Colonists resented the fact that the revenue from colonial land sales was being spent on a scheme over which they had no control, and this resentment coloured their view of the single women who chose to emigrate. *The Sydney Gazette* complained in November 1835 that the scheme had done the colony 'a great moral as well as political injury' by introducing women who mostly failed to be 'useful, moral and virtuous persons'.[8]

A report in *The Sydney Herald* blamed the fact that the women travelled independently, under no control.

Source 1.18

prostitution in the nineteenth century not only meant a woman who sold sex, but could also mean one who had sex outside marriage

[A]mongst two or three hundred females of about seventeen years of age, with all the temptations held out to them by the sailors, it is hardly possible but that some cases of **prostitution** must occur in so long a voyage. They are separated for ever from their friends, their parents, and guardians, and thus that moral restraint is removed which so greatly tends, in the female mind, to the maintenance of virtuous habits.

The Sydney Herald, 20 August 1835, p. 2.

In the England they left behind, the emigrant women were painted as unfortunate and foolish, rather than immoral. Source 1.19 is a hand-coloured lithograph, which was probably first published as a 'broadsheet', an ancestor both of the modern newspaper and the modern comic book. Broadsheets were large, single-sided news-sheets, which were sold on the streets of London for a farthing – a quarter of a penny. Many Londoners at this time were illiterate or could barely read. Broadsheets catered for these customers by telling their stories as much in pictures as in words. The text of the broadsheet is reproduced below, but you may like to see how much sense you can make of its message just by 'reading' the pictures, as the illiterate did at the time. Historians generally retain the original spelling in a source even though it is not correct in today's terms or even at the time it was written. It reveals the level of education and the use of language of the person writing the document.

Source 1.19 'Female emigration! Dedicated with all due respect to the fair sex of Great Britain & Ireland', unknown artist, 1834

FEMALE EMIGRATION [the text]

Dedicated with all Due respect to the Fair sex of Great Britain and Ireland – by their Obedient Servant W.N. [W. Newman]

[1. caption] The embarkation – all agog for Sydney – bidding good bye to the land of Plum-pudding. Penny magazines. Poverty and Poor Laws – for one of Convicts and Kangaroos!!

[2. caption] "In the bay of Biscay O" – "Where every wild wave drown the Moon" – the topmasts playing at touch with the clouds – the Emigrants being all <u>sea-sick</u> – kick up a breeze which increases to a complete squall.

[3. caption] Nocturnal accommodation – swing swong all night long – the Emigrants stowed 3 in a bed – from 7 in the evening until 10 the next morning – NB under lock and Key!! –

[4] [bubble 1.] Oh, This is the "preserved meats" …. we were promised – hard biscuit that breaks our teeth out at every mouthful – O for the poverty of poor despised England – twere luxury to this!! –

[bubble 2.] Now them who vonts any more voyter – the Superintendant says as how if yor werr good, he'll cut a hole in the ??* and you may regale yourelves with the smell of His dinner.

[5] [bubble] I say Captain Why are them poor Devils in the next room like any thing you find in the street – D'ye give it up – yes – Why because they are "pick't up" – ar – ar – ar – Do you know what makes me so fond of Soup – No – Because I'm Soup-er-intendant – Haw – Haw – Haw –

[4 and 5. caption] "look on this picture and on this" – The emigrant's berth – & the Captain's cabin – the emigrants <u>fed</u> on "A mouldy biscuit and water each per day" with a sermon from Honble etc. Reverend Dr Rubysnout – While the Superintendant Captain Chaplain etc. guzzle themselves with "3 courses and dessert".

[6. caption] Disembarking in the land of Felons – troubled with the blue devils – Escorted (in the smithfield style) from the ship to their Destination by a Regiment of Liberated Convicts commonly call'd "Police" – Thermometer at 30!! …

[7. caption] The <u>"Lumber room"</u> – or as the Government advertisement <u>calls it 'the comfortable apartments" of Mrs B. which will be prepared for the Emigrants on their arrival"</u> – an <u>old Broken down shed</u> – something <u>worse than a stable</u> – raining cats dogs and pitchforks – (the wet season having set in) still under the Surveileance of "the Unboil'd" …

[8. caption] What with the rain by day and damp straw at night – the Lumber room by degrees gets cleared of its tenents – the survivers having exhausted their little stock of Money – wait upon the Agent – When they are treated as shown above!! …

[9. caption] A specimen of the comfortable situations in New South Wales – the emigrants being thrown upon their own Resources go in search of

Continued…

Work – Jane R – one of these poor creatures after Traversing the country is obliged (to support Life) to enter a dustyard and sift sinders at 5^S a week and her hot Water

[10] [bubble] Is It possibly my Daughter?

[caption] Last scene of all which ends this strange Eventful history – a view in St Martin's le grand – Jane R – after toiling some time in the Dustyard is brought to England by a Humane Captain – Being entirely destitute and on the point of starvation – she commits suicide by taking Poison!!! –

Published by G.S. Tregear, 90 Cheapside, October 1834 [all misspellings in the original].
*??: indicates that the word in the original source cannot be distinguished.

USING HISTORICAL SOURCES AS EVIDENCE 1.4

Use Sources 1.19 and 1.20 to answer the following questions.

1. Tell the story told in 'Female Emigration' in your own words. Look closely at the detail of the pictures in order to do this. Share your retelling with another student and compare outcomes.
2. What emotions were the readers of this story meant to feel? How does the document evoke these emotions?
3. How does the picture of the female emigrants given in the lithograph differ from that given in the extracts from *The Sydney Gazette* and *The Sydney Herald*?
4. What assumptions about women's place in society underpin these sources?

1.5   Experiences, 1834–1850

INQUIRY QUESTION

What do experiences from 1834 to 1850 reveal about the reasons people emigrated?

We will examine different experiences of immigration to the colonies.

Historians and the assisted female emigrants of the 1830s

The first historians to write about British emigration to Australia were mostly interested in the policy and practice of emigration as a system, from the point of view of the men creating and administering it. The sources readily available to these historians were public records like those cited above: government reports and newspaper stories in England and in the colonies. These sources mostly pictured the women as miserable and often immoral, at best as victims of circumstances beyond their control, and historians tended to echo these opinions. Thus, Michael Cannon, while generally sympathetic to the individual experience of emigrants, characterised the early female emigrants as 'paupers [very poor person], patients and prostitutes'.[9]

In the last decades of the twentieth century, historians became dissatisfied with history that was written 'from above': from the point of view of the men (and occasionally women) who exercised power in society and left written records of their lives. They set out to describe the lives and the understandings of men and women who did not 'make history', but just lived it. Historians of emigration searched the records collected by local and family history societies, and found many letters – unpunctuated, badly spelt – written by poor and barely literate emigrants to families back home. They examined those letters to learn what they could about their authors' experience of emigration.

Below is one such letter – better spelt than most. Isabella Gibson arrived in Sydney in December 1833, one of about a hundred unmarried women who came as assisted emigrants on the ship the *Layton*. The ship's passenger list tells us that she was 27 years of age, rather older than most of her fellow passengers, and as an experienced seamstress, she was more skilled than most. In June 1834 Isabella Gibson wrote home to her sister Helen. Her letter writing reveals a quite good education, but includes the usual lack of full stops to create sentences, few or no paragraphs, and some misspellings.

Source 1.21

*Note: A packet is a ship carrying goods, mail and some passengers. This ship was named the *Cognac* and was registered in Liverpool, England.

scurvy disease caused by a lack of fresh fruits containing vitamin C leading to bleeding from the mouth and then severe weakness

I send this by the Cognac Packet*
Sydney, Jamieson Street, 19th June 1834.
Dear Sister,
I wrote home on 17th Febry last which letter I hope will reach London about this time informing you that we arrvd at Sydney on the 16th Decr and that I engaged here with a Mr Hunt to do his upholsterary needle work, salery to be 8£ a year For several months after landing I was afflicted with the **scurvy** and other complaints from which I am now quite better of and at present in good health I am much surprised and disappointed at receiving no letter from you considering how strictly I charged you to write soon and how faithfully you promised to do so It is now ten months since I left home yet no letter from any of you I regularly enquire at the post office every Packet that comes from England and as often return home disappointed I can get no intelligence of the Mail Brigg the ship Richard was to come by it is conjectured here that the owners of it must have failed and in consiquence of that the ship will not come here at all at this time but if so it is strange that he has not come out by any other ship whither he has changed his mind and is not coming at all or what has become of him I cannot assertain I form numberless conjectures but all in vain every day adds to my anxiety … if I were assured that Richard would never come I would endeavour to return home as soon as possible if I could find it all practicable but I doubt whither it will ever be in my power … I regret that I have no person to live with me that I trust or I would take a room and make bonnets and frocks and sell a few toys, penny dolls sell here for 6d each or take in apolstering needlework Miss Veitch the Scotch woman is the only person I could put any confidence in and I understand she is expecting to be married soon to a farmer about 150 miles up the country – A farmer and his family that came out with us in the same ship went to live at that place and a few of his neighbour farmers employed him to return

Continued…

to Sidney to bespeak wives for them among the free women that he could recommend he fixed on Miss V. for one and she has had two letters from the man saying he intends to come to Sidney soon when if they approve of each other at sight they will be directly married If I was to give the least hint of such a thing being agreeable to me I believe I might have the same opportunity but I could not bring my mind however destitute I may be to think of marrying any person I have no regard for on this account … – Dear H I hope you will not on any account delay writing immediately on receiving this …

Isabella Gibson to her sister Helen, 19 June 1834, Royston and District Local History Society in Hertfordshire, England, copy held in Mitchell Library, Library of NSW.

There may be more information about Isabella Gibson in the colonial records of marriages and deaths. In 1836 an Isabella Gibson married a Henry Bath in New South Wales, so perhaps Isabella found a man she could love. But the marriage was short-lived; the death of Isabella Bath was recorded in 1846.

USING HISTORICAL SOURCES AS EVIDENCE 1.5

1. What does the letter in Source 1.21 reveal about the author's experience of emigration? What does it tell of her hopes and fears?
2. Historians look for 'significant' evidence in the documents that they read, evidence they can use in making historical arguments. Choose three facts and explain why they might be useful to historians of emigration.
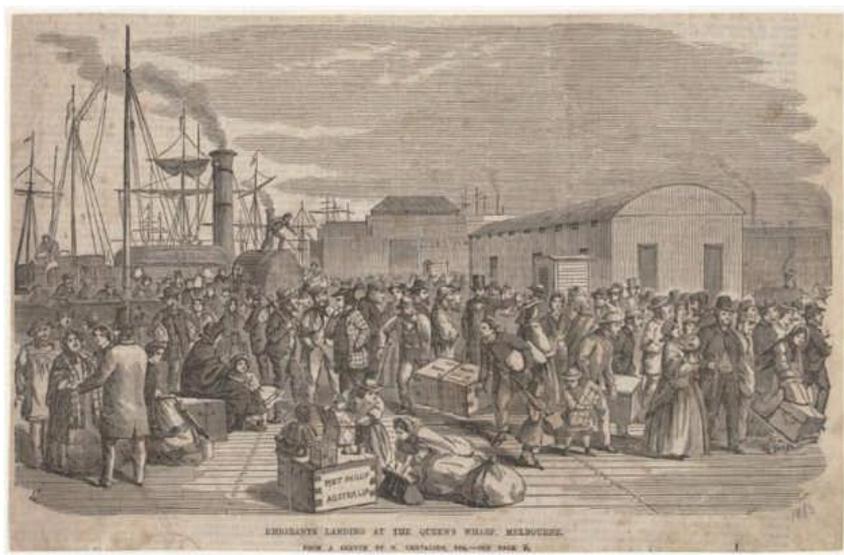
↑**Source 1.22** Frederick Grosse, *Emigrants Landing at the Queens Wharf, Melbourne*.
Courtesy National library of Australia.

Government assistance to female immigrants ceased when they arrived in Sydney; the government did nothing to help them find accommodation and employment. Caroline Chisholm was the wife of an army officer, a woman who believed that her duty in life was to help other women less fortunate than herself. She was concerned that the newly arrived young women were both in need and in moral danger. In 1841 she set up an Immigrants Home in Sydney, with an employment registry attached, and personally escorted scores of women to places of employment in the country.[10]

Chisholm printed the following letter in a pamphlet advocating female immigration, which she published in Sydney in 1842. She called the writer 'an honest bushman'.

Source 1.23

> Reverend Madam,
>
> I heard you are the best to send to for a servant, and heard our police magistrate say, it was best to leave all to you; and so I'll do the same, as his honour says it's the best. I had a wife once, and so she was too good for me by the far, and it was God's will, Ma'am; but I has a child, ma'am, that I wouldn't see a straw touch for all the world; the boy's only four yeare old: and I has a snug fifty-acre farm and a town 'lotment, and I has no debts in the world, and one teem and four bullocks; and I'se ten head oh cattle, and a share on eight hundred sheep, so I as a rite to a decent servant, that can wash and cook and make the place decant; and I don't mind what religion she be; if she is sober and good, only I'se a Protestant myself; and the boy I have, I promised the mother on her death bed, should be a Catholic, and I wont, anyhow, have any interferance in this here matter. That I do like in writing nothing else, I wouldn't, mam, on any account in the world, be bound to marry; but I don't wish it altogether to be left out. I'll give her fourteen [pound] wages, and if she don't like me, and I don't like her, I'll pay her back to Sydney. I want nothing in the world but what is honest, so make the agreement as you like, and I'll bide by it. I sends you five pounds; she may get wages first, for I know some of the gals, and the best on un, are not heavy we boxes; and supposing anything should happen, I would not like it to be said she came here in rags. I wants also, a man and his wife; he must be willing to learn to plough, if he don't know how, and do a fair day's work at any think: his wife must be a milker, and ah dustrious woman: I'll give them as much as they can eat and drink of tea and milk, and whatever wages you set my name down for, I'll be bound to pay it. With all the honer in the world I'se bound to remain your servant till death.

Caroline Chisholm, *Female Immigration considered, in a Brief Account of the Sydney Immigrant's Home*, Sydney, 1842, p. 45.

Chisholm wrote that she admired 'this honest bushman' and went to unusual lengths to help him. She selected a suitable young woman and found employment for her at a property near the bushman's farm, and within a month he wrote thanking her: 'Upon my word, you have suited me exactly, and as soon as our month is up we is to be married'.

↑**Source 1.24** *Caroline Chisholm, The Emigrant's Friend,* Sydney, Australia, c.1845

Chisholm believed that marriage was the proper role for women; she advocated low wages for women lest they be tempted not to marry. She wrote in 1848 that married women were essential in civilising New South Wales.

Source 1.25

For all the clergy you can despatch, all the schoolmasters you can appoint, all the churches you can build, and all the books you can export, will never do much good without what a gentleman in that Colony very appropriately called 'God's Police' – wives and little children – good and virtuous women'.

Caroline Chisholm, *Emigration and Transportation Relatively Considered*, London: John Ollivier, 59, Pall Mall, 1847.

The historian Ann Summers has criticised Caroline Chisholm's project as 'an imposition on women', which 'allowed only two possible choices to women about what to do with their lives'.

Source 1.26

They could be wives and mothers, or workers in surrogate-mother jobs, and win respectable status – and lose all independence to the authority and economic support of their husbands. A subtler form of exploitation but exploitation nevertheless; because women were doing what was supposed to be 'natural' to them, they were not expected to want any monetary reward or even any independent identity. They had status and the kind of power, formerly held by priests, that is acknowledged but resented by men, but their lives were now firmly circumscribed by the limits of home and family. They lost all powers of **self-determination**.

self-determination the ability of an individual or group to control their actions without outside influence

Ann Summers, *Damned Whores and God's Police*, Coogee, NSW, NewSouth, 2016, p. 445.

USING HISTORICAL SOURCES AS EVIDENCE 1.6

1. Using Source 1.23, outline why Caroline Chisholm thought publishing such a letter would encourage female emigration to the Australian colonies.
2. Explain Caroline Chisholm's impact in NSW in the 1840s. Refer to at least two sources from Sources 1.22–1.26.
3. Evaluate the importance of the role of women in Australian colonial society. Refer to Source 1.26 within your discussion, as well as at least one other document from this chapter so far.
4. Now that you have read to this point, reflect back on Source 1.21. How typical would Miss Gibson's experience have been among the female emigrants?

Why did men and women emigrate to Australia before 1850?

In Source 1.16, the historian James Belich discussed the push and pull factors that historians usually attribute to be the reasons for people emigrating. Belich stresses that 'there is still a missing piece, a very large one, in the Anglo migration jigsaw puzzle. It is to be found in that most difficult of historians' terrains, in the inside of people's heads'.

One way we might get inside people's heads, as best we can, is to look at what they were reading. Source 1.27 is an example of the deliberate use of the 'pull' factor by the founders of South Australia. The colony was founded by an Act of the British Parliament in 1834 and colonised in 1836, as a 'free' colony without convict labour and its evils. The men who planned and financed the colony – the South Australian Company – were mostly evangelical Christians with connections to the 'Clapham Sect'. Proceeds from land sales in South Australia were dedicated to bringing out assisted emigrants with appropriate farming skills, and care was taken to recruit equal numbers of men and women.

John Stephens was a bookseller, journalist and editor of the Methodist journal the *Christian Advocate*.[11] In 1838 he was employed by George Fife Angas, a leading member of the South Australian Company, to write an emigration handbook. His first production was a lengthy pamphlet, and Source 1.27 shows its title page.

THE LAND OF PROMISE:
BEING
AN AUTHENTIC AND IMPARTIAL HISTORY OF THE RISE
AND PROGRESS OF THE NEW BRITISH PROVINCE
OF

SOUTH AUSTRALIA;
INCLUDING
PARTICULARS DESCRIPTIVE OF ITS SOIL, CLIMATE,
NATURAL PRODUCTIONS, &c.
AND PROOFS OF ITS SUPERIORITY TO ALL OTHER
BRITISH COLONIES.
EMBRACING ALSO A FULL ACCOUNT OF THE

South Australian Company,
WITH

HINTS TO VARIOUS CLASSES OF EMIGRANTS, AND
NUMEROUS LETTERS FROM SETTLERS CONCERNING
WAGES, PROVISIONS, THEIR SATISFACTION WITH THE
COLONY, &c.

BY ONE WHO IS GOING

John Stephens, *The land of promise; being an impartial and authentic history of the rise and progress of the new British province of South Australia*, Smith, Elder and Co., Cornhill, London, 1839.

The introduction to Stephens's pamphlet is reproduced in Source 1.28. He claims to write as an intending emigrant to South Australia, who has gathered information about the colony for his own benefit. He did emigrate to South Australia, but not until 1843.

Source 1.28

The following sheets pretend to no higher merit than belongs to industry in the collection of information, care in ascertaining its authenticity, and fairness in making selections from the mass. This is really the work of *an intending emigrant*, and was begun, continued, and ended, under the influence of the feelings and motives incident to one in that position. The author … is not conscious of having concealed any defect, or exaggerated any merit, attaching to the subject of his narrative; nor is he aware of the existence of any source of appropriate information which he has not exhausted … The reason of this publication is, he trusts, apparent in its completeness and fulness, as compared with any other work of a similar description.

The renunciation of his native land, and the adoption of another country, is the most important step a man can take … The author has felt this in his own case, and has not been unmindful of it in the cases of

Continued…

*Note: The *Oxford English Dictionary* gives as the eighteenth-century meaning of 'independence': 'exemption from external control or support; freedom from subjection, or from the influence of others; individual liberty of thought and action'.

…Continued

those who may read these pages with a view to come at the real merits of the self-supporting colony. If they arrive at the same conclusion with him, they will be led to regard the province of South Australia as offering to capitalists and labourers alike, the best prospect of securing that easy and peaceful independence which is now so rarely to be witnessed amongst the tradesmen, agriculturists, and mechanics of this crowded Isle.

This volume was intended to be on a much smaller scale, so as to put it within the reach of the poor man. But the accumulation of important matter soon compelled the author to give up on that idea. He therefore respectfully suggests to the wealthy friends of the colony the propriety of purchasing copies of the 'Land of Promise' for loan amongst the poorer classes in the immediate vicinities, and of placing them in the **Mechanics**' Libraries of the several towns or villages in which they reside …

J.S.

London, December 7, 1838.

John Stephens, *The land of promise; being an impartial and authentic history of the rise and progress of the new British province of South Australia*, Smith, Elder and Co., Cornhill, London, 1839.
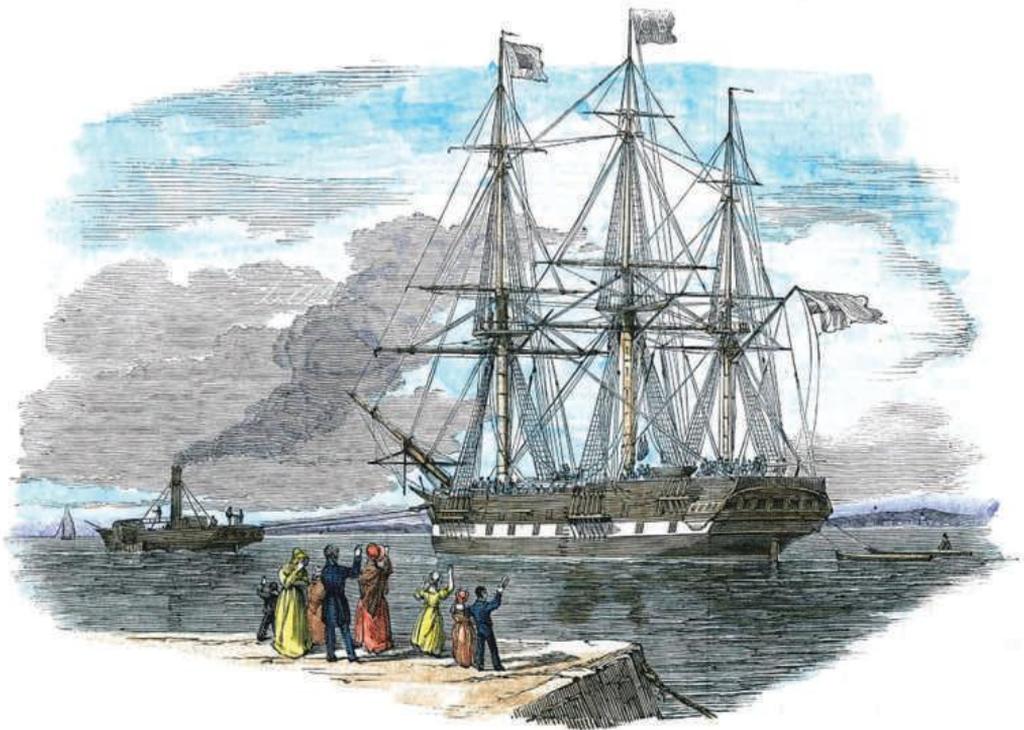
↑**Source 1.29** British emigrant ship being towed out of harbour before setting sail for Sydney, Australia. Certain skilled men and their families were given assisted passages, as were some single women between 18 and 30 who had been domestic or farm servants.
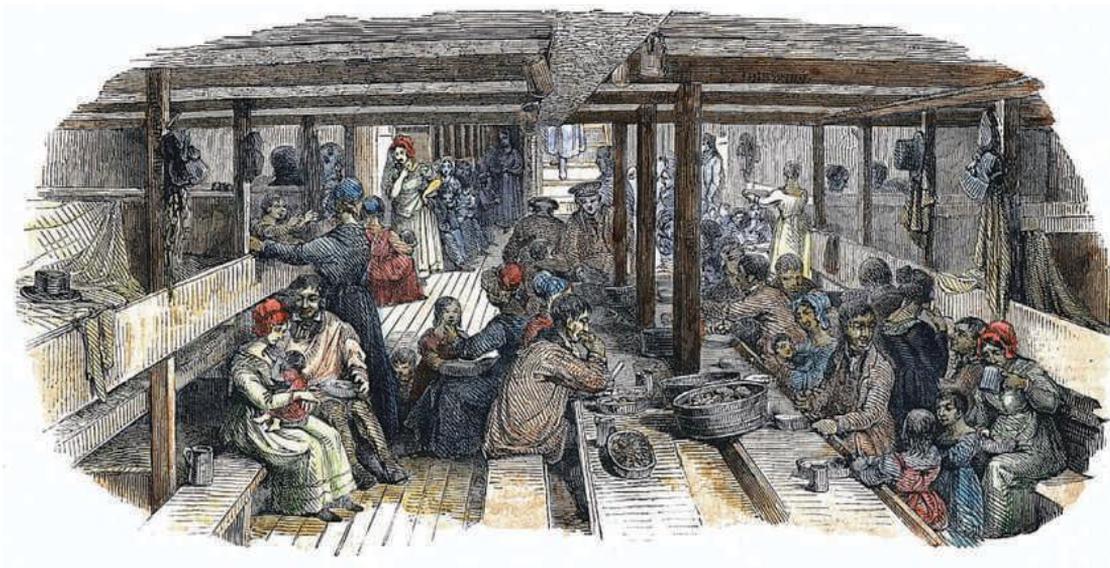
↑**Source 1.30** British emigrants bound for Sydney, Australia, in quarters on the *St Vincent*. Through HM Colonial Emigration Commissioners, the British government gave free passage to workers whose skills were needed in Australia, including farm and domestic workers and blacksmiths.

USING HISTORICAL SOURCES AS EVIDENCE 1.7

1. Source 1.28 was written five years before the author actually emigrated. How reliable might the source be, and on what factors would this reliability depend?
2. Outline the push and pull factors highlighted in Sources 1.27 and 1.28.
3. Explain how Sources 1.27 and 1.28 are useful to a historian.
4. From the last paragraph in Source 1.28, who are the intended readers of this book?

←**Source 1.31** Emigrants allowed on deck – scenes on board an Australian emigrant ship from *Illustrated London News*, 20 January 1849

Another way to 'get inside of people's heads' is to read what they have written. As we have seen in the case of Isabella Gibson, some working-class emigrants left moving accounts of their experience in letters written home to their families. Henry Parkes's family preserved a series of letters he wrote after leaving home, including some written in London prior to emigration.

In 1837 the New South Wales government expanded its program of assisted emigration to include, in addition to single female emigrants, married couples with and without children, skilled mechanics and agricultural labourers. The colonial government paid a 'bounty' for each man and woman landed in Sydney or Hobart who met its specifications.

Henry and Clarinda Parkes were two such emigrants, leaving London in March 1839. Parkes was to become an Australian politician and a 'Father of Federation'; we take up this part of his story later in this book. The facts of Parkes's biography are well documented.[12] His family were tenant farmers, forced off the land by economic circumstance, and Henry had to work as a casual labourer from a very early age. Apprenticeship to an ivory-turner gave him a valuable skill, but the business he started in Birmingham failed, and he and his wife Clarinda moved to London in search of wider opportunities. Here too his business failed, and he had to sell his craftsman's tools to buy bread; emigration seemed the only choice available. The emigration historian Eric Richards sees Parkes as responding to 'push' factors more than 'pull'. He has described Parkes as 'not precisely a coerced emigrant', but one who 'was responding to the pressure of economic adversity, and this was converted effectively enough into exile'.[13]

Parkes's letters to his family show him alternating between hope and sorrow.

London, December 6th, 1838.
My Dear Sister,

I received the goods all safe, and was much refreshed with your kind letter, and am in rather better spirits than when I wrote last to you … but things are as flat as they can be here at present, and my situation is anything but agreeable …

My expectations of London have met with disappointment in nearly every particular, but I will not talk of that. You will remember that I hinted to you that, in case I did not succeed in London, I should go farther. I had almost forgotten that I ever had such thoughts, among the fresh and astonishing scenes of this strange, glorious place, till it seemed as if there was no place for me among the countless multitude of its inhabitants. My thoughts then returned to emigration.

The information which we have obtained since we have been here respecting Australia has determined both Clarinda and myself to make up our minds to emigrate to a land which holds out prospects so bright and cheering to unhappy Englishmen, though at the distance of sixteen thousand miles …

Henry Parkes, *An Emigrant's Home Letters*, Angus and Robertson, Sydney, 1896, pp. 21–9.

CREATING A NATION 1834–2008

The next day Henry Parkes wrote again:

[London] December 7th, 1838.

I am in high hopes of Australia, as well I may be when I compare my chance of living there with my chance of doing so here; but I cannot give you much information now or I should be up all night. The colony of New South Wales is three times as large as England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales, and as beautiful a country as this. The soil produces almost everything which this produces, together with pomegranates, oranges, lemons, figs, &c. Land can be bought in some of the towns for seven pounds per acre, in the second town in the colony for twenty pounds, and in some parts of the country for five shillings per acre. Mechanics can get forty and fifty shillings a week, and buy sugar for two shillings a pound; tea for two shillings; beef, twopence a pound; wine, sixpence per bottle; rent, four shillings per week. Sydney, the capital of the colony, contains 25,000 inhabitants. However, my hopes are not extravagant, though I make sure of getting rich and coming over soon to fetch all of you. I had forgotten to say the climate is the healthiest in the world …

I am very sorry they are going to take my father's garden, but I wish he was going with me to Australia, and he could then buy a five shilling acre of land and make another. And if you can persuade my mother to live half a dozen years longer I would come and fetch her too, and she should have a dairy; for cows are only four pounds each, the very best.

Your affectionate brother,
HENRY PARKES.

Henry Parkes, *An Emigrant's Home Letters*, Angus and Robertson, Sydney, 1896, pp. 21–9.

USING HISTORICAL SOURCES AS EVIDENCE 1.8

Use Sources 1.32 and 1.33 to answer the following questions.

1. List the key factors that led to Parkes's decision to emigrate. Is he moved more by 'push' or 'pull' factors?
2. Do you think Parkes is influenced by emigration handbooks? Give evidence of your opinion.
3. Do you think Parkes is editing the information he includes here for his family's sake?

Punch was founded in England in 1841 as a humorous magazine, carrying drawings and short essays. By 1848 it was well-established as providing reading matter that was both entertaining and respectable – unlike the 1834 broadsheet we saw in Source 1.19. This 'cartoon' (see Source 1.34) – a term first used by *Punch* – reflects the changed attitude to emigration among the middle class – the people who have been called 'the novel-reading, servant-employing class'.

↑**Source 1.34** *Punch*, vol.15, 1848, p. 27. 'Here and there or, emigration a remedy' text under image

By the 1830s the colonial population comprised First Nations peoples, the traditional owners of the land; convicts who were transported to the colonies and used in Port Phillip District in government work gangs, even though it was not a convict colony; and free settlers. We will now examine their experiences.

In the book *Australians 1838*, historian Alan Atkinson reconstructed the working lives of convict workmen, using the daily work records kept by government clerks. There were two convict gangs: the skilled men and the labourers.

Source 1.35

The year began with a day typical of many that would follow … Most of the [37 unskilled] men worked in Collins Street, Melbourne's central thoroughfare, cutting and banking its sides. This work was to continue, little by little, day by day, throughout the year, although smaller jobs – cutting tea-tree, preparing lime, burning charcoal, collecting wood or pushing the water cart – drew some of the workers away from time to time. The skilled men, or mechanics, totalled 33 on 1 January … Four convict mechanics began the year by building a hut in the bush; another four cut floorboards. One man spent the day **morticing** posts, while another three

Continued…

morticing cutting a recess cavity in a fence post to receive the end of a fence rail

…Continued

brought in posts and railings from the bush and carried rations back to the native police station as they returned to the sawpit.

Skills made a difference to the experience of convict life. Mechanics were more settled in their work, and worked together for longer … In the road gangs a man's workplace and companions varied a great deal …

The labourers were punished more often and more severely. William Kay received a total of 250 lashes during the year, half of them within two months. He was convicted of drunkenness four times, stealing once, being in a public house once, and once of being away from the barracks all night …

The thought of the knotted cat [of nine tails – the lash] tearing open barely healed flesh is appalling. But we should not overlook the nature of the offences being punished. Getting drunk and being in a public house were not the crimes of men under close confinement. There was an evident lack of supervision after working hours, and probably some opportunity to work in one's own time to earn the drinking money … Servitude at Port Phillip was certainly a form of bondage, but it left the convicts with some power to order their own lives.

Alan Atkinson and Marian Aveling (eds), *Australians 1838*, Fairfax, Syme and Weldon, Sydney, 1987, pp. 291–2.

USING HISTORICAL SOURCES AS EVIDENCE 1.10

1. What does Source 1.35 tell us about the experiences of convict workers in the Port Phillip District?
2. Source 1.35 is a secondary source. What are (a) the advantages and (b) the disadvantages of a secondary source in regard to reliability?

Understanding the motives of historical actors

Historians struggle to 'get inside the heads' of illiterate convict workmen; we know much more about the motives and understandings of the men who used their labour. In 1834, before Batman's expedition to Port Phillip, Edward Henty sailed from Launceston with sheep and horses and a small party of working men, mostly convicts, and occupied land at Portland, on the far west coast of what would become Victoria.

Edward Henty was one of the seven surviving sons of Thomas Henty, a gentleman farmer and breeder of merino sheep from Sussex in England.[14] The Henty family wrote copiously to each other and their friends, and they kept the letters.

Thomas Henty was considering emigration to Australia as early as 1822. In that year he wrote to a friend who had recently emigrated to New South Wales.

The state of Agriculture [in England] is worse than when you were here, there is absolutely no sale for anything in the shape of Agricultural produce … Ruin stares the Farmer full in the face, and Rents are lowering all over the Kingdom, but this will not save the Farmers … [Emigration] requires great courage to surmount the many difficulties and privations you necessarily will have to encounter, and nothing but perseverance and well husbanding your Money, Strict Economy at starting, and in fact great prudence, with the best management will enable you to retain that independence*, so delightful, and so desirable in every sense of the word – I long to receive a letter from you, giving me *a very particular* account of the Country, but more particularly of the prospect for a Farmer with a pretty good stock of Agricultural Knowledge, Capital, and Industry – I shall believe more from your opinion given than all the books I may read upon the subject.

*Note: Henty suggests here that economic independence underpins a broader liberty.

Quoted in M. Bassett, *The Hentys, an Australian and Colonial Tapestry*, London, 1954, p. 28.

By 1828 the Henty family had decided to emigrate from Sussex. In August, James Henty, Thomas's eldest son, set out the arguments for emigration to another of the sons, William.

←**Source 1.37** Thomas Henty, 1775–1839. An English pioneer of Australia, father of Edward Henty, the first permanent colonist in Victoria, Australia. Print from c.1880s.

Source 1.38

I have almost come to the conclusion that New South Wales will do more for our family than England ever will, considering the means we have to commence building with … Father says he has no doubt he can land in New South Wales with £10,000 independent of Freighting a ship out, Stock, both Sheep and Horses and other investments – if so, with that, we might be enabled very soon to get a large Stock and Farm on a most extensive scale if we thought it desirable when we got there. What can we do in England with £10,000 amongst all of us[?] … brought up as we all have been unless indeed we chose to descend many steps in the scale of Society and which our feelings could ill stand, having at the same time an opportunity of doing

Continued…

as well and perhaps considerably better in New South Wales, under British Dominion and a fine climate … Our situation … will be vastly superior … immediately we get there we shall be placed in the first Rank in Society, a circumstance which must not be overlooked as it will tend most materially to our comfort and future advantage … Our amusements would be in sporting and improving our estates, and our business growing fine wool and breeding blood horses for both of which we have good markets.

Quoted in M. Bassett, *The Hentys, an Australian and Colonial Tapestry*, London, 1954, pp. 34–6.

The Henty family emigrated first to the Swan River Colony in Western Australia in 1829, and then to Launceston in 1831, before finally settling at Portland in Port Phillip District. The land granted to the family at Swan River proved barren, and in Van Diemen's Land the government refused the free land grant which Thomas Henty believed was due to him. The Portland venture was a last desperate effort to save the family from that descent 'in the scale of Society' that they had emigrated to avoid. In the end it succeeded; most of the sons and their families did indeed place themselves 'in the first Rank in Society'.

FOCUS QUESTIONS 1.3

1. Explain the motivations of the Henty family in coming to the Australian colonies.
2. Estimate the balance of push and pull factors in their decision.
3. 'Britain was a nation with a rigid class structure.' To what extent did the Australian colonies offer a chance to escape that? Use evidence from the sources within this chapter to justify your argument.

The Henty family were the first in the wave of **pastoralists** who swarmed onto Aboriginal lands in Victoria. They often viewed Aboriginal people in an unfavourable light and did not see them as owners of the land, partly because the British government did not view them as owners and did not offer them a treaty or compensation.

pastoralist one who grazes sheep for meat or wool

The historian, Richard Broome, described what happened next:

Once the Hentys squatted at Portland in November 1834 and Batman and Fawkner possessed Melbourne in August 1835, three waves of Europeans arrived: overstraiters from Tasmania, overlanders from New South Wales and immigrants from Britain. All were involved in the greatest land grab in British imperial history. Within ten years most of central and lower-western Victoria was under sheep and the 30 000 European newcomers far outnumbered traditional owners.

Aboriginal people faced this invasion in numerous ways. Many groups tried to control Europeans by incorporating them within Aboriginal law and kinship systems. Kulin Elders even formed a treaty with John Batman in 1835 giving him temporary access to their land, but not selling it as Batman supposed. (The British Government declared the treaty illegal).

Continued…

Source 1.39

Such negotiations often created workable relations. If the newcomers violated Aboriginal law they might be punished and occasionally fatally speared: one case being the eight shepherds killed at Benalla in 1838 in the 'Faithful Massacre'.

Some dealt with the invaders in other ways. Derrimut, a Boon Wurrung elder, warned Fawkner of an up-country Aboriginal attack in 1835. Also, when colonial authorities formed the Port Phillip Native Police Corps in 1842 twenty elders or sons of elders joined the force. Derrimut and the others have been called 'collaborators'. But these elders simply chose a political solution to the presence of whites, by negotiating not fighting. They maintained Aboriginal cultural ideas in a changing world by other means. The offer of European horses, uniforms, food and guns, enlarged their power and the resources of their group. Occasionally they used this power against Aboriginal people who were strangers to them, killing several score over a few years.

Other groups challenged the invasion militarily. However, they directed their efforts less at the Europeans, killing only fifty-nine, and more at their stock. Thousands of sheep were killed, often far beyond what could be eaten, which drove some squatters temporarily from their runs. Eventually, European numbers, troops, police, horses and guns ended such resistance.

Aboriginal people entered the European economy, forced by the disruption to their own economy and attracted by European foodstuffs and stimulants: notably flour, tobacco and tea. They did domestic and casual work, acted as guides and pastoral workers for squatters, and traded feathers and skins using their traditional skills.

Richard Broome, *Aboriginal People of Victoria, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission*, Canberra, 2002, pp. 9–10.
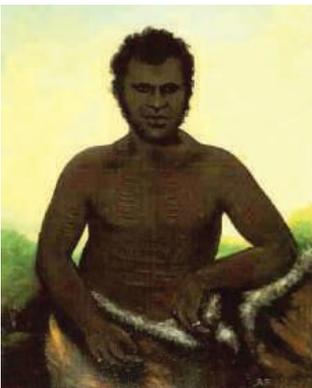
↑**Source 1.40** Portrait of Derrimut by Benjamin Duterrau. Painted in 1837 as a result of the visit to Hobart with J.P. Fawkner. Courtesy Dixon Galleries, State Library of NSW.

In 1847 Alexander Harris published an account of his life as a working man in New South Wales, under the title *Settlers and Convicts; or Recollections of Sixteen Years' Labour in the Australian Backwoods, by an Emigrant Mechanic*. Harris was a man with strong moral and political views.[15] Like many English radicals of the 1840s he believed that the Australian colonies had been established in the interests of the capitalist classes in England, and his account of life in the colonies is coloured with resentment at the employing classes, the Hentys' 'first Rank in Society'.

Late in his account he wrote about how the 'settlers' had robbed 'the Aborigines' of their land, and how the Indigenous people had reacted to this robbery. His words are a good place to end Chapter 1 of our investigation.

The Aborigine could understand a ten or twenty or even fifty acre settler saying "I need this; my own country starves me: I have come here to grow my grain, and to support life!" But he cannot understand the 20,000 acre man with his countless flocks and herds, and white slaves – he has no sympathy whatever with him. Avarice [greed] and covetousness [desiring what others have] are vices unknown to the savage; and he can only regard the man labouring under them as one infected with some shocking and mysterious disease …

Wherever there are these little farms where the owner cannot afford to pay white labourers, he invariably maintains the most amicable relations with any Aborigines about him, for the sake of obtaining their assistance in his agricultural operations. Were this course pursued, not only would all the advantages which I have specified accrue to the civilized man, individually and commonly, but the black would be benefited every way. If, in short, there is anything to be done for the civilization of the blacks and to prevent their utter extermination, it is to be found in the encouragement of the amicable relations which so easily establish themselves between them and the small settler.

Missionary efforts I am afraid will long, if not always be the 'voice and no more'. Hitherto they have been as futile as they appear to have been zealous [enthusiastic]. If this must be ascribed [credited] partly to the deficiency of every sense of moral obligation of the Aborigines of Australia save to their own form of human law and custom, it must certainly also be equally imputed as an effect to the abominations [disgraces] of the white man's character, and to his conduct towards the members of his own race; and to the bitter feeling which the blacks all experience, though they very generally veil it, against us as a nation of robbers, robbing out of mere wantonness, and not from the pressure of necessity. They understand no theories about capital and labour, and pauperism and emigration: all they feel is that they are wronged; all they see, the fact that it is done by those who are rich already, and do not want the soil for subsistence, not by the poor, who might be justified.

Alexander Harris, *Settlers and convicts; or, Recollections of sixteen years' labour in the Australian backwoods*, Melbourne University Press, Carlton, Vic, 1969, pp. 232–4. First published C. Cox, London, 1847, Ferguson no. 5429.

USING HISTORICAL SOURCES AS EVIDENCE 1.11

1. Using Source 1.39, explain the differing ways Aboriginal people responded to the settlement of the Port Phillip District.
2. Explain Harris's viewpoint in Source 1.41.
3. Using Source 1.41, what qualities does Harris ascribe to the Aboriginal peoples? Do you think he successfully 'gets into their heads'?

Writing from the point of view of a working man, Alexander Harris saw the success of the Australian colonies as due to the hard work of the small landholders – ex-convicts and assisted immigrants – and their wives and families. Caroline Chisholm agreed with him, and so increasingly did middle-class opinion in England, leading to more emigration to the Australian colonies.

1.6 Chapter summary

Here are some dot-points for you to consider and add to:

Continuities

- The colonisation of Australia by the British government continued after 1834.
- Governments continued to influence immigration: before 1834 by bringing convicts through coercion, after 1834 by bringing free settlers through encouragement and financial assistance.
- Immigration to the colonies after 1834 continued the takeover of the traditional lands of First Nations peoples in Australia.

Changes

- After 1834 free settlers began to overtake convicts as the main sources of immigrants for the Australian colonies.
- English reformers and capitalists by emigration to the colonies set out to remake the Australian colonies in Britain's interests.
- Various forms of assisted immigration were established to create a colonial workforce.
- Women and family migration was seen as central to 'civilising' colonies – imagining of gender roles.
- Free emigrants from Britain were motivated by both push and pull factors, whereas convicts had been forced to leave.

1.7 End-of-chapter activities

The following tasks are designed to help strengthen your understanding of the material explored in this chapter and to encourage you to further analyse and evaluate the events, ideas, perspectives and experiences that shaped the new nation between 1834 and 1850.

Consolidating your understanding

Complete the following questions to help revise the key events, ideas, perspectives and experiences that shaped migration to the Australian colonies between 1834 and 1850.

 Cambridge University Press

1. Describe the living and working conditions in Britain.
2. What is assisted immigration and why was it adopted in the Australian colonies?
3. How did the increasing population impact the Aboriginal population?
4. Why were women and children seen as 'God's Police'?
5. How was the settlement of the Port Phillip District different to other colonies?
6. Complete the following two mind maps outlining the push and pull factors that encouraged emigration to the Australian colonies. For each factor you identify, find a source or two that supports it. An example has been completed below.

'... no comfortable family life is possible' Engels (1.6)

'... hovels, made of mud and or straw ...' Cobbett (1.4)

Poor living conditions

Push factors

'The soil produces almost everything' Parkes (1.33)

'The land is excellent, and very rich' Batman (1.13)

Quality of the land
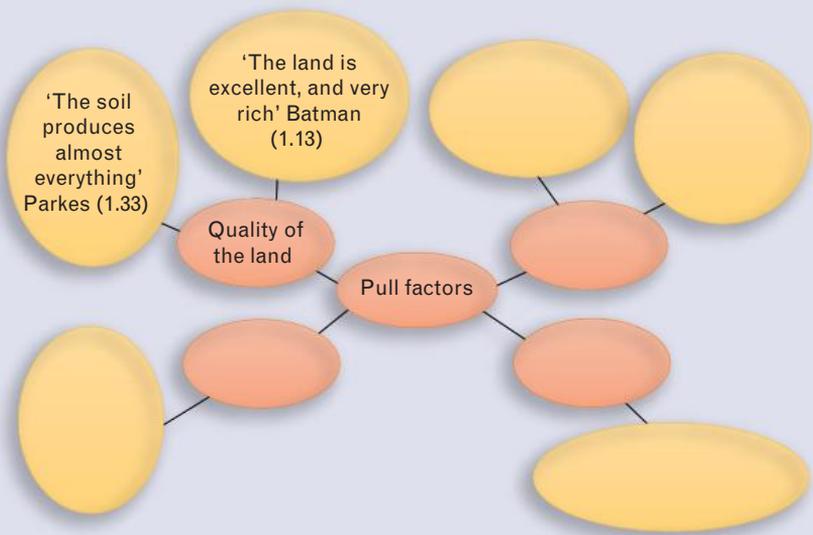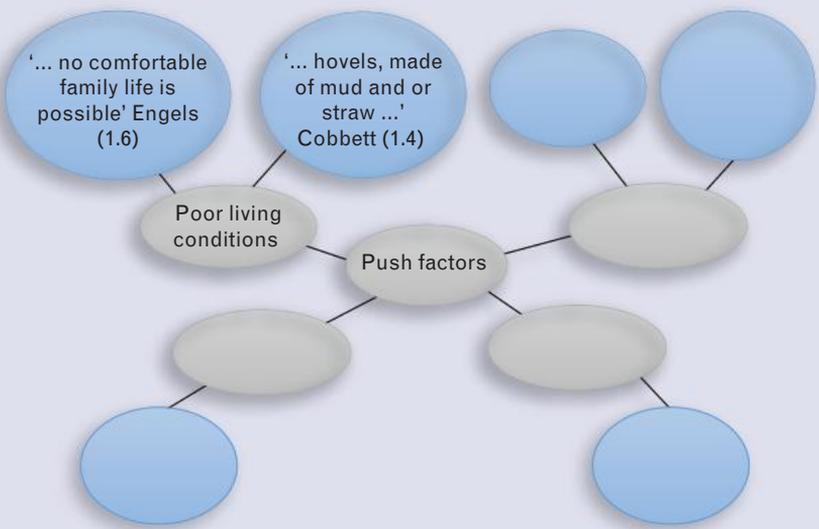
Pull factors

Evaluating historical significance

1. Rank the push and pull factors you identified in your mind maps from most significant to least significant. Justify your rankings.
2. Compare your response to the person sitting next to you. What were the similarities and differences in your factors and ranking?
3. Debrief as a class. Having listened to your classmates' factors and rankings, would you change yours? If so, which ones and why?
4. There is a voice of a historical character missing in Sources 1.23–1.26. Imagine that you are the young woman whom Chisholm sent into the bush to be married and write a letter to your family in England telling your story, emphasising the points that would have been important at the time.

Constructing an argument: essay writing

1. To what extent did class and social hierarchies shape attitudes and perspectives on migration to the Australian colonies between 1834 and 1850.
2. To what extent do you believe there was a genuine attempt by permanent settlers in the Port Phillip District to establish better relations with the Aboriginal population? Draw on the sources in this chapter as well as your own research to support your position.
3. To what extent did emigration policies and trends change the nature and extent of the flow of people to the Australian colonies?

Extension reading

Alan Atkinson and Marian Aveling (eds), *Australians 1838*, Fairfax, Syme and Weldon, Sydney, 1987, pp. xvii, 289–92; https://socialsciences.org.au/australians-1838/

Australian Dictionary of Biography, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University; biographies of Caroline Chisholm, Alexander Harris, the Henty family, Henry Parkes, John Stephens; http://adb.anu.edu.au

Eric Richards and Deborah Oxley, 'Free Immigration in the 1820s', in James Jupp (ed.), *The Australian People: An Encyclopedia of the Nation, Its People and Their Origins*, Cambridge University Press, Melbourne, 2002, pp. 30–2.

CHAPTER 2
Diggers and settlers in the 1850s

Chapter timeline

World events	Date	Australian events
1845–49: Irish Potato Famine **1848:** California, US, Gold Rush – gold discovered near Sacramento **1848:** *The Communist Manifesto* published **1848:** Revolutions of 1848 in Europe		
	1850	
		1851: New South Wales gold discovery – Edward Hargraves discovers gold near Bathurst **1851:** Victorian separation – in July Port Phillip District becomes a separate colony, Victoria **1851:** Victorian gold discovery – in July a squatter discovers gold near Clunes **1852:** News of Australian gold discoveries inspires rush of migrants from Britain
1853: The arrival of US gunships in Edo (now Tokyo) Bay forces Japan to end its isolation and, in 1854, open ports to trade with the USA **1853–56:** Crimean War with Great Britain and Russia on opposing sides		**1854:** Eureka Stockade – police and troops attack protesting diggers in Ballarat
	1855	
		1855: Chinese entry tax – Victorian government imposes £10 entry tax on Chinese immigrants **1856:** *Victorian Electoral Act 1856* for new Victorian Parliament introduces secret ballot **1857:** Buckland river riots – diggers attack Chinese miners allegedly encroaching on their claims
1858: Start of 90 years of British Crown rule in India		

World events	Date	Australian events
		1859: Select Committee on Aborigines recommends creation of reserves
		1859: Colony of Queensland separated from NSW

2.1 Introduction

INQUIRY QUESTIONS

- How did the discovery of gold change the character of migration to Australia?
- How did the migrants change the characteristics of Australian society, economically, politically, socially and culturally?

The history of colonial Victoria is a story of three great rushes: the land rush of the 1840s, the gold rush of the 1850s and the land boom of the 1880s. The 1850s gold rush was the most significant of these. It multiplied the colony's population fivefold in less than a decade, submerging the pre-gold pastoral society under a wave of new migrants, who were more literate, skilled, ambitious and politically alert than their predecessors.

News of the initial gold discoveries travelled first to the adjoining colonies. Having only recently secured the end of convict transportation from Britain, Victoria was nervous about the prospect of ex-convicts from New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land joining the rush. Migration from the other colonies peaked in 1851–52 and then subsided as some returned and the larger flow from overseas increased.

It cost five times as much to sail to Australia as to North America. Only a government subsidy enabled most of Victoria's pre-gold migrants to make the voyage. But the prospect of instant riches inspired 200 000 British and Irish migrants to come at their own expense. For the first and only time in the century, the flow of British and Irish migrants to Australia in 1852–53 almost equalled the flow westwards across the Atlantic to North America.

Most of the unassisted immigrants were single men in their twenties and thirties. There were more English and Scots and fewer Irish among these unassisted immigrants as well as a significant number of Germans and a sprinkling of Americans. Before long they were joined by some Swiss Italians from Ticino who usually borrowed money to come.

A minority of talented professional men would rise to leadership in the colony. A contemporary observer underlined the special quality of the gold migrants: 'A new class of people, better educated and perhaps more desperate, and needing only the powerful inducement that gold alone can supply has for the first time found its native land too small and poor to contain it. The middle stratum of society has been stirred.'[1]

These unassisted migrants outnumbered the assisted two to one; yet assisted immigration continued, largely to fill gaps created by the rush of unassisted. Fearful of the effects of importing so many young single males, Governor La Trobe instructed immigration officials to increase the numbers of young women: in 1853 and 1854 women, mainly Irish domestic servants, outnumbered men two to one among assisted migrants to Victoria. Poorer and less literate than the English and

Scots, the Irish came, nevertheless, in less desperate circumstances than the starving **peasants** who crammed the overloaded 'coffin ships' bound for the United States in the midst of the 1840s potato famine.

The peak of the rush had already passed when the last great wave of new gold rush migrants, the Chinese, began to arrive in the colony in the mid-1850s. The most distinctive culturally, and comprising more males than other groups, their presence tested the cohesion of a society already experiencing a hangover from the heady early days of the rush.

Gold Rush Victoria was a brave experiment in colonisation under pressure. People wondered what kind of society would emerge from the topsy-turvy gold rush years. Would it reproduce the culture of the 'mother country' or take on a more radical shape? Would its different English, Scottish and Irish elements merge into a cohesive new society, or would ethnic and religious differences divide it? And what of the Americans, Germans and Swiss Italians? Would the fortune seekers of the rush become productive citizens of a more settled society?

↑**Source 2.1** Departure of SS *Great Britain* from Liverpool for Australia in August 1852, *Illustrated London News*, 1852. Designed by famous inventor Isambard Brunel, *Great Britain* was the first steamship designed for long-distance oceanic travel and almost halved the time for the voyage to Australia from four months to two.

2.2 Significant events in the 1850s

INQUIRY QUESTION

How did immigration change the Australian colonies in the 1850s?

Here are some statistics to analyse to understand this demographic [population] revolution.

Migration to Victoria 1852–1860 ←**Source 2.2**

Year	Estimated population of Victoria	UK assisted	UK unassisted	Other colonies	Foreign ports	Male arrivals	Female arrivals	Total
1852	168 489	15 477	29 286	48 253	1648	74 872	19 792	94 664
1853	222 436	14 578	33 032	35 834	8868	66 032	26 280	92 312
1854	312 307	16 318	31 895	26 900	8297	57 369	26 041	83 410
1855	364 324	9245	20 916	21 763	14 647	47 889	18 682	66 571
1856	397 560	4679	14 028	21 202	1685	28 335	13 259	41 594
1857	463 135	14 369	28 304	17 917	2640	40 890	22 340	63 230
1858	504 519	5859	17 393	18 404	2692	31 187	13 161	44 348
1859	530 262	3151	12 330	12 639	2463	19 809	10 774	30 583
1860	537 847	1736	11 734	13 953	1614	19 566	9471	29 037

Geoffrey Serle, *The Golden Age: A History of the Colony of Victoria*, 1851–1861, Melbourne University Press, 1963, Appendices 1, 2 and 5.

Birthplaces of Victorian population (per cent) ←**Source 2.3**

Census year	Australian colonies	England and Wales	Ireland	Scotland	China	Others
1846	23.1	31.1	27.8	12.9		5.1
1851	26.5	37.9	18.9	10.4		6.3
1857	20.5	37.5	16.0	13.2	6.2	6.6
1861	29.4	32.7	16.2	11.3	4.6	5.8
1871	49.0	23.3	13.7	7.7	2.5	3.8
1881	62.2	17.1	10.0	5.6	1.4	3.7
1891	68.4	14.3	7.5	4.4	0.8	4.6
1901	78.3	9.8	5.1	3.0	0.6	3.3

Richard Broome, *The Victorians: Arriving*, Fairfax, Syme and Weldon, Sydney, 1984, p. 98.

Artist Samuel Thomas Gill was born in England and emigrated at the age of 21 to South Australia in 1839. Photography was in its infancy in the 1850s, but Gill's paintings and engravings capture something more interesting than a photographic view of the gold rush colony: they are miniature *interpretations* of the gold rush experience. In Source 2.4 you see the scene on Queen's Wharf, opposite the Customs House in Flinders Street, where new migrants left the steam ferry, that had transported them from their ship anchored in Port Phillip Bay, and began their adventure in the new land. Another immigrant, the English writer William Howitt, wrote: 'All down, near the wharves, it is a scene of dust, drays and carts hurrying to and fro, and heaps of boxes, trunks, bundles and digging tools … It is every man's business to take care of himself here.'[2]
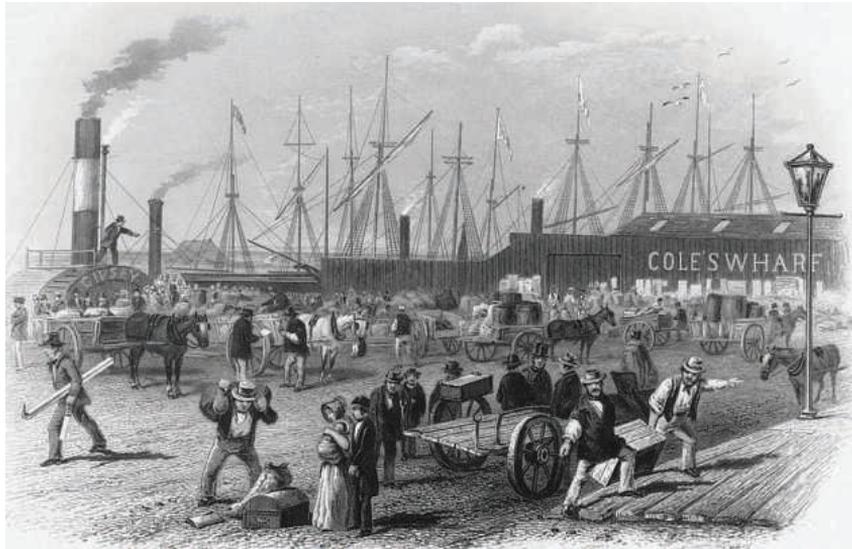
↑**Source 2.4** S.T. Gill, *Queen's Wharf Melbourne, West End*, 1857, *Victoria Illustrated*, Sands and Kenny, Melbourne, 1857. Courtesy State Library of Victoria.

USING HISTORICAL SOURCES AS EVIDENCE 2.1

1. Using Source 2.2, in which year did females make up the greatest proportion of new arrivals, and in which year the least?
2. In which year did foreign arrivals make up the largest number, and in which year the least?
3. Using Source 2.3, in which year did the Irish make up the largest proportion of British migrants, and in which year the least?
4. Explain how Victoria's population changed as a result of the gold rushes.

Gold: a crisis of imperial control

In January 1851, Edward Hargraves, an Australian recently returned from California, announced that he had discovered gold near Bathurst in New South Wales. Others had already found traces of the metal, but Hargraves – 'a master of publicity' according to historian Geoffrey Blainey – created the fuss that inspired others to find the payable deposits he had only glimpsed.[3] The colonial governors did not really welcome a gold rush. They had heard of the lawlessness on the Californian gold fields and were worried about the thieves and released convicts they expected to flock to the local fields. In June a pastoralist [one who grazes sheep for meat or wool] discovered gold near Clunes in Victoria. Finds elsewhere were also reported. Soon thousands of prospectors were rushing to the new fields, almost emptying Melbourne of its male population.

To poor men, gold promised instant riches. 'To win gold', writes Blainey, 'was the only honest chance millions of people had of bettering themselves, of gaining independence, of storing money for old age or sickness'.[4] But another historian, David Goodman, questions this optimism, noting that many thoughtful colonists feared gold's effects. While liberals [progressives] generally welcomed the rush, conservatives and radicals believed that it would create disorder, break up families and increase the gap between the haves and the have-nots.[5]

One interested eyewitness was none other than the governor of Victoria himself. Victoria had only recently separated from New South Wales and its first governor, Charles La Trobe, wrote in alarm to his superior, long-serving Colonial Secretary Earl Grey. His dispatch of October 1851 would have taken three months to reach London and by the time Grey's reply reached him, the flood of migrants was at its peak.

The discoveries within our bounds, coming as they do at the close of the wet season, in localities in comparative proximity to our towns, exercise a far wider influence upon our excitable population than did the discoveries in New South Wales upon that colony, under the advantages of a larger population and the greater remoteness of the gold field.

Within the last three weeks the towns of Melbourne and Geelong and their large suburbs have been in appearance almost emptied of many classes of their male inhabitants; the streets which for a week or ten days were crowded by drays loading with the outfit for the workings are now seemingly deserted. Not only have the idlers to be found in every community, and day labourers in town and the adjacent country, shopmen, artisans, and mechanics of every description thrown up their employments, and in most cases, leaving their employers and their wives and families to take care of themselves, run off to the workings, but responsible tradesmen, farmers, clerks of every grade, and not a few of the superior classes have followed, some unable to withstand the mania and force of the stream, or because they were really disposed to venture time and money on the chance, but others because they were employers of labour, left in the lurch and had no other alternatives. Cottages are deserted, houses to let, business is at a standstill, and even schools are closed.

La Trobe to Earl Grey, Secretary of State for Colonies, 10 October 1851, Further Papers relative to the Recent Discovery of Gold in Australia, British Parliamentary Papers, 1852, XXXIV, 1508.

Governor La Trobe again reported his impressions to London on 12 January 1852.

There is a spirit abroad, partly induced by that of the times in which we live, partly arising from the character and past relation to society of the larger number of the people flocking to our shores from the neighbouring colonies – soon to all appearances to be strengthened by additions from other quarters of the globe, owing no allegiance to British rule – and partly resulting from the intoxicating influence which the sudden and unexpected acquisition of great wealth in its most dazzling form, exercises upon the minds of the multitudes – which must be carefully watched, and promptly brought under control, if this Colony is [not to] parallel California in crime and disorder.

La Trobe to Secretary of State, 12 January 1852, in Geoffrey Serle, *The Golden Age*, p. 25.

2.3 Influential ideas of the 1850s

INQUIRY QUESTION

What were the influential ideas in the 1850s?

Chartists mass working-class movement in England in the 1840s so named because these protesters drew up a charter, or list, of democratic reforms that they presented to the Parliament; one Chartist petition had several million signatures

manhood suffrage the demand that all adult men have the right to a vote

secret ballot a vote placed into a ballot box without the voter's name being placed on the ballot paper, so as not to identify whom one voted for; it prevented voters being influenced or pressured to vote a certain way, unlike the previous system in which men voted in public for a candidate by raising their hand for all to see

We will examine different influential ideas of migration to the colonies.

Class and social hierarchies
The impact in Britain

News of the Australian gold discoveries arrived in a Europe still recovering from the distress and turmoil of 'the hungry forties'. In 1848 revolutionaries almost toppled the governments of France and Germany, while **Chartists** marched on London demanding **manhood suffrage** and the **secret ballot**. By the early 1850s the revolutionary mood had subsided. Germany and France had swung from democracy back to monarchy. In 1851, to advertise its industrial achievements and promote economic recovery, England held a great International Exhibition in London. Soon Britain would begin a long period of prosperity and imperial expansion, but for the time being, economic and political conditions remained unsettled.

Gold gave new impetus to overseas migration. The discovery of gold in California in January 1848 attracted almost 300 000 people from elsewhere in the United States and Europe. The even richer fields of New South Wales and Victoria soon eclipsed it. To Britain's leaders, it seemed as if **providence** had come to their aid, providing a remedy for overpopulation and poverty and an outlet for frustrated democratic ideals. Others, including some working men, questioned whether emigration was really the solution to England's ills. Surely England should reform its own society rather than ship its victims overseas.

Source 2.7 shows a rare **daguerreotype**, an early form of photograph, which captures the crowd, estimated at 25 000, who rallied on Kennington Common, London, in support of a petition to the Parliament on 10 April 1848. The famous Chartist orator Feargus O'Connor and other leaders occupy the platform in the centre of the picture, speaking without amplification of any sort.

↑**Source 2.7** Chartist meeting, Kennington Common, London, 10 April 1848, daguerreotype. Courtesy British Library.

FOCUS QUESTIONS 2.1

1. What can you tell about the Chartists by looking at Source 2.7?
2. What were the Chartists fighting for? Why do you think they wanted this and what does that tell us about life in the 'mother country'?

RESEARCH TASK 2.1

1. Find out and list the six demands of the Chartists.
2. Describe why the demands were both needed and desired.

The Times newspaper was often regarded as the voice of the British establishment. Its editorial opinions reached a wide cross-section of the educated middle and upper classes. It had this to say of the Australian gold rushes.

There seems … no doubt that we really have a California of our own, if we have only the spirit to make good use of it. What a blessing if the idle fellows that hang on our parishes and beg in our streets, that choke up our charities and harden our hearts, would take themselves off to a place where with a very small amount of labour and skill they might scrape up little fortunes! Who can tell how many more gold fields we shall have in a few years, inviting the population of this crowded, and we may add, this groaning Europe to seek new homes through the length and breadth of

Continued…

Source 2.8

the globe, to found new institutions and to enjoy that comfort and that liberty which is denied them by the monopolies and tyrannies of the Old World … possibly that same gold which led the population of Europe to America in the first instance may now be employed to counteract the great triumph of despotism and the general collapse of popular institutions which mark this lamentable era.

Editorial, *The Times*, 19 January 1852.

The *Northern Star*, published in Yorkshire, was once the most successful radical working-class newspaper in England. During the Chartist movement of the 1840s its circulation was greater than that of *The Times*, but by 1852 it had declined.
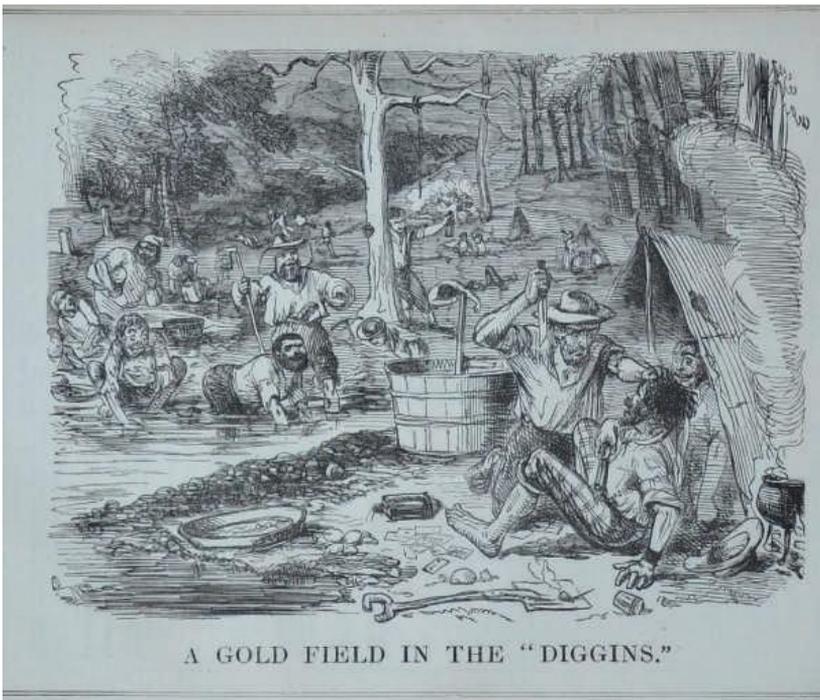
Source 2.9

The discovery of the Australian gold fields has raised the general question of emigration, and certain parish authorities are speculating – advancing money [for passages] in hopes of a profitable return … The object of the parties is to lessen poor rates, or to overcome pauperism by emigration … We tell them they've begun at the wrong end. To send labourers out of a country that has millions of acres of land uncultivated, and profitable if cultivated, in hopes of getting rid of pauperism, is not only unwise, but suicidal. Is there any requisite for life, that gold can buy, which England, Scotland, and Ireland do not possess? … Then how comes it that in an old country, which is the granary of the marketable wealth of so many countries, that the labourers, the producers of its riches, are obliged to quit it in search of gold, which, when possessed, can only be used as a means to command the necessaries and luxuries of life?

Letter to *Northern Star*, 5 June 1852.

satirical mocking and sarcastic tone

The newspaper *Punch* adopted a generally **satirical**, sceptical and conservative view of the Australian gold rushes. 'The present rage is Emigration', it wrote in an article accompanying the following cartoons. 'The great pity is that some of the best people in England – all the labouring classes – the persons who enrich the country, are going, and we shall have none but the consumers left'.

AN ENGLISH GOLD FIELD.

A GOLD FIELD IN THE "DIGGINS."

↑**Source 2.10** *Punch*, 31 July 1852

A land of gold? News from Australia

Prospective emigrants wanted to assess their chances on the Victorian goldfields. They hung on the words of family members who had emigrated, on letters contributed to the British press and on the travellers' tales and guidebooks that poured from English presses. Some letters were written for the writer's family alone while others were written with publication in view, either to promote emigration or, more rarely, to discourage it.

per capita a Latin term to mean an average amount according to the number of people involved

It took as much as four months for a letter to reach Britain and at least as long for the prospective emigrant to reach Australia; by then the situation may have changed. However, those who travelled in clipper ships did it in half that time. Between 1852 and 1854, the **per capita** value of gold won on Victorian fields declined from £390 to £148. Even at the peak of the rush, fewer than a quarter of Victoria's people were actually living and working on the goldfields, but gold swelled the Victorian economy, providing jobs and fortunes for many non-miners.

↑**Source 2.11** George Baxter, *News from Australia*, London, 1854. Courtesy State Library of Victoria.

Letter writers wrote with the situation of the recipients and their English, Scottish, Irish or European homeland culture in mind. They referred to the difficulties in the home society ('push') or the attractions in the colony ('pull') factors favouring emigration, or to the problems in colonial society discouraging it. As you read the selection below, make a list of the negative ('push') and positive ('pull') factors that might have arisen in the mind of the readers as they read them.

George Baxter, a pioneer of colour printing, produced this image (see Source 2.11) in London.

An anonymous Englishman writes home, and his letter was published in the *Northern Star*.

Source 2.12

Tell the starving thousands in England we will give them a cordial [friendly] welcome here. We want labourers. Come over and help us. Our crops are rotting on the ground for want of hands to gather them. Our thousands and tens of thousands of sheep are going unshorn for the same reason. Our flocks and herds are being boiled down merely for the fat, because we have not sufficient population to eat them. Our public buildings, roads, bridges, and works of all kinds suffering for want of workmen. The quantity of gold that is being dug up is truly astonishing, one ship that has just sailed from this port to London took three tons weight of gold, in all of which has been dug principally by laboring men … We had a very hot Christmas day. I think the weatherglass was 115 in the shade*. What a contrast to you! We had leg of lamb and green peas for dinner, and plumb pudding and cherries afterwards. We thought of you, and spoke of you all the time. You would all do. Tinkers, tailors, barbers, bakers, coachmen, muck-men, carpenters, masons, mantua [cloak]-makers, cooks, drapers, bonnet-builders, shopmen; indeed any men but lazy men. Remember, it is a land of gold!

*115 degrees on the Fahrenheit scale is 46.1 degrees Celsius, the temperature scale used under a federal government Act of 1970 and in use from 1972.

Anonymous letter to the *Northern Star*, 19 June 1852.

A Scotsman, John McKinnon, wrote home:

Source 2.13

Now, Sandy, it is no profit to me to tell you lies. That, I will not. I heard at home good accounts of Australia, but I never believed till I saw it with my own eyes, and I think more of it than I ever heard at home, it is the richest town of its size in the world. And I will tell you that I am only six weeks and two days at work, and I have in my possession this night after clearing all expenses, £20 sterling. How long would I be in Skye before I would gather as much, but here they are no more in a person's eyes than 20 farthings.

John McKinnon to his family in Skye, *ANZ Gazette*, 28 May 1853.

Michael Hogan, an Irishman, wrote this to his brother (his original spelling is retained):

Source 2.14

Dear Brother I am most anxious that you and family would Come out here where I Can make a happy home for you and myself. This is the place where a man makes all for himself independent of any master for at once you purchase land here you have it forever without taxes or any other Cess[tax]. So I expect you will have no hesitation but come out at once for the sooner you Come the Better, whichever is the quickest way to come out hear that is wat I desire. If you wish [me] to pay your way out here I will do so or either to Come by Imigration.

I also wish to know from You have you heard from my Brother James who went to America for I under stant in your last letter there was no account from him in it. I was very angry with him when he was about to immigrate that he would not Come to me where I could make a happy home for him … as I have said or mentioned before this is the Country where we can Enjoy ourselves with the Best of every thing indpenden of a landlord or of the Galling **Yoke** of oppression …

yoke a frame fitted to oxen or bullocks that then attaches to the wagon they are pulling. Here 'the Galling Yoke of oppression' is literally the galling (infuriating) yoke (straitjacket) of oppression (injustice).

Michael Hogan to Mathew Hogan in Tipperary, Ireland, 8 December 1853, State Library of Victoria, MS 12427.

William Howitt, an English author, wrote this opinion of the gold rushes.

Source 2.15

[I]f anyone at home asks you whether he shall go to the Australian diggings, advise him first to go and dig a coal-pit; then work a month at a stone quarry; next sink a well in the wettest place he can find, of at least fifty feet deep; and finally, clear out a space of sixteen feet square of a bog twenty feet deep; and if, after that, he still has a fancy for the goldfields let him come; understanding, however, that all the time he lives on heavy unleavened bread, on tea without milk, and on mutton or beef without vegetables, and as tough as India-rubber … The majority of the diggers are dissatisfied, and not earning more than expenses, many not that. There seems a general feeling of disappointment; and there is as general an expression of indignation at the inflated accounts which have drawn such numbers to the colony. They declare that the only object has been to cause a large immigration at any expense of truth; and that where the accounts were true in some respects, they were not *the whole truth*; the drawbacks and difficulties being carefully kept out sight, which make all the difference.

William Howitt, *Land, Labour, and* Gold: Or, *Two Years in Victoria*, London, 1855, Letter XI, 15 January 1853.

USING HISTORICAL SOURCES AS EVIDENCE 2.5

1. Explain the push and pull factors that saw people come to Victoria during the gold rushes. To prepare your answer draw two columns, labelled 'push' and 'pull', and using Sources 2.11–2.14 list the push and pull factors you discover.
2. To what extent were the people who came to Victoria successful in achieving their aspirations? Refer to Source 2.15 and other knowledge within your response.

INQUIRY QUESTION

What do perspectives in the 1850s reveal about people's future hopes?

We will examine different perspectives of migrants to the colonies.

The digger's wedding: the colonial marriage market

Like the American West, gold rush Victoria was a society of adventurous young men. In 1854 about half its male population was between the ages of 20 and 35. They outnumbered women of the same age by more than two to one, and on the goldfields the ratio was more than three to one.

Rushing from one new goldfield to the next, sleeping under canvas and relying on the precarious fortunes of mining, these bands of footloose young men worried the colony's elders. 'There are thousands and tens of thousands now at the diggings who have no earthly tie near them', the immigration reformer Caroline Chisholm lamented. 'They are fast losing all the associations of humanity'.[6] In the 1840s, Chisholm had promoted female immigration but in the early 1850s she began to promote 'Family Colonisation', the emigration of family groups rather than single men and women.

One of the most memorable sights of gold rush Melbourne was 'the digger's wedding'. The lucky digger and his girl, dressed in their finest and quaffing champagne, drove like lords and ladies through the streets of the city. Sometimes, according to the old colonist Thomas McCombie, the wedding was a sham. The young lady had been borrowed for the day from one of the city's boarding houses and her elegant clothes purchased by the **spendthrift** digger.

spendthrift one who spends money wastefully

Another observer, the Melbourne *Argus,* saw the 'racy vulgarity' of the wedding as a sign of an unhealthy marriage market. When the excitement of the rush was over, what kind of society would Victoria become? And if the young men eventually wanted wives and homes of their own, where were they to come from? Others worried about the welfare of the young women. 'Know the man well first and do not be dazzled by his gold dust', a women's magazine advised. Some of the brides may have regretted their haste. 'In no country is the crime of wife desertion so common a one as in this', the *Argus* observed in 1860.[7]

↑**Source 2.16** S.T. Gill, *The Digger's Wedding in Melbourne in Victorian Goldfields 1852–3*, watercolour. Courtesy State Library of Victoria.

The Melbourne *Argus* wrote of the colonial marriage problem.

Source 2.17

[T]here are many considerations suggested by 'the Digger's Wedding,' apart from the temporary folly usually accompanying it, that excite in the mind of a thoughtful observer grave apprehensions respecting the results to society, that must spring from so unpromising a source … The greatest of the social evils that this Colony, and every colony has to endure, is the relative disproportion of the sexes. It is simply absurd to expect that morality and religion will spread in a land where the sexes are not properly balanced. The reverse has been only too fearfully demonstrated in the history of certain colonies. But it is not enough that the sexes should be numerically equal, the women who are to be the mothers of a future nation must themselves be cultivated in mind and heart. A mother sunk in ignorance, and familiarised to the sight of vulgar vice, will never be likely to rear an intelligent and virtuous family. Nor is the nomadic life of the gold digger, with its accessories of absence from home, varying fortune, and destitution of educational and religious appliances, at all fitted to conduce to the moral and spiritual growth of the digger's household … We look to the thousands of people flowing into our city daily, and we find that the immense majority of them are males. We find that Britain is willing to send us out occasionally small drafts from her overflowing workhouses and pauper asylums, to supplement our deficient female population. The benevolent Mrs Chisholm pursues her course of unwearied philanthropy [giving help to others freely], and does all that a lady even of her extraordinary energy can do to fill up the void. But still the void is not filled, nor likely to be filled. The quantity of the female immigration is immeasurably smaller than our requirements demand, and the quality of it is vastly below the necessities of the case.

Editorial, *Argus*, 23 October 1852.

FOCUS QUESTIONS 2.2

1. Why did the artist of 'Alarming Prospect, The Single Ladies off to the Diggings' (see Source 2.18) regard their departure as 'an alarming prospect'?

2. How accurate was the vision of their character?

↑**Source 2.18** John Leech, *Alarming Prospect, The Single Ladies off to the Diggings*, 1853, etching: watercolour and gum Arabic. Courtesy State Library of Victoria.

CREATING A NATION 1834–2008

Gold rush democracy: the suffrage question

What kind of society did the gold rush emigrants hope to create in Australia? The young, skilled and ambitious men who dominated the influx wanted the traditional rights of 'freeborn Englishmen', but with a radical democratic twist. Many had probably supported the principles of the Chartist movement, such as universal manhood suffrage, secret ballots, equal-sized electoral districts and the abolition of property qualifications as a qualification to vote. Unlike the American colonies, which had to fight for their freedoms, the Australian colonies won them without a struggle. In 1855 the British Parliament passed the Victorian Constitution Act, conferring self-government on the colony. Herman Merivale in his *Lectures on Colonization and Colonies* (1861) recalled the British government believed that giving the colonies 'domestic freedom' would strengthen their 'continued dependence on the imperial sovereignty'.

Victoria's parliament was modelled on Britain's, with a Legislative Council elected on a property **franchise** and a Legislative Assembly elected on a popular franchise. In March 1856 Victoria became the first Australian colony to introduce the secret ballot, a step towards removing the bribery and coercion that marred open elections in which people such as your landlord or employer could see whom you voted for. Some diggers had already won the vote through their possession of a **miner's right**, but in 1857 Victoria became the first colony to give the vote to all adult men, subject only to a residence qualification of three months. Victorians were proud of having introduced democratic reforms that England would achieve only decades later.

Most colonists were liberal democrats, but they differed on how their principles were to be interpreted and applied. Some, like Edward Wilson, the proprietor of the leading Melbourne newspaper the *Argus*, worried that without the checks and balances of the parent society, **democracy** might descend into **anarchy**. His arguments were persuasively answered by the paper's editor, the brilliant 28-year-old Irish Protestant barrister

franchise the Legislative Council, or upper house of parliament, was elected by adult male voters who owned property in Victoria of a certain value; while the Legislative Assembly, or lower house of parliament, was elected by all adult males who were resident in Victoria

miner's right after the Eureka Rebellion, partly over the licence fee, the miner's right was issued for one year, which included manhood suffrage – the right of men to vote

and later Chief Justice of Victoria, George Higinbotham. Manhood suffrage, Higinbotham argued, was the most effective way of securing the representation of all society's interests. Yet as 'H' an anonymous female correspondent to the *Sydney Morning Herald* objected, the so-called 'universal' suffrage actually excluded the interests of half of humanity. In the 1870s Higinbotham introduced an amendment to the Electoral Act to extend the suffrage to women but failed to secure support. It would take another two decades for Victoria to extend the franchise to women.

A goldfields newspaper commented on these democratic reforms:

Source 2.19

A great experiment is in progress, and all the lovers of freedom in the world will watch the result. Victoria has had the honour of showing the mother country an example worthy of imitation in several important and indeed vital points. Legislation here is of necessity more free and unfettered [unrestrained] than it can be in England. If the people make up their minds as to the propriety of a change, the same difficulties do not present themselves that are encountered by reformers in England. Starting from the point to which the intelligence of enlightened [well-informed] Englishmen has brought them, they do what their countrymen at home are vainly wishing were done. The adoption of the ballot illustrates our meaning … The Ballot has been introduced in this colony, and from every part of England we hear of the encouragement its adoption and success have given to reformers there. They have been stimulated to renewed exertions, and regard the attainment of their object as accelerated by many years. They can point to Victoria and the elections conducted under the new system, and find in that chapter of our colonial history a complete answer to the objections of their opponents and their groundless and childish fears and misgivings. Universal suffrage is the natural sequel to the ballot. It has followed it here, and it will one day follow it in Britain.

Editorial, *Mount Alexander Mail*, 6 January 1858.

George Higinbotham wrote this of manhood suffrage in two editorials in 1858.

Source 2.20

We presume no one ever contended that the counting of heads was an infallible way of getting at the truth; and we advocate manhood suffrage, not because it is an infallible, but because it is the best practicable, expedient for securing representative government. Manhood suffrage includes the representation of all interests, although it may not be in that precise proportion which would be most beneficial to the country – and who is competent to say what such a proportion should be?

We hold that the great end of all electoral systems is as far as possible to secure justice and good government to every individual; that no amount of wealth gives anyone an extra claim as to these matters; that a

Continued…

community is not a commercial company, in which a man should have a voice potential to the number of shares he is able to buy; that the claim to be well governed rests upon something quite apart from one's power of paying the expenses of government; that LAZARUS [poor man] has as much right to be considered as DIVES [rich man]; and that all men who live in a country have as large an interest in its good government, and as equal a stake in it, that their mere pecuniary [monetary] possessions are but as dust in the balance.

Editorials [by George Higinbotham], *Argus*, 31 December, 18 May 1857.

A female reader wrote to the press:

Source 2.21

That the elective franchise is not a natural or inherent right in any class of the community is sufficiently proven by the history of the representative principle. The franchise is a privilege conferred by the commonwealth itself, upon certain classes of its members. The question then is: are there any valid reasons for refusing this privilege to women, who, but for their sex – the accident of birth – would, by the present laws, be entitled to it? I opine [think] that numerous positive evils result to women, and through women to society at large, in consequence of that policy which restricts the franchise to male persons only; and that there are no objections to a more equitable distribution of civil rights, which will bear the test of calm, impartial, scrutiny.

In the first place, Sir, it seems to me that this restrictive policy introduces a principle into our polity as absurd as, to my thinking, erroneous. It applies a physical condition as a test of moral fitness. A man possessing a certain fixed property qualification is presumed to have that degree of intelligence necessary to a right exercise of this civil privilege; but a woman – though she have tenfold more discretion, talent, virtue, knowledge, genius, or property – shall never under any circumstances be admitted to participate. Because she is a woman – and for no other reason, she is, and so long as the present system lasts – she will be disfranchised. I confess I do not see the justice of this, while women are competing with men now in many a walk of life, and with quite as much success upon the whole as the more favoured sex can boast of.

Letter from 'H' in *Sydney Morning Herald*, 2 July 1858.

USING HISTORICAL SOURCES AS EVIDENCE 2.7

1. Using Source 2.20, outline George Higinbotham's arguments in favour of manhood suffrage.
2. Explain how the gold rushes contributed to political progress in Victoria. Refer to Source 2.19 and other evidence.
3. Describe the experiences of women during the gold rush decade. Refer to Source 2.21 and other evidence within your response.

↑**Source 2.22** *A Great Public Meeting at Melbourne, Victoria 1857*. Courtesy National Library of Australia.

2.5 Experiences from the 1850s

INQUIRY QUESTION

What do experiences in the 1850s reveal about attitudes to non-British minorities?

We will examine different experiences of immigration to the colonies.

Race and Empire

The new gold mountain: Chinese diggers

The first Chinese immigrants to Australia arrived in the late 1840s to work as contract labourers on pastoral stations, but with the discovery of gold the influx grew rapidly until by 1857 there were 23 000, mostly young single men, living and working on the Victorian goldfields. In Kwantung (Guandong) and Fukien (Fujian), the provinces of southern China where most of the emigrants originated, it was common for young men to travel in search of work. The social dislocation following the Taiping Rebellion – a response to foreign penetration – and the lure of riches in 'The New Gold Mountain' stimulated the flow.

DID YOU KNOW?

The Taiping Rebellion was a violent and widespread protest movement in China, a rural and nationalistic uprising by peasants against their long-term and foreign Manchu rulers. It led to much disorder in China during 1851–1864.

European diggers looked on the Chinese immigrants as intruders. They were suspicious of the Chinese methods of mining in large teams and of their 'manners, colour, religion and customs'. In 1857, the Victorian government imposed a residence tax on them. It was only after the rush had peaked and the returns on mining activity began to decline that tension between Chinese and European miners reached boiling point.

By July 1857, the 6000 Chinese comprised about 40% of the diggers on the Ovens goldfield in northeast Victoria. There had been intermittent disputes between European and Chinese diggers during 1856. However, in mid-1857 tension increased as the returns from fossicking in the riverbed declined, and the Chinese began to sink shafts on ground the European miners regarded as their own.

In July 1857 the European diggers on the Buckland River goldfield called a public meeting.

Mr Bell on taking the Chair, stated that the object of the meeting was to take into consideration what measures should be adopted to protect the body of the white miners from the incursions of the Chinese, and as the Government seemed determined to do nothing for our protection, the time had now come to decide whether the Buckland was or was not to become exclusively a Chinese settlement. One thing was certain, that either the whites or the Chinese would have to leave this gold field. The Chairman hoped that whatever measures might be adopted, law and order would be obeyed in carrying them into effect, and concluded with an earnest appeal to preserve order in the meeting, and that every one should have a fair hearing,

[The meeting then unanimously passed the following four resolutions]

That we, the white miners of the Buckland have long and patiently borne with the inconvenience and losses which we have sustained in consequence of the overwhelming number of Chinamen who are making daily encroachments upon the limited space of ground which we still occupy; be it therefore resolved that we will no longer tolerate their encroachments.

That we condemn in the strongest terms the impolicy and Injustice of our Government, although frequently warned to the contrary, in maintaining those laws which have allowed the Chinese to come into this country in such vast numbers, and upon this gold field specially, where they have left the European population in a small minority; Be it resolved that should we in self-preservation be at any time compelled to use forcible means to eject the Chinese from this gold field, that the responsibility rests entirely with the Government, who refuse to give us even the semblance of protection.

That we consider it an imperative duty which we owe to ourselves, likewise to our adopted country and our families, to use the most strenuous measures in our power which the law admits, for the total expulsion of a race whose vile and beastly practices we look upon with the utmost abhorrence; Be it therefore resolved, that in the open face of day, we hereby publicly avow our earnest determination to carry the above measures into full effect for the total expulsion from this colony of a race which an iniquitous law has placed socially upon an equal footing with ourselves a law impolitic and unjust, inasmuch as it openly countenances and encourages a gross violation of every principle of morality, and to the last degree insulting to our manhood as free born citizens and British subjects.

That should dire necessity compel us eventually to resort to the only resource which a careless Government has left us to carry out the object

Continued…

…Continued

embodied in the foregoing resolutions, every provision and care shall be taken for the preservation of the effects of the Chinese by allowing them an opportunity for the immediate removal thereof, it being clearly understood that no unnecessary violence or wilful destruction of property will be countenanced.

Ovens and Murray Advertiser, 4 July 1857.

Despite calls for upholding law and order, a riot erupted.

Source 2.24

On Saturday morning-after, a meeting held for the purpose of publicly expressing the opinions of the diggers on the river, and at which it was resolved at once to expel the Chinese about forty or fifty men proceeded to clear the encampment, and the various claims about the junction. They gave the Chinese time to pack their swags, then burnt their tents and drove the terror-stricken mob of long-tailed cowards down the creek. Each small encampment in its turn was served in the same way, and its former denizens [occupants] were added to the flowing body. As the operation of evicting them proceeded, the numbers of the agents in this measure increased; this addition was totally unnecessary, as we hear of only a single instance in which one of the **Celestials** endeavoured in vain to encourage his countrymen to show fight, and who forgot his own eloquent precepts when the danger of assault became imminent. But while increasing the number of assailants, it added also another and the worst feature to the proceeding. Acts of personal violence were committed. Chinamen were knocked down and robbed, their swags taken from them and cast into the river; Chinese stores broken open and robbed, and such of their contents as were not easily moved, or of general value, devoted to the flames. As the eviction process was extended down the creek, so also did these acts of brutal violence and base robbery increase. When it reached the Chinese encampment above the Lower Flat, the fury of the mob appears to have reached its height. From eye-witnesses we learn that ruffianly behaviour, unmanly violence, and unbounded rapacity were manifested on every side. One gentleman assures us that he saw Chinamen knocked down and trampled on; another declares that he could have walked dry shod across the river, on the piles of bedding with which its surface was covered, and its current interrupted just below the Lower Flat. Another avows having helped several Chinese out of holes into which they had jumped to protect themselves; one instance occurred of an unfortunate wretch remaining in his cold and wretched hiding place until Monday morning. We ourselves saw a European woman, the wife of a Chinaman, who had been dreadfully hit about the head; and a Chinaman whose fingers had been cut, because he refused to give up a gold ring which he wore.

Celestials a popular European insulting slang term for Chinese people in the mid-nineteenth century; originally from an ancient term for China, the empire ruled by Heaven (celestial being the Latin term for heavenly)

Ovens and Murray Advertiser, 6 July 1857.

↑**Source 2.25** S.T. Gill, *Might versus Right*, 1862–3, watercolour, pencil and ink, *L.T. Doyle Sketchbook*. Courtesy State Library of New South Wales.

USING HISTORICAL SOURCES AS EVIDENCE 2.8

1. Examine the resolutions passed by the meeting of miners before the Buckland River riot in Source 2.23. What light do they throw on the motives of the European miners? To what extent were the motives economic, moral, racial or political?
2. The European diggers had resolved to use 'no unnecessary violence', the Chinese were reported to offer no resistance, and some Europeans came to their aid; so why did the situation turn violent?
3. Reviewing episodes like the riots at Buckland River and Lambing Flat in New South Wales, historian Ann Curthoys suggests that hatred of the Chinese was not inspired by anything the Chinese did so much as a belief that the Chinese had no right to be in the colony at all.[9] Do you agree?
4. The artist S.T. Gill entitled his contemporary painting of an incident between Chinese and European miners 'Might versus Right' (see Source 2.25). Who do you think represents Right and who represents Might? Art historian Sasha Grishin suggests that the painting conveys Gill's sympathy with the Chinese.[10] Do you agree? Explain why.

Diggers and Aboriginal people

At the end of the 1850s, a Select Committee of the new Victorian parliament confirmed the devastating impact of the two decades of European settlement on the original inhabitants of the land, who had been reduced to barely one-tenth of their original population. Yet, as historian Fred Cahir notes in Source 2.28, the story was not one of passive victimhood: Aboriginal people often played an active role in the gold rush story.

When the Select Committee met in 1858 under the chairmanship of Thomas McCombie, an old colonist of liberal outlook, to inquire into the condition of the Aboriginal people, educated

opinion on their future prospects, as historian Richard Broome noted, was 'still divided on the matter of Aboriginal humanness, equality and ability'[11]. The most pessimistic witness, William Hull, believed that 'the design of Providence [was] that the inferior races should pass away before the superior races'.

But the pessimists were in the minority. Most witnesses maintained the Christian belief that Aboriginal people were not inherently inferior to other people. The squatter Archibald Campbell declared, 'I suppose all men in the image of the Maker are capable of being Christianised'. As historian Robert Kenny notes in *The Lamb Enters the Dreaming* (2007), the missionaries' belief that the Aborigines could be 'reclaimed' may have offered more hope than the more fatalistic views of secular [non-religious] writers.[12]

The 1859[13] report recommended the establishment of reserves [places to confine Indigenous peoples], a policy which accommodated, in a limited way, the aspiration of the Kulin people for access to their own land. In 1863 the Victorian government established seven reserves, mostly less than 1000 acres, (altogether 0.03% of the land mass of the colony) at Ebenezer (north of Dimboola), Yelta (near Mildura), Framlingham (near Warrnambool), Lake Condah (near Portland), Ramahyuck (near Sale), Lake Tyers (near Lakes Entrance) and Coranderrk (near Healesville).[14]

←**Source 2.26**
Coranderrk Station was one of several Aboriginal reserves or missions across Victoria.[15]

↑**Source 2.27** Diggers and Aboriginal people: an artist's view. Eugene von Guérard, *Aborigines met on the road to the diggings*, 1854. Courtesy Geelong Art Gallery.

USING HISTORICAL SOURCES AS EVIDENCE 2.9

The painting by von Guérard is sometimes titled 'The Barter' (see Source 2.27).

1. What is being offered by the Aboriginal participants and what might the diggers have offered them?
2. What inferences can you draw from the demeanour of those on each side of the transaction?

The historian Fred Cahir has written this of Aboriginal people on the goldfields.

Source 2.28

Victorian Aboriginal people demonstrated a great deal of agency, exhibited entrepreneurial spirit and eagerness to participate in gold mining or related activities and, at times, figured significantly in the gold epoch. Their experiences, like those of non-indigenous people, were multi-dimensional, from passive presence, active discovery, to shunning the goldfields. There is striking and consistent evidence that Aboriginal people, especially those whose lands were in rich alluvial [riverbed] gold-bearing regions, remained in the gold areas, participated in gold mining and interacted with non-indigenous people in a whole range of hitherto neglected ways, whilst maintaining many of their traditional customs. There is also evidence that Aboriginal people from Tasmania, New South Wales, Queensland and South Australia were present on the Victorian goldfields.

Fred Cahir, *Black Gold. Aboriginal People on the Goldfields of Victoria 1850–1870*, Aboriginal History Monograph 25, Australian National University E Press, Canberra, 2012, p. 1.

→**Source 2.29** A lithograph of the gold field of Ophir, NSW. George French Angas, lithograph. In the foreground are some Aboriginal women who were employed by the diggers. Woolcott and Clarke, Sydney, 1851.
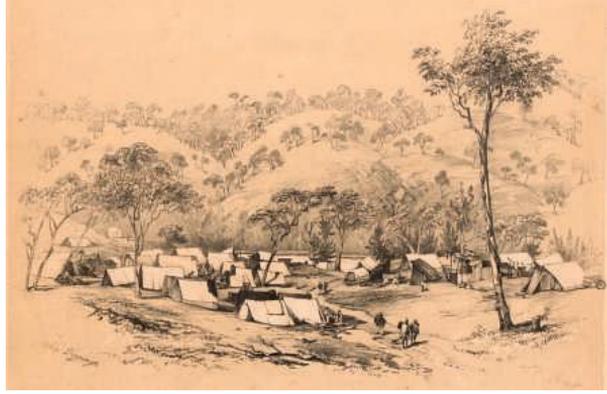
The Select Committee's report on Aboriginal people in the colony of Victoria in part said:

Source 2.30

From the evidence which the Committee have obtained, it appears that at the first settlement of the Colony in 1836 there were from six to seven thousand Aborigines distributed over its area. So great has been the mortality amongst them, however, that so far as can be ascertained, there are not more than a few hundreds remaining, who are in a state of abject want, with the exception of the Yarra and Western Port tribes, under the immediate charge of the Guardian of Aborigines and a few who settled on or near the old Aboriginal Station at Mount Franklin.

The great and almost unprecedented reduction in the number of the Aborigines is to be attributed to the general occupation of the country by the white population; to vices acquired by contact with a civilized race, more particularly the indulgence in ardent spirits; and hunger, in consequence of the scarcity of game since the settlement of the Colony; and, also in some cases, to cruelty and ill-treatment. The great cause, however, is apparently the inveterate propensity [habit] of the race to excessive indulgence in spirits, which it seems utterly impossible to eradicate. This vice is not only fatal, but leads to other causes which tend to shorten life.

Your Committee are of opinion that great injustice has been perpetrated upon the Aborigines – that, when the Government of the Colony found it necessary to take from them their hunting grounds and their means of living, proper provision should have been made for them. Had they been a strong race, like the New Zealanders, they would have forced the new occupiers of their country to provide for them; but being weak and ignorant, even for savages, they have been treated with almost utter neglect.

With the exception of the Protectorate, which was an emanation [creation] of the Imperial Government, and which seemed to have been only partially successful, little or nothing has been done for the black denizens of the country. Victoria is now entirely occupied by a superior race, and there is scarcely a spot, excepting in the remote mountain ranges,

Continued…

…Continued

or dense scrubs, on which the Aborigine can rest his weary feet. To allow this to continue would be to tolerate and perpetuate a great moral wrong; and your Committee are of opinion that, even at this late period, a vigorous effort should be made to provide for the remnants of the various tribes, so that they may be maintained in comparative plenty.

The only practical method of accomplishing the desired object, and the one most likely under all the circumstances of the case to succeed, would, in the opinion of your Committee, be to form reserves for the various tribes, on their own hunting grounds. Those ought to be of such a size as would enable each tribe to combine agricultural and gardening operations with the depasturing of a moderate number of cattle and sheep … Those establishments ought to be under the charge of missionaries, clerical or lay, whose duty it would be to endeavour to teach the Aborigines the great principles of Christianity, as well as the elemental branches of secular education …

Your Committee hope that, in some measure, under the plan which they have suggested, the remnants of the Aborigines may be both civilized and christianised. They find, upon a thorough investigation of this part of the subject, that the Aborigines are possessed of mental power on a par with their brethren of the other races of man; and that they are perhaps superior to the Negro, and some of the more inferior divisions of the great human family … Their perceptive faculties are peculiarly acute, they are apt learners, and possess the most intense desire to imitate their more civilized brethren in almost everything.

Report of the Select Committee of the [Victorian] Legislative Council on the
Aborigines, 1859, pp. iv–v.

USING HISTORICAL SOURCES AS EVIDENCE 2.10

1. Using Source 2.30, list the reasons the Select Committee offered for the catastrophic decline of the Aboriginal population in Victoria.
2. While the review appeared sympathetic to the Aboriginal situation, there were still racist attitudes. List as many of these as you can find from Source 2.30.
3. Using Source 2.30 and your own knowledge, explain the reasoning for the creation of reserves.
4. What aspects of Aboriginal life were neglected or replaced by the reserves?
5. To what extent did gold rush migration change colonial attitudes towards race? Use at least two sources from this chapter within your response.

Weighing up the gold decade

Historians agree that the gold rush migrants transformed Victoria. Sometimes they go further, arguing that the unassisted migrants who dominated the inflow left a distinctive and permanent imprint on Victoria, and even on Australia. Victorian historians, some descended from the migrants, generally see their contribution in a positive light, pointing to their literacy, independence and democratic outlook. Others, including both conservatives and radicals, and historians of gender and race, see a more mixed picture of losses as well as gains.

In reviewing the 1850s migration, we will examine the contrasting verdicts of two historians: Geoffrey Serle, a champion of gold rush democracy, and Paul De Serville, a historian of the 'gentleman settlers' of Port Phillip, the pioneers whom the gold generation displaced.

FOCUS QUESTION 2.3

Read each passage (see Sources 2.31 and 2.32) carefully and note the continuities (what stayed the same) and changes (what did not stay the same), as well as the positive and negative characteristics that they identify with the gold rush migrants. Then we will review the whole chapter, drawing up our own balance sheet of gains and losses, changes and continuities in the End-of-chapter activities.

Geoffrey Serle (1922–1998) taught at Monash University for much of his career and wrote many books on Victoria.

Source 2.31

> Victoria provides an almost unique case of masses of migrants over a short period swamping a small existing society. This cross-section of the British Isles – with only the aristocracy, the paupers and the aged seriously under-represented – created, as it were, a new large self-governing county, automatically recreating British institutions and re-forming familiar clubs and societies. In a real sense they regarded themselves as part of Britain, still attempted to correct the local vagaries of Nature by importing birds, fish, trees and plants, read the same journals, books and newspapers, and thronged to the post-office on mail days. They took immense pride in the creation of 'another England', and assumed that it was the virtue of British institutions which made such success possible. These migrants probably felt less than in most periods that Britain was a country that had no place for them, and where social injustice prevailed. But there was still a widespread determination to make a better England; successful reforms like the ballot, even the abolition of public executions, were paraded as examples which the **mother-country** would do well to follow. The seeds of local patriotism quickly flowered as pride in the products of work and enterprise developed. The double-loyalty grew fast and strong, but the great stimulus to local patriotism and an incipient sense of nationality which the Port Phillippians experienced, in their fight against convicts and in the campaign for separation, had been missed by the new migrants, and the irksome control of the Colonial Office was only a brief irritation. This wave of migrants, like all others, held back the development of patriotic feeling.

mother-country the term used by English emigrants for the England they had left to come to Australia

Australia Felix the name given to Port Phillip by the surveyor and explorer Thomas Mitchell, which is the Latin name for 'Happy South Land'

Geoffrey Serle, *The Golden Age: A History of the Colony of Victoria, 1851–1861*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1963, pp. 380–1.

Paul de Serville, a freelance historian, has written many books, including two on the Victorian upper class.

Source 2.32

> Progress had changed **Australia Felix** but it had not, in the opinion of the overlander George Hamilton, made Victorian any happier … For [the squatter] E.M. Curr (whose family had lost their vast runs) more important was the destruction of trees, the disappearance of the natural grasses, and,
>
> *Continued…*

above all, the passing of the Aboriginals, whose occupation of the country he took up planted in him a lifelong interest in their culture … The 1850s men regarded the Port Phillip period with indifference or contempt, and only occasionally with interest … Such men believed that only with the discovery of gold and the granting of a constitution did the colony begin its history and come of age. History, as understood in the nineteenth century, was concerned with political institutions and with progress. Port Phillip had no political institutions, no governor, nor political movements … From there it was a short step to regarding the pioneers as simple, ill-educated people, and part of a backward, provincial and conservative society. The men who thought this way were usually liberal and progressive and their judgement of the pre-gold men was a part echo of the way in which the pioneers had first regarded Aborigines.

Paul de Serville, *Pounds and Pedigrees: The Upper Class in Victoria, 1850–1880*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1991, pp. 40–1.

USING HISTORICAL SOURCES AS EVIDENCE 2.11

1. Geoffrey Serle argues that while gold accelerated Victoria's democratic development it 'held back the development of patriotic feeling' (see Source 2.31). Why does he think so, and do you agree?
2. Serle argues that the migrants of the 1850s wanted to make 'another England' but a 'better England'. Do you agree with his verdict?
3. In focusing on the dominant immigrant group, the unassisted British immigrants, does Serle underestimate the viewpoint and experience of others, such as the assisted immigrants, the Irish and the Chinese?
4. Paul De Serville looks at the gold rush through the eyes of the pre-gold gentlemen settlers (see Source 2.32) who doubted gold made Victoria a happier society. Were there perhaps other losers who regretted the impact of gold? Look again at Governor Charles La Trobe's dire predictions at the beginning of this chapter (see Sources 2.5 and 2.6). Were any of his fears fulfilled?
5. De Serville suggests that nineteenth-century people saw history as a story of political institutions and progress. What impacts of the gold rush does such a history leave out?

2.6 Chapter summary

Here are some dot-points for you to consider and add to:

Continuities

- Assisted immigration schemes for agricultural labourers and domestic servants began in the 1840s and continued into the 1850s.
- Movements towards colonial self-government began in the 1840s and continued into the 1850s.
- Aboriginal Protectorate continued into the 1850s.

Changes

- Gold multiplied migrant inflow, swamping pre-gold population.
- Victoria attracted large inflows of population from other colonies, especially Van Diemen's Land (now called Tasmania) and New South Wales.
- Migrant inflows shifted towards young unassisted male immigrants.
- An imbalance of sexes generated anxiety about a colonial 'marriage problem'.
- The gold rush accelerated the process of democratic reform.
- The influx of Chinese immigrants excited racial tensions on the goldfields.
- A steep decline in the Aboriginal population forced a review of policy.

2.7 End-of-chapter activities

The following tasks are designed to help strengthen your understanding of the material explored in this chapter and to encourage you to further analyse and evaluate the events, ideas, perspectives and experiences that shaped the new nation in the 1850s.

Consolidating your understanding

Events

Using the sources in this chapter, answer the following questions:

1. What were the conditions that led people to leave Great Britain and come to Victoria in the 1850s?
2. How did the gold rushes in Victoria change patterns of migration in the 1850s? (Consider male and female, differing social classes and different nationalities. Ensure your response is backed up with evidence from statistics and primary sources.)
3. Make a table outlining the pros and cons of the gold rushes for the Colony of Victoria. A suggested template is below.

	Pros	Cons
Economic		
Social		
Political	New migrants brought new ideas, such as Chartism which helped bring about universal manhood suffrage and the secret ballot in Victoria.	The democratic reforms enacted during this time did not apply to women.

Ideas and perspectives

1. How did letters home to Britain shape perspectives of life in the Australia?
2. In what ways were ideas about class and social hierarchy confirmed and/or challenged during the gold rush decade?
3. Explain how Aboriginal people demonstrated agency during the gold rushes. Refer to Source 2.28 within your response.
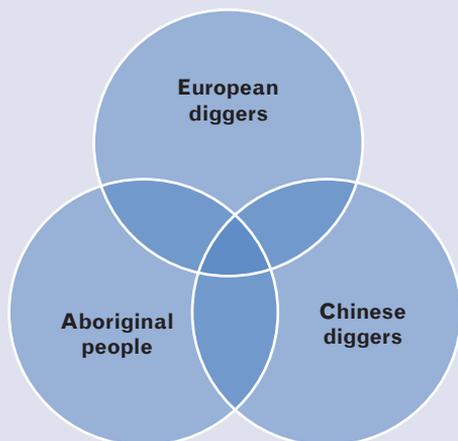
Experiences

Investigate the experiences of Chinese diggers in more detail. See for instance https://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/9642

Respond to the following questions:

- Why did the Chinese come to Victoria during the gold rushes?
- Make a list of the taxes that only Chinese diggers had to pay. Why were these implemented by the colonial government?
- Did the Chinese diggers protest against their unfair treatment and discrimination? If so, were they successful?
- What does the treatment of Chinese diggers suggest about the colony's attitudes towards race?

Analysing perspectives

In pairs, brainstorm the similarities and differences between the experiences of the three groups below during the gold rush decade.
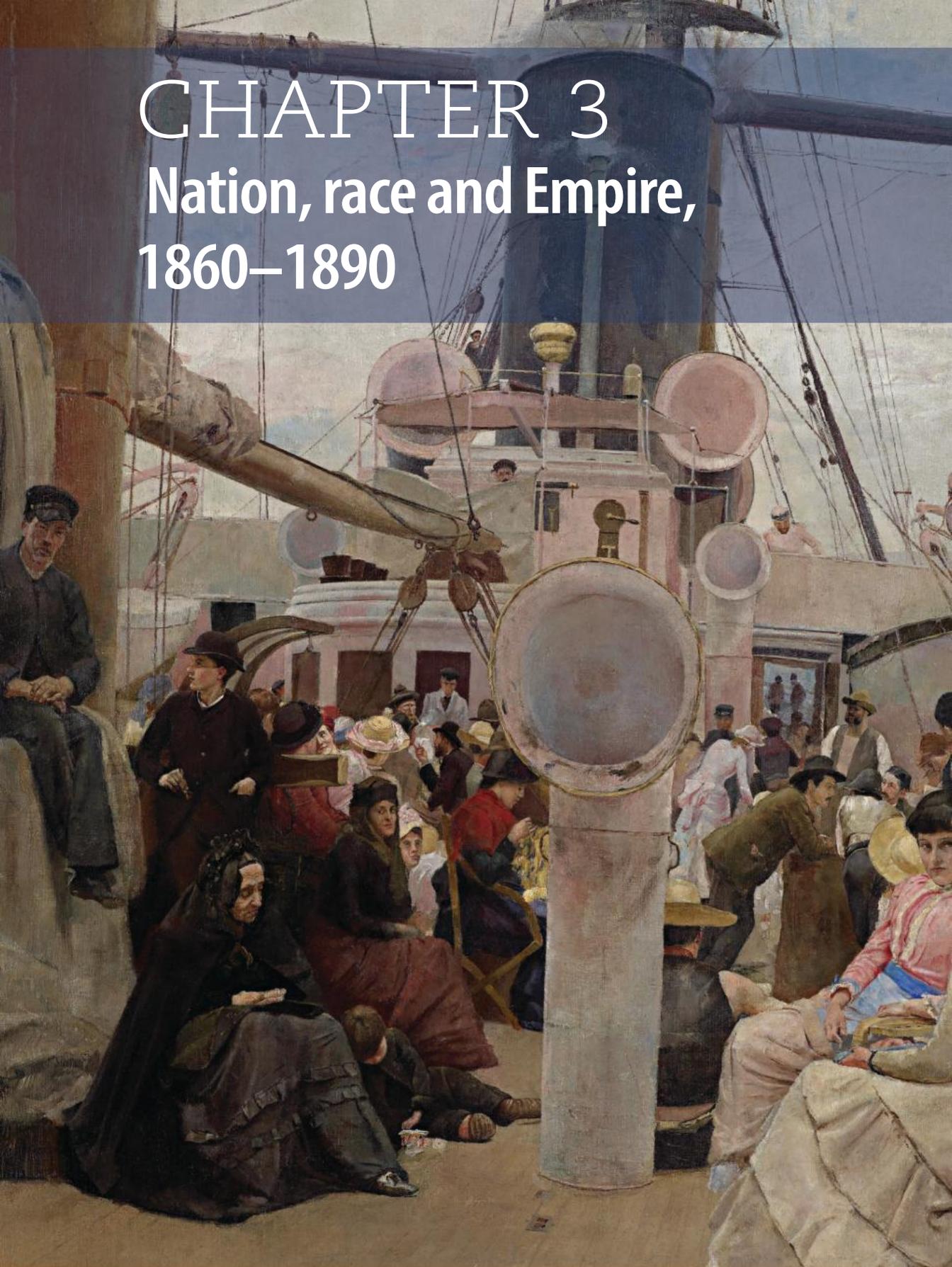

Constructing an argument: continuity and change

1. Evaluate the extent to which the Victorian colonial experience was changed by the gold rushes.
2. 'One of the consequences of the gold rush decade was that it strongly influenced colonial ideas and attitudes about race'. Discuss.

CHAPTER 3
Nation, race and Empire, 1860–1890

Chapter timeline

World events	Date	Australian events
	1860	
		c.1860: Australia's population reaches one million
1861–65: American Civil War between the Union and seceding Confederacy		
1865: Slavery abolished in the United States		
		1868: Attempted assassination – Henry O'Farrell shoots Duke of Edinburgh at Clontarf, Sydney
1869: Suez Canal opens linking the Mediterranean to the Red Sea		**1869:** Victorian Aboriginal Protection Board begins – Aboriginal Protection Act gives Central Board wide powers over Aboriginal residence and employment
	1870	
1871–1914: Second Industrial Revolution		**1871:** First association of native-born Australians founded – the Australian Natives' Association
		1877: First Test cricket match played between England v. Australia at the MCG
		1878: Seamen's strike – protests against Chinese employment and residence
	1880	
		1881: Coranderrk Petition – Kulin people appeal for secure tenure of their lands
		1886: Amending Act of 1869 Aboriginal Act – the Act's white racial ideas of degrees of descent required 'mixed-descent' people to assimilate into European society
		1887: Queen Victoria's Jubilee – imperialist demonstrations spark republican protests in Sydney
		1888: Arrival of the ship *S.S. Afghan* sparks protests against Chinese immigration
		1889: NSW premier joins movement for Australian federation when Henry Parkes gives his Tenterfield Oration
	1890	

3.1 Introduction

INQUIRY QUESTION

What changes occurred in the composition of Australia's population between 1860 and 1890?

A note on the opening image

Tom Roberts painted *Coming South* from sketches he made as a passenger on the S.S. *Lusitania* during his voyage from England to Australia in 1885. Roberts was born in England and emigrated to Victoria with his family in 1869 but returned to England to study painting in the early 1880s.

In the mid-1880s steamships were rapidly improving the speed, safety and comfort of the voyage. Roberts's painting captures a representative collection of passengers – old and young, women and men, English, Scots and Irish, rich and poor – at leisure during the 42-day voyage.

Among his fellow passengers was the journalist J.F. Archibald who, as editor of *The Bulletin* magazine in Sydney, would foster the emergence of a new school of nationalist writers, including Henry Lawson and Banjo Paterson, while Roberts would become a leader of the Heidelberg School of nationalist painters.

The legacy of the gold rush on Victoria

Long after the 1850s, the gold rush continued to shape Victoria's history. The wave of gold-seeking immigrants created a bulge in the colony's population that skewed its development for the rest of the century. In the late 1850s the first gold-seekers were joined by an influx of female immigrants. By the 1860s they married and began families.

Over the half-century, children born in the colony grew from about one-third to three-quarters of Victoria's population (see Chapter 2, Source 2.3). The Australian Natives' Association, formed in the early 1870s, became their political voice. Old colonists wondered whether these young 'Australian natives' would inherit their parents' British character and loyalties. Most Australians were proud to be British and part of an Empire that covered almost a quarter of the globe. But how did loyalty to Britain's Queen fit with aspirations of younger Australians for national independence? What did racial ideas of 'British blood' mean for some Irish? And would First Nations peoples and Chinese immigrants fit into this ideal? As they moved towards nationhood, the colonists anxiously debated what it meant to be Australian in a world where other nations and races threatened.

3.2 Significant events, 1860–1890

INQUIRY QUESTION

How did immigration change the Australian colonies between 1860 and 1890?

In the table of Source 3.1, you can see how the wave-like increases in the various age-cohorts influenced the dominant concerns of each decade. The arrival of their children at school age in the 1870s strengthened the political demand for the provision of 'free, compulsory and secular' state

education. In the 1880s, as that cohort of children entered the workforce, got married and had families of their own, their demand for jobs and homes stimulated a new surge of economic growth, the Melbourne 'landboom', and another wave of migration. In the early 1890s, however, as the tide ebbed, the colony entered a depression, the worst in Australia's colonial history. The gold rush migrants were now nearing the end of their lives. Victoria's Old Age Pension, introduced in 1897, recognised the needs of old diggers who had run out of luck.

The population echo-effect of the gold rush

Age group	1861	1871	1881	1891	1901
School (5–14)	8706	192 088	217 557	246 399	278 010
Workforce (15–65)	357 737	412 651	509 479	705 891	947 700
Homemakers (30–34)	206 521	161 049	182 978	331 181	330 380
Elderly (65+)	3264	10 101	39 378	65 159	67 591

←**Source 3.1** Based on A.R. Hall, 'Some Long Period-Effects of the Kinked Age Distribution of the Population of Australia, 1861–1961', *Economic Record*, 1963, pp. 43–52.

USING HISTORICAL SOURCES AS EVIDENCE 3.1

1. The age structure at any one time creates different and unique demands on society. Consider Source 3.1 and identify for each age group the decade of most pressure on the economy and society.
2. How was this reflected in policy?
3. Why is the table in Source 3.1 called the 'population echo-effect of the gold rush'?

3.3 Influential ideas, 1860–1890

INQUIRY QUESTION

How were debates about the character of the emerging nation shaped by ideas of race, religion and class?

The coming Australian: the question of national character

In the closing years of the nineteenth century, Australians began to ponder their future as a nation. While we usually speak of 'national identity' – a term borrowed from social psychology in the 1970s – colonial Australians usually spoke of 'national character', a concept that implied intellectual and moral qualities as well as self-consciousness and self-esteem.

They believed that the character of the future Australian depended on the quality of its young people, a question that they increasingly viewed through the evolutionary perspective of Charles Darwin's famous book, *On the Origin of Species* (1859).

Since the **Enlightenment**, Europeans had placed themselves at the top of a perceived hierarchy of races. After the 1850s, most Europeans believed in the existence of different races of humanity. For instance they thought a

FOCUS QUESTION 3.1

In pairs or small groups brainstorm what it means to be Australian.

Enlightenment the name for the period in the eighteenth century marked by a philosophical belief in the power of reason

British race, an Aboriginal race, and a German race existed, among many others. They often used the word 'blood' as another word for 'race'. They also believed there was a white race and other coloured races, as we will see in these chapters. This idea led to racism, the belief some races are inherently superior, and some inherently inferior. This idea of the existence of different races and a hierarchy of races is now dismissed by social and biological scientists as an imagined idea, a social construction, and not a real phenomenon. The differences between human groups, traits such as hair type and skin colour explain nothing about behaviour or ability as once thought, and such physical differences are vastly outweighed by the overwhelming commonalities of all humans.

Darwin's theory of evolution by **natural selection** seemed to provide them with an explanation of why the European or **Aryan** peoples were superior – or so they believed themselves to be. In their mind they had proved to be the 'fittest' of humans in the evolutionary struggle. The American anthropologist Lewis Morgan declared that the 'Aryan family represents the central stream of human progress, because it has produced the highest type of mankind, and because it has proved its intrinsic superiority by gradually assuming the control of the earth'.[1]

But Europeans in Australia worried about what would become of the Aryan or Germanic races in this new environment of Australia. Would it improve or worsen? Historian David Walker explains how Australian colonists thought about this question.

natural selection
Charles Darwin's term to describe how the mutations in species that gave an advantage to surviving in an environment were favoured and perpetuated over those that did not

Aryan a term referring to ancient Indo-European peoples and used in the nineteenth century, and later Nazi thinking, to refer to white races

anthropology the study of human cultures

Source 3.2

> The term 'Australians' was first applied to the many different and poorly understood Aboriginal tribes or nations that occupied the Australian continent. That these people were called Australians caused increasing confusion through the nineteenth century when it became apparent that the native-born children of the convicts and free settlers and their descendants would need to be named and their characteristics described. In nineteenth century Australia a fundamental division emerged between what was taken as the dying Aboriginal race, a 'primitive' remnant and increasingly the subject of **anthropological** interest, and the appearance of the white native-born and their descendants, the voice of the future and a suitable subject for prophecy …
>
> What caused people to change in Australia? There was more emphasis than might now be supposed on climate, racial physiology and diet in nineteenth century explanations … The transplantation of a rugged British people to a hot climate raised some disturbing questions about the extent of racial adaptability. Whether the Australian was located in the future or the past or on the margins of society, the great majority of commentators insisted that this figure was male. The study of national characteristics, racial adaptation or national character was overwhelmingly concerned with the male and the quality of manliness.

David Walker, 'Concept of the Australian' in James Jupp (ed.), *The Australian People*, Angus and Robertson, Sydney, 1988, pp. 864–8.

Here are four visions of the future Australian. In the first, Jefferson Connelly, a leader of the Australian Natives' Association, predicts that the future native Australian will become 'a lesson and blessing to mankind'.

'[T]he present indications were that the German races were rapidly becoming the dominating power in the world in philosophy, science, art and politics, as well as mere force. One of the great offshoots of that race has now dwelt in Australia, a country with every possibility of developing national character, and national life, higher than the world has yet known. With a splendid descent, with a climate and material conditions most favourable to the rapid developments of man without the enervating effects of the tropics, with a high degree of political and social liberty, and with a comparative immunity from war and war burdens. From its geographical position we require but one thing, the education and development of a national life, spirit and sentiment worthy of such advantages and opportunities. Upon the young men of Australia there devolved a responsibility and a duty, probably without parallel in history, the possibilities of giving to the national life of the country tendencies for good or evil that no after effects could altogether erase; the duty of directing our opening national life towards so high a standard that Australia with the teachings of history behind it, and all its great advantages and opportunities before it, should become a lesson and blessing to mankind.

Source 3.3

T. Jefferson Connelly, 'The Growth of National Character', *The Bendigo Advertiser*, 13 April 1887.

Australians viewed sporting success as a proof of national character. In 1877 a combined Victorian and NSW Eleven defeated an English cricket team in what is now regarded as the first 'Test Match'. In 1877, another colonial sporting hero, the sculler Edward Trickett had just returned from England after winning the world championship.

The Illustrated Sydney News in 1877 made these comments about sport and national character and included this illustration in a supplement in the same edition (see Source 3.5).

Athletics may not be the best test of a colony's progress nor do we mean to assert that success in them is to be more valued than other kinds of success; but to excel in some of the manly sports and pastimes of the genuine English type, such as boat-racing, cricketing, rifle-shooting, or foot-racing, undoubtedly betokens a good physique and a stamina which go far to prove that, notwithstanding the alleged enervating [exhausting] influence of the Australian climate, the descendants of the British race in this colony are not degenerating physically.

Source 3.4

The Illustrated Sydney News, 3 February 1877.
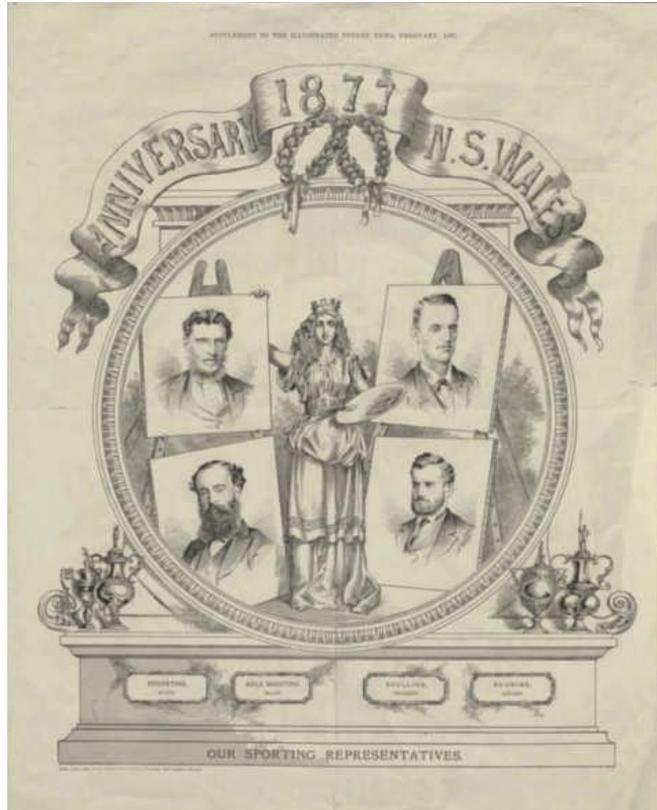
feminist a believer in the social, economic, and political equality of the sexes; an advocate of the rights of women

Bella Guerin, an early female graduate of the University of Melbourne and a future **feminist**, wondered about the place of higher culture in a society founded on gold and sport.

Source 3.6

Our progress, as a colony, has been rapid, because our founders had gold and made golden use of it. And is this all our inheritance? A prosaic story of pounds, shillings and pence? … A prosperous colony such as ours, by its very prosperity tends to become commonplace. The type of character, then, which circumstances such as ours are likely to produce is a commonplace practical one … The extreme zest which we display for our great public amusements, for our horse racing, our cricket, and our athletic sports generally, it is an evidence to a critical observer that, as a people, we have little intellectual resource … We are admittedly a clever, pushing, high-spirited race, but we should carefully develop heart-culture and thoroughness. Heart-culture, which is quite as important as brain culture, will tend to produce charity and humanity.

Bella Guerin, 'The Development of National Character in Victoria', *Argus*, 10 July 1886.

The journalist and novelist Marcus Clarke offered this satirical view in his pamphlet *The Coming Australian Race* (1877).

The Australasians will be selfish, self-reliant, ready in resource, prone to wander, caring little for home ties. Mercenary marriage will be frequent and the hotel system of America will be much favoured. The Australasians will be large meat eaters, and meat eaters require more stimulants than vegetarians. The present custom of drinking alcohol to excess … will continue. All carnivores are rash, gloomy, given to violence. Vegetarians live at a lower level of health, but are calmer and happier. Red Radicals are for the most part meat eaters … The Australasians will be content with nothing short of a turbulent democracy.

The conclusion of all this is therefore that in another hundred years the average Australasian will be a tall, coarse, strong-jawed, greedy, pushing, talented man excelling in swimming and horsemanship. His religion will be a form of **Presbyterianism**; his national policy a Democracy tempered by the rate of exchange. His wife will be a thin narrow woman, very fond of dress and idleness, caring little for her children, but without sufficient brain power to sin with zest. In five hundred years – unless recruited from foreign nations the breed will be wholly extinct but in that five hundred years it will have changed the face of nature and swallowed up all our contemporary civilization.

It is however, perhaps fortunately – impossible that we shall live to see this stupendous event.

Presbyterian one of the Protestant (non-Catholic) Christian denominations originating in Scotland. Here it was used by Marcus Clarke to mean narrow-minded and money-centred.

Marcus Clarke, *The Coming Australian Race*, Massina and Co., Melbourne, 1877, pp. 20–1.

USING HISTORICAL SOURCES AS EVIDENCE 3.2

Use Sources 3.2–3.7 to answer these questions.

1. What fears did contemporaries have for the 'Coming Australian Race'?
2. Analyse the reasons they gave for optimism or pessimism about the future of the native-born colonists.
3. Consider particularly how ideas of biology and environment influenced their view of 'national character'.
4. In what ways do you think ideas of gender shaped or distorted the debate? Why do you think this debate existed at all?

3.4 Perspectives, 1860–1890

INQUIRY QUESTION

What do perspectives from 1860 to 1890 reveal about ideas of sectarianism and race?

Sectarianism: Irish Catholics and English Protestants

About one-quarter of Australia's colonial migrants came from Ireland. Their predominantly peasant background and Catholic religion set them somewhat apart from the majority of English and Scots

immigrants. To the Anglo-Saxon Protestant majority, the Irish were not only different but inferior, both racially and religiously.

The historian Patrick O'Farrell discusses how the English saw the Irish.

Fenians members of the Irish Republican Brotherhood, a militant organisation to achieve Irish independence from British rule; they took their name from a legendary band of warriors who defended Ireland 1800 years before

Sinn Feiners means 'we ourselves' in Gaelic, the Irish language, and its supporters were Irish nationalists who wanted an end to English rule of Ireland

Sectarianism refers to the friction between Protestants and Catholics reflecting differing religious views and national backgrounds; in colonial society, most Catholics were Irish and most Protestants English, Scottish or Welsh

> The Irish were The Enemy. In their various forms convicts, rebels, workers, **Fenians**, **Sinn Feiners** – they were the despised and rejected, the outcast, the feared, the hated. They were hated and they hated in return … To employers, 'the Irish were lazy, dirty, drunken and so on. To their friends they were religious, sentimental, generous'. They were taken to be, not individual matters, but expressions of a common behavioural stereotype assumed to be racially inherent … Such racial stereotyping is no longer intellectually fashionable, indeed it is now deemed discreditable, but it lives still at a popular level … The contest between Irish-oriented minority and English-oriented majority, far from being divisive, became the main unifying principle of Australian society … Australia was not merely the context of this dynamic … The distinctive Australian identity was not born in the bush, nor at Anzac Cove; these were merely the situations for its expression. No; it was born in Irishness protesting against the extremes of Englishness.

Patrick O'Farrell, *The Irish in Australia*, UNSW Press, Kensington, 1987, pp. 7–8, 11–12.

Sectarianism was a divisive influence in colonial politics. Supporters of secular state schools clashed with defenders of Catholic parish schools. Protestants accused Catholics of owing loyalty to a foreign power, the Papal State in Rome, of perpetuating ancient Irish grievances against the English, and of isolating themselves from other colonists. Catholics replied that they suffered discrimination in business and social life and kept to themselves because others excluded them.

A significant event: the attempted assassination of the Duke of Edinburgh

In 1867–68, Prince Alfred Duke of Edinburgh, Queen Victoria's son, toured the eastern colonies. Each colony sought to outdo the others in extravagant demonstrations of loyalty to the British throne. On 12 March 1868, Henry James O'Farrell, a self-described Fenian, shot and wounded the Prince at Clontarf beside Sydney Harbour. O'Farrell was probably paranoic and mentally unstable[2], but the attack inflamed sectarian tensions, which were cunningly exploited by politicians.

Four years after the attempted assassination, the NSW Premier Henry Parkes referred to the attack on the Prince when he addressed his electors of Mudgee on the subject of immigration. Memories of the violent incident were still fresh.
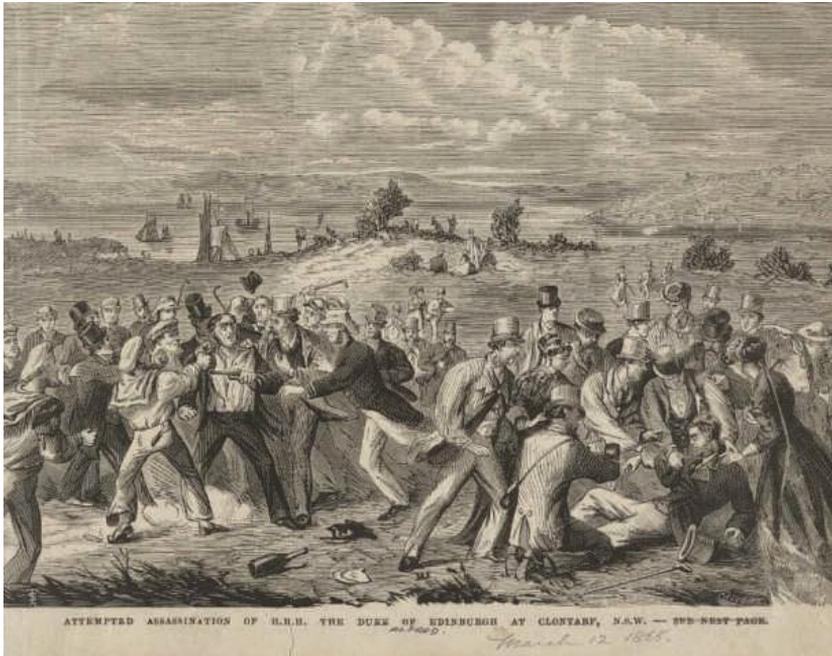
↑**Source 3.9** Attempted assassination of the Duke of Edinburgh. Samuel Calvert, *Attempted assassination of HRH the Duke of Edinburgh at Clontarf NSW*, 1868. Courtesy National Library of Australia.

I protest against Irishmen coming here and bringing their national grievances to disturb this land of ours … to distract the working of our political institutions by acting together in separate organised masses, not entering into the reason of our politics, nor judging public questions on their merits, but blindly obeying the dictation of others as ignorant as themselves. Until Irishmen learn to be Australian colonists – until they learn to tolerate free discussion – until they understand the uses of liberty they must not be surprised if people regard their presence as something not very desirable. I object altogether to any class of men coming here, to set themselves in motion to extinguish freedom of speech and to impede the work of our free institutions. (A voice: You old baboon!)

Bathurst Free Press, 10 January 1872.

An Irish Catholic replied to Parkes and the jibe of Parkes being an 'old baboon' in a letter printed in the *Freeman's Journal*, a Catholic newspaper.

I do not see that, because a funny Celt [Irish person] in a little crowd, ventured to chaff him by pretending to mistake him for a somewhat handsomer animal [the baboon], he was bound to work himself into a frenzy ending in a vomiting forth of bilious twaddle … I will just show how very stupid Mr. Parkes, writhing under Irish badinage [sledging],

Continued…

can be … Can the colossal humbug who represents Mudgee point to one instance in which this 'fair land of ours' has been disturbed by an Irishman happening to have vivid ideas of his country's wrongs? More than that: has he the slightest warrant for the assumption that the importation in question has ever taken place? Why, the leading journals of the very Empire whose gospel of freedom he professes to preach, give him the lie direct! For example, if such a great man as Mr. Parkes could possibly stoop to read journals like the London Spectator, he would find that, from an English point of view, the emigration of the Celt simply means a first phase of his transformation from a possibly discontented political rioter into 'a loyal and useful subject of the British Crown'! It is a notorious fact that, in public circles all over the United Kingdom, colonial Irishmen are looked upon as forming, perhaps, the most even-tempered, orderly, and industrious section of the community … AN AUSTRALIAN.

Letter to the *Freeman's Journal*, 20 January 1872.

USING HISTORICAL SOURCES AS EVIDENCE 3.3

1. Identify the racial, religious or political stereotypes in the exchange between Henry Parkes and AN AUSTRALIAN in Sources 3.10 and 3.11.
2. Using Sources 3.8–3.11, explain the impact of sectarianism in the Australian colonies.

VERY LIKELY.

Biddy (after the place).—" FAIX, MA'AM, AN' SIVERAL FAMILIES OIVE LIVED WID AV TUK ME FOR ENGLISH, AND (*with a chuckle*) OIVE NOT CONTHRADICTED THIM."

↑**Source 3.12** 'Very Likely', *Punch*, 19 December 1872

1. Do you agree with O'Farrell's claim, from Source 3.8, that other Australians often regarded the Irish as 'The Enemy'?
2. Humour can be a powerful way of reinforcing or combating prejudice. Consider the cartoon 'Very Likely' and the dialogue of Biddy (the Irish servant) in Source 3.12. In what ways has the cartoonist appealed to the reader's prejudices through humour?
3. In the cartoon in Source 3.12, how are the faces drawn to increase the stereotyping?
4. Consider O'Farrell's view, from Source 3.8, that the Australian identity was formed through the interaction of English and Irish elements of the population. What elements of Irishness can you detect in 'the distinctive Australian identity'?

Ideas of race and Chinese immigrants

Event: the seamen's strike

In 1878, the Australian Steam Navigation Company attempted to introduce Chinese firemen on its vessels trading in the South Pacific. They were paid £2 7s 6d a month compared with the £6 paid to Europeans. The Seamen's Union called a strike and the company backed down, but Anti-Chinese Leagues campaigned to stop further Chinese immigration.

In 1881 Victoria passed a Chinese Influx Restriction Bill imposing a £10 entry tax on Chinese immigrants, limiting their numbers, requiring returnees to prove their identity, and disenfranchising Chinese voters. The Chinese population had actually been declining and, as historian Charles Price noted, there was little evidence that they were actually stealing jobs from Europeans.[3]

> **free trade** the idea that trade between nations should not be hindered by taxes, quotas or barriers

Lowe Kong Meng arrived in Melbourne in 1853, one of the many merchants attracted by the Victorian gold rush. Cultured and sophisticated, he spoke several European languages. Lowe married a European woman, lived in a fine house in Malvern and became a respected figure in Melbourne society. For his services in mediating between the Chinese and the European communities, the Chinese emperor awarded him the title Mandarin of the Blue Button.

In the pamphlet in Source 3.14, written with two other Chinese businessmen, Lowe and his fellow countrymen reminded readers of the imperial context of the Chinese question, the imposition by Britain on China of a treaty committing each to the principle of **free trade**. They also commented on the reception given Chinese immigrants.

MR. LOWE KONG MENG.—[From a Photograph by Frith.]

↑**Source 3.13** The Chinese merchant Lowe Kong Meng. Courtesy State Library of Victoria.

Source 3.14

This, then, is the position of the Chinese in Australia, relatively to British colonists. By a treaty forced upon his Imperial Majesty, our august [grand] master, your nation compelled him to throw open the gates of his empire to the people of Western Europe. In return, you bound yourselves to reciprocity [equivalent exchange]. The freedom to come and go, to trade and settle, which you insisted upon claiming for yourselves, you also accorded to the subjects of his Imperial Majesty. He has fulfilled the first part of the compact, and the trade of Great Britain with China has trebled during the last fourteen years, to say nothing of the indirect commerce transacted with that country via Singapore and Hong Kong. Well, our countrymen begin to emigrate to these colonies, and to seek employment on board of Australian vessels, in the fullest confidence that the second portion of the compact will be carried out, and they are astounded to find that its fulfilment is resisted by the subjects of Her Majesty Queen Victoria in Australia, and that we are routed and hunted down as if we were so many wild beasts …

In the name of heaven, we ask, where is your justice? Where your religion? Where your morality? Where your sense of right and wrong? Where your enlightenment? Where your love of liberty? Where your respect for international law? Which are the pagans [believers in no religion] – you or we? And what has become of those sublime and lofty sentiments of human brotherhood and cosmopolitan friendship and sympathy which are so often on your lips, and are proclaimed so wisely from pulpit, press and platform?

L. Kong Meng, Cheok Hong Cheong and Louis Ah Mouy, *The Chinese Question in Australia*, Melbourne, 1879, pp. 28–9.

CHINESE AT WORK IN MELBOURNE.

↑**Source 3.15** *Chinese at Work in Melbourne*, 1867. Frederick Gross, engraver. David and Ebenezer Syme, 1867. Courtesy State Library of Victoria.

Public meetings were held to express the views of Australians on Chinese immigration. This one was held in Richmond, a working-class suburb.

A meeting of ratepayers of Richmond, called by the mayor in reply to a requisition, was held last night in the local town hall, to protest against the influx of Chinese into the Colony. The Chairman, in opening the proceedings, said some Chinese gentlemen had sent him a pamphlet [the Chinese Question in Source 3.14], which was temperately written, and it would be well for all to read it.

Mr Alfred Miller [Secretary of the National Reform and Protection League], who first addressed the meeting, said he did not expect there would be any discussion on the question they had met about. Anything that could be said on the Chinese side of the question was contained in the pamphlet referred to by the chairman, but there were important facts on the other side which could not be overlooked. The Chinese were not a progressive people, and did not avail themselves of the advantages they had possessed for centuries, but were behind all other nations, and with nations as with individuals, those which were superior ought to prosper, The Chinese would, if not prevented, come to this colony like locusts, eating up the prosperity which the British people had been the means of creating, and would be destructive of the best interests of the colony. Some religious people had spoken of the hopes they had of converting the Chinese to Christianity … but he called on the people here if they valued their religion, to keep the Chinese out of the colony altogether, for if that were not done they would sap the foundations of Christianity, and render the Christian people who now supported the institutions of the colony incapable of doing so by taking employment out of their hands. If the Chinese were not kept out of the colony they would interfere with every industry and trade, and would ruin them … The Chinese question affected merchants as well as it did other classes, for the Chinese merchants here grew fat on what was really the slave labour of their countrymen.

Argus, 9 January 1879.

FOCUS QUESTIONS 3.2

1. Between 1857 and 1881, the Chinese population had declined from 25 424, or 6.2% of Victoria's population, to 12 132, or 1.4%. So, if the Chinese were a declining proportion of the population, why did Victorians want to restrict their entry?

2. Compare the arguments used for and against Irish Catholics (in the previous section) with those used against Chinese immigrants. In what ways were they similar or different?

3. Using Source 3.16, what 'important facts' does Alfred Miller advance in support of his demand to stop Chinese immigration? How factual were they?

4. The chairman of the meeting of Richmond ratepayers described *The Chinese Question* as 'temperately written'. Compare the style of this pamphlet (see Source 3.14) and the speech by Alfred Miller at the meeting (see Source 3.16). Analyse the two sources and discuss which is the most persuasive and why.

5. In accounting for the attitudes of each speaker, what weight do you give to the following factors: religion, economics, race, politics, empire, self-interest?

Assimilation: Aboriginal Victorians and the government

After 1860, the Victorian government's policy towards Aboriginal people became increasingly intrusive and discriminatory. Darwin's theory of evolution by natural selection seemed to provide an explanation (and justification) for the apparently irresistible decline of the First Nations peoples. Today Aboriginal population decline is explained by other factors: colonisation, violence, disease, cultural disruption, and white racism and indifference.

The 1869 Act for the Protection and Management of the Aboriginal Natives of Victoria, commonly known as the *Aboriginal Protection Act, 1869*, gave the government's representative, the Central Board, power to determine where Aboriginal people could live, how they were employed, how their earnings were spent and how their children were cared for and educated, including the power to remove them from their parents. The Act passed without debate yet, as historian Richard Broome remarks, it 'became a black mark in Aboriginal affairs and the history of human rights in Australia'.[4]

On the six reserves where the majority of the Victorian Aboriginal population lived, some authorities, like the Ramahyuck missionary Rev. Friedrich Hagenauer, were dictatorial, while others like the Inspector and manager of the Kulin people at Coranderrk, John Green, were more kind. He declared: 'My method of managing the blacks is to allow them to rule themselves as much as possible'. Under Green, the Coranderrk community made good progress.

However, in 1881 *The Age* editorial writer wrote this:

Source 3.17

> It appears to be taken for granted that the aborigines are doomed. They must, like the aborigines of other countries, pass away before the white man. It would be useless at this period to discuss the cause of this or to deny the inevitable. In this country they pass away without a struggle. They simply vanish. Such helplessness as they manifest stirs up in us a feeling of pity, and we are moved by Christian philanthropy to give them such help as will extend the vanishing point and allow them to glide off the stage rather than pass away abruptly. This is a duty we owe to ourselves as much as to the aborigines. We have taken possession of their lands – their hunting ground. We have dispossessed them without scruple. We, however, owe ourselves this duty on higher grounds than that; they are the remnants of a bygone people. They are weak and helpless; and although philosophers may argue that it is natural they should go, and that nature is absolutely and wisely pitiless, our philanthropy compels us to strengthen and help them. We may well inquire whether we are rendering such assistance as is needed, and which is creditable to our humanity.

Editorial, *The Age*, 13 January 1881.

The ex-Coranderrk manager John Green supported the Coranderrk people in resisting local settlers' attempts to seize their lands. Consequently, the Board sacked him. He remained an influential neighbour and adviser to the Coranderrk community. In 1881 the Kulin led by William Barak went over the Board's head by marching to Melbourne and appealing directly to ministers

and parliament. They demanded Green's return and an end to the Board's control. Their protest and petition forced a parliamentary select committee inquiry into conditions at Coranderrk. Here is their petition of 1881:

Sir

We want the board and the Inspector, Captain Page, to be no longer over us. We want only one man there, and that is Mr John Green, and the station to be [directly] under the Chief Secretary, then we will show the country that the station could self support itself.

These are the names of those that wish this to be done:
Wm Barak X
Thos. [Bamfield]X
Dick Richard X
[and 43 others signed below these names, including some women and children].

Petition submitted 16 November 1881 in Giordano Nanni and Andrea James (eds.), *Coranderrk: We Will Show the Country*, Aboriginal Studies Press, Canberra, 2013, pp. 175–6.

USING HISTORICAL SOURCES AS EVIDENCE 3.5
1. Outline the views presented in Source 3.17 on Aboriginal people.
2. Explain how Darwin's theory is challenged by Sources 3.17 and 3.18.

FOCUS QUESTIONS 3.3
1. Analyse the views of *The Age* in Source 3.17 and consider whether they are based on fact or opinion.
2. What idea(s) lay behind *The Age*'s view that Aboriginal people were 'vanishing' and that 'nature is absolutely and wisely pitiless'?
3. Do the petition and address from the Coranderrk people confirm or not *The Age*'s view that 'they pass away without a struggle'?
4. What do these documents reveal about the government's administration of the reserves and the petitioners' grievances and aspirations?
5. From this time to the Uluṟu Statement from the Heart in 2017, First Nations peoples have often addressed government in petitions. Why do you think they adopted this method?

Politicians, including Chief Secretary Graham Berry, were often more sympathetic to the Kulin's appeals than the Central Board. In 1884 Berry made Coranderrk a permanent reserve after meeting with the Coranderrk people to hear their grievances against the Aborigines Protection Board. In 1886 they again walked to Melbourne in their 'Sunday best', this time to thank Berry

↑**Source 3.19** Kulin Deputation to farewell Graham Berry, March 1886. Barak is the white bearded figure in the second row, third from the left. Courtesy State Library of Victoria.

and present him with a farewell gift and address to mark his departure to become Victoria's representative in London.

While in Melbourne, they gathered for this photograph (see Source 3.19) and prepared a message to Berry, which was made into a beautiful, illuminated document (see Source 3.20) with text shown in Source 3.21.

↑**Source 3.20** Illuminated address presented by William Barak and 15 other Coranderrk residents to Graham Berry, March 1886. Courtesy National Museum of Australia.

The following address, which was said to have been dictated by the key elder Barak, was inscribed on illuminated cardboard by Messrs. Fergusson and Mitchell, and read as:

To the Honourable Graham Berry

We have come to see you because you have done a great deal of work for the aborigines.

I feel very sorrowful, and first time I hear you was going home I was crying. You do all that thing for the station when we were in trouble when the board would not give us much food and clothes, and wanted to drive us off the land. We came to you and told you our trouble and you gave us the land for our own as long as we live, and gave us more food and clothes and blankets and better houses, and the people all very thankful.

And now you leave this country, Victoria, to go to England, where we may never see you no more. We give you small present with our love. When you go away keep remembering the natives, for the natives will remember you for your doing good to Coranderrk. We had a trouble here in this country, but we can all meet up along 'Our Father'. We hope that God will lead you right through the water and take you safe to England, and keep you in the straight way, and save you eternal life through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

Argus, 25 March 1886.

USING HISTORICAL SOURCES AS EVIDENCE 3.6

1. Analyse the image in Source 3.19 and describe the people's demeanour.
2. Analyse the address presented to Berry in Sources 3.20 and 3.21 and discuss the people's political strategies used in their struggles.
3. Was *The Age* (see Source 3.17) correct to say the people were 'weak and helpless'?
4. Why did the people of Coranderrk look to Graham Berry? What grounds for hope did they have?

Since the early 1880s the Board had tried to close Coranderrk as it believed its people were troublesome. It was also preparing a new policy to manage Aboriginal people in Victoria.

Its submission to parliament below should be read with caution. It used terms Aboriginal people find offensive today, for they were based on the racial thinking of 120 years ago, that people of mixed descent ('half caste' in the nineteenth century terminology) were different from those of 'full descent'. Aboriginal people today rightly reject such terminology of degrees of descent, as Aboriginal identity is an individual's cultural choice, dependent only on descent from Aboriginal families and also community recognition. It is not determined by outsiders or government. However, we need to know what people in the 1880s thought to understand the past and how society has changed.

This is what the Board wanted:

The Board for the Protection of the Aborigines are unanimously of opinion that all able-bodied half-castes capable of earning their living should be merged as soon as practicable in the general population of the colony. Inasmuch, however, the State, by Act of Parliament (no. 349) [in 1869] declared that 'half-castes and their children' should be 'deemed Aboriginals', the Board faithfully carried out the provisions of the Act; and inasmuch as the State has for years supported these 'half-castes, and induced many of them to come to the stations, thereby to a considerable extent destroying their self-reliance, it would be hard and unjust to cast them adrift without due notice and preparation.

The Board, in framing their resolutions, have kept these considerations in view, and believe that the policy proposed to be adopted is for the best interests of the half-castes themselves.

The object aimed at is that the process of merging should be completed as soon as possible, after which all responsibility of the government as regards them would cease–finality thus being obtained.

The following are the proposals of the Board: –

(i) That from 1st January 1885, all able-bodied half-castes now on the station under the age of 35 years should be told to look out for employment, or seek settlement elsewhere.

(ii) That rations be supplied to them for a period of three years from date of such notice, if the Board deem it necessary.

(iii) That during these three years, and for a further period of two years, clothing be issued to them, if the Board deem it necessary.

(iv) That at the expiration of five years blankets only be issued to them for a period of two years, if the Board deem it necessary.

(v) That during the seven years, some assistance may be granted to such of them as desire to select land.

(vi) That at the close of the above-mentioned period of seven years, they should have no further claim on the Board or Government, but be accounted in all respects free and equal citizens of the colony.

(vii) That all half-caste women now married to Black husbands, with whom they are at present living on any of the stations, might continue still to enjoy their present privileges.

(viii) That if, from 1st January 1885, any able-bodied half-caste, male or female, under the age of 35 years marries a full-black, both husband and wife shall be reckoned among the able-bodied half-castes.

Twentieth Report of the Board for the Protection of the Aborigines, *Papers Presented to Parliament*, no. 94, 1884.

FOCUS QUESTIONS 3.4

1. What reasons did the Aborigines Protection Board advance for its policy of separating Aboriginal people (see Source 3.22)?

2. Why, in the eyes of its contemporary supporters, was this new policy considered 'in the best interests' of those being forced off the reserves? Do you agree or not?

3. What aspects of Aboriginal society did it ignore or deliberately seek to change?

In late 1886, parliament enacted the Board's policy, swiftly and word for word. It became known as the *Half-caste Act, 1886*. It is described by Richard Broome as 'the most draconian (harsh) Aboriginal legislation of its time' because it split families on the reserves and eventually closed the reserves. It aimed to absorb those of lighter skin into the community, while allowing those on reserves to fade away, thus erasing Aboriginality.[5]

3.5 Experiences, 1860–1890

INQUIRY QUESTION

What do experiences from 1860 to 1890 reveal about the changing identities of those living in Australia?

National and imperial identity

A Sydney newspaper observed in January 1888, 'It is only lately that the words "national" and "nationality" have been applied to the public life of Australia'.[6] A century after the first British settlement in New South Wales, many Australians were pondering their national identity. Would they become partners with Britain in a great Imperial Federation, or separate from Britain and become a republic like the United States? Australian nationalists drew upon several, sometimes conflicting, streams of thought and feeling – sentimental loyalty towards Britain; pride in their white Anglo-Saxon or Celtic race; fear and hostility towards other races, especially Asians; eagerness among the native-born to succeed their immigrant parents; rejection of the rigid class divisions of the Old World; and hopes for a more democratic society in Australia. These hopes and fears grew more intense and urgent in the late 1880s, rising to the surface in public debates over the Jubilee of Queen Victoria and the Centennial Celebrations of New South Wales.

The map in Source 3.23 was published in 1886 by the Imperial Federation League to coincide with the Colonial and Indian Exhibition in London. Ardent imperialists, including members of the English aristocracy, formed the League in 1884 with the aim of 'securing by federation the permanent unity of the empire' while preserving 'the existing rights of local parliaments'.

In Australia, the League attracted only minority support, mainly from British-born members of the 'anglophile upper middle class'. Australian natives, both middle of the road nativists and more radical republicans, regarded it warily, fearing that London might curb their desire for fuller independence. Yet even strong Australian nationalists could be still be moved by the strains of 'God Save the Queen' and feel proud to be part of an Empire on which the sun never set.

'As much as guns and warships, maps have been weapons of imperialism', the historian Brian Harley writes, pointing to this map of the British Empire as an example. Intriguingly, the artist who drew it, Walter Crane, was actually a socialist and he inserted some mildly critical touches such as the Phrygian (liberty) caps on the figures of Freedom, Fraternity and Federation and the motto 'Human Labour' across Atlas's chest.[7]

↑**Source 3.23** Imperial Federation League map of the British Empire, 1886. Courtesy Cornell University Library.

Event: the Queen's Jubilee and the republican riots of 1887

In 1887, people across the Empire celebrated the Jubilee (50th anniversary) of Queen Victoria's reign. In June, Sydney's Mayor A.J. Riley called an evening meeting at the Sydney Town Hall to seek public support for a celebratory treat for the colony's school children. This is what occurred.

Source 3.24

CELEBRATION OF THE QUEEN'S JUBILEE
UPROARIOUS PROCEEDINGS AT THE TOWN HALL
THE CROWD DISPERSED BY THE POLICE

Pursuant to a requisition signed by some 4000 citizens to the Mayor, a public meeting was to have taken place at the Town Hall yesterday evening for the purpose of considering the celebration of Her Majesty's Jubilee, and a proposed treat to school children. As the sequel showed, a second, and again a successful attempt was made by a number of individuals to thwart the object of the gathering, and to turn the proceedings into an absolute chaos of uproar, confusion faction fighting and ruffianism of a most disgraceful and unprecedented character in the history of the colony …

One of the leaders of the New South Wales Secular Association was urged on the platform, but immediately pushed off. This move was resented by some of his followers, and a rough-and tumble wrestling match ensued. Fighting at this juncture broke out in all directions, the press table

Continued…

was rushed, and the chairs, table, and reporters were swept bodily away, the latter being forced to beat a hurried retreat to the platform. Their place having been immediately filled, a mob crept upon the table, and with sticks, umbrellas, and fists held their posts, until they were either knocked or dragged to the floor. In the lulls between violent discussion and party groans and counter cheers, voices in several quarters were heard to interject 'Three cheers for the Queen,' and others, 'Three cheers for Liberty, Englishmen, and their offspring,' each call being the signal for fresh uproar and additional free fights. Every now and then the enthusiastic loyalists on the platform burst forth with a verse of the National Anthem to which a chorus of groans and hisses was supplied by many in the body of the hall.

The Sydney Morning Herald, 11 June 1887.

↑**Source 3.25** Scenes from the second Town Hall meeting, 10 June 1887, *The Illustrated Sydney News*, 25 June 1887

The Mayor and his supporters then adjourned to the Mayor's Room at the Town Hall where Premier Henry Parkes and other loyalists addressed the reduced crowd.

But what can be said of these persons who we know represent not one in a hundred, probably not one in five hundred, of the whole population – what can be said of these persons when they senselessly band themselves together to prevent the vast majority of their fellow-subjects from expressing their loyal opinions? (Cheers.) If they are opposed to the limited monarchy of England, they would be equally opposed to any form of settled government whatever – (loud cheers) – and, depend upon it, the true principle of loyalty does not mean any fulsome, or even adulatory, homage to the person, whether the King or Queen, but it means the sentiments of attachment to the forms and conditions of settled government. (Cheers). These persons would rebel to-morrow against a republican form of government, just as much as they profess to rebel against a monarchical form of government. (Loud cheers). They are the professors of lawlessness and of hatred of everyone and everything that is higher and better than themselves. (Cheers).

The Sydney Morning Herald, 11 June 1887.

Over 20 000 people attended a third public meeting at the Sydney Exhibition Building in Prince Alfred Park to pass resolutions honouring the Queen and restoring Sydney's reputation for loyalty to the British Crown.

USING HISTORICAL SOURCES AS EVIDENCE 3.7

1. Using Source 3.26, explain Parkes's criticism of the protesters.
2. The popular weekly magazine *The Bulletin* declared that 'Australian and Republican are synonymous'. To what extent do you think this statement was true? Refer to Sources 3.24–3.27 within your response.

The Bulletin newspaper defined who was an Australian in response to these Jubilee scuffles.

Source 3.27

Let there be no mistaking the issue. The recent Sydney troubles have been between the people of Australia and Imperial Officialdom; between the Native Australian of Republican instincts and tendencies and the imported Royalist … By the term Australian we mean not those who have merely been born in Australia. All white men who come to these shores with a clean record – and who leave behind them the memory of the class distinctions and the religious differences of the old world; all men who place the happiness, the prosperity, the advancement of their adopted country before the interests of Imperialism, are Australian. In this regard all men who leave the tyrant-ridden lands of Europe for freedom of speech and right of personal liberty are Australians before they set foot on the ship which brings them hither. Those who fly from an odious military

Continued…

conscription, those who leave their fatherland because they cannot swallow the worm-eaten lie of the divine right of kings to murder peasants are Australians by instinct – Australian and Republican are synonymous. No nigger, no Chinaman, no lascar, no kanaka, no purveyor of cheap coloured labour is an Australian.

The Bulletin, editorial, 2 July 1887.

USING HISTORICAL SOURCES AS EVIDENCE 3.8

1. Describe how *The Bulletin* defines being Australian in Source 3.27.
2. Explain the criticisms *The Bulletin* has of the 'old world'.

Among the protesters at the June Sydney Town Hall meeting were the pioneer feminist Louisa Lawson (see Source 3.28) and her 20-year-old son, coach painter and aspiring poet, Henry Lawson (see Source 3.29). The incident marked a significant moment in the emergence of Henry Lawson as a member of the 'Bulletin School' of nationalist writers: editor J.F. Archibald held over his poem 'Song of the Republic', written in the heat of the affair, for the special Christmas supplement of the strongly republican *The Bulletin* weekly magazine.

↑**Source 3.28** Louisa Lawson in the 1880s. Courtesy of State Library of NSW.

↑**Source 3.29** Henry Lawson aged 20. Courtesy of State Library of NSW.

Henry Lawson later recalled of this republican moment:

Source 3.30

I heard Tommy Walker, and Collins, and the rest of 'em, and of course a host of Yankee freethought and socialist lecturers. I wore the green in fancy, gathered at the rising of the moon, charged for the fair land of Poland, and dreamed of dying on the barricades to the roar of the 'Marseillaise' – for the young Australian Republic. Then came the unexpected and inexplicable outburst of popular feeling (or madness) – called then the Republican riots – in '87, when the Sydney crowd carried a disloyal amendment on the Queen's Jubilee, and cheered, at the Town Hall, for an Australian Republic. And I had to write then – or burst. *The Bulletin* saved me from bursting.

'Pursuing Literature in Australia' (1898–99) in Henry Lawson, *Autobiographical and Other Writings 1887–1922*, edited by Colin Roderick, Angus and Robertson, Sydney, 1972, p. 110.

Henry Lawson wrote this passionate poem about republicanism.

Source 3.31

'A Song of the Republic'

Sons of the South, awake! Arise!
Sons of the South, and do.
Banish from under your bonny skies
Those old world errors and wrongs and lies
Making a hell of a Paradise
That belongs to your sons and you.

Sons of the South, make choice between
(Sons of the South, choose true)
The land of Morn and the land of E'en
The old Dead Tree and the Young Tree Green
The land that belongs to the Lord and Queen
And the Land that belongs to you.

Henry Lawson, *The Bulletin*, 24 December 1887.

FOCUS QUESTIONS 3.6

1. What did Lawson mean by 'the old Dead Tree and the Young Tree Green' in Source 3.31?

2. The crowd at the Town Hall meeting called for 'Three cheers for liberty, Englishmen and their offspring' but Henry Lawson called for the 'Sons of the South' to choose between the 'The Land that belongs to the Lord and Queen and the Land that belongs to you'. Were Australian republicans refighting old world battles or leaving them behind?

3. Historian Humphrey McQueen argues that 'Racism is the most important single component of Australian nationalism.'[8] What other components can you discern in the Sources 3.27, 3.30 and 3.31? Do you agree with McQueen?

4. Some Australians described themselves as 'Independent Australian Britons'. Was this a contradiction?

5. Henry Lawson was only 21 when he wrote his 'Song of the Republic'. In what ways do you think he spoke for his generation of young Australian Natives?

Australia invaded! The threat to Australian sovereignty

A hundred years after British settlement, Australians were proud of their past and confident of their future. Yet, surprisingly, in the midst of their success, they often felt fearful and vulnerable. A report by British military officers in 1877 recommended the colonies strengthen their defences against potential invaders, like Russia, whose naval vessels had recently appeared in Australian waters. Australian businessmen and missionaries were also beginning to reach into the South Pacific where France and Germany had colonial ambitions and possessions.

Australia's main fear, however, was not Britain's European rivals, but the Asian peoples to their north. In 1888 the arrival of the ship *Afghan*, with a cargo of Chinese immigrants, sparked a wave of protests around the east coast. As historian David Walker observes, Australia was an 'anxious nation', a lonely outpost of Europe in an Asia it saw as alien and potentially hostile. Its dreams of national progress were clouded by nightmare visions of hostile invasion, conquered cities and racial annihilation.[9]

Invasion novels became popular, including the socialist William Lane's *White or Yellow* (1888) and Kenneth Mackay's *The Yellow Wave* (1894). They often carried a political message. *The Battle of the Yarra* (1883) urged the colonies to federate in order to prevent a Russian invasion.

The Battle of Mordialloc or, How We Lost Australia (1888) imagines a dystopian (nightmare) possibility for Australia. The book's dramatic cover is shown in Source 3.32 and part of its plot is in Source 3.33.

The fictitious story of *The Battle for Mordialloc* begins in 1888, when Australia reached its centenary and Melbourne – 'Marvellous Melbourne' – was on the crest of a real estate boom.
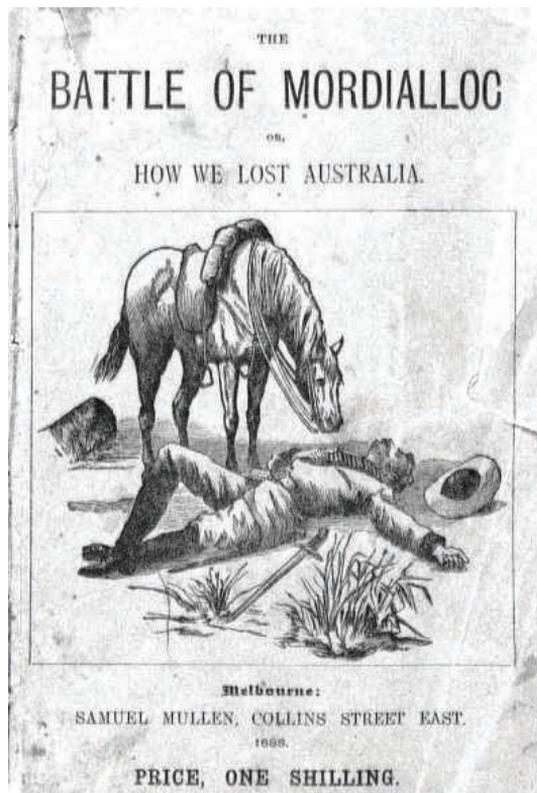
↑**Source 3.32** *The Battle of Mordialloc* (1888) front cover

Source 3.33

There never was, probably there never again will be, a people so prosperous and so full of confidence in the future as we Australians were in the year which saw us a century old. We were proud indeed of the noble heritage which had fallen to us. Where, a hundred years before, the land was practically a vast solitude, scantily peopled by the lowest savages, noble cities had sprung up with thriving industries, halls of learning, and spires rising heavenwards.

Continued…

…Continued

Our geographical position seemed to guarantee us a future of uninterrupted peace. From the wars and rumours of wars, and the perpetual unrest of the old world, we were separated by the whole diameter of the globe … The day was not far distant, we believed, when the Southern Cross would look down on a mighty Commonwealth, virtually mistress of the South Pacific, capable of holding her own against all comers, and dictating terms on a footing of equality with the most powerful nations of the world.

[Carried away with its prosperity and pride, Victoria declares its independence. Russia and China combine forces to invade the helpless colony. Three thousand foreign troops land at Mordialloc, a seaside town on the outskirts of Melbourne. Local Volunteers fight valiantly but are overwhelmed by a numerically superior force.]

Behind us lay Mordialloc in flames. On our left was the calm expanse of the bay – no longer ours, I reflected with bitterness – but a Russian lake. Behind it the fiery sun was sinking rapidly in a flood of crimson – true type of the national sun which had just gone down for ever in blood.

On we went in the deepening twilight – on and still on, till the lights of Melbourne came in sight. As we rode in, we found the whole place in an awful uproar. The railway stations were choked with crowds of people, flying to Ballarat, Sandhurst Adelaide, and other places. Thousands more were hurriedly quitting the town on foot, on horseback, and in every description of vehicle.

It was expected that the Russians would occupy the town on the following day, and proceed at once to restore some sort of order, but there were terrible misgivings that at any moment the Chinese troops, bent on massacre and pillage, might pour into the town before the former arrived on the scene …

Suddenly the distant rattle of musketry put an end to my reverie. Nearer and nearer it came, louder and louder, and intermingled with the din the exulting shouts of the rapidly advancing foe. Our worst forebodings had come to pass – the Chinese were in the town.

Our city in flames, our people slaughtered by the thousand, our fleet captured or sunk, and all hope of succour [help] gone, there was nothing for it but to drink the cup of humiliation to its very dregs.

One after another the other colonies fell before the invaders, till – of the mighty continent – we could not call a single foot our own. For myself, as for many others of my fellow-countrymen, accustomed as we had so long been to breathe the air of freedom, the galling yoke of our new masters proved so intolerable a burden that we made our way, in the course of a few months, to the old country.

It may be that in the days to come another Australia shall arise to take the place of the old … But, however that may be, I can never recall to mind the closing scenes in our national history without the most bitter and

Continued…

Excerpt from *The Battle of Mordialloc Or, How we Lost Australia*, Edward Maitland, Samuel Mullens, Melbourne, 1888, pp. 7–8.[10]

In March 1888 the US government made an agreement with China suspending immigration to the United States for 20 years. In this cartoon, Uncle Sam, the symbolic representative of the United States, watches as the 'yellow gulf stream' is diverted towards Australia.

THE YELLOW GULF STREAM.

Dammed out of America, its Course is Diverted, and Threatens to Overflow Australia.

↑**Source 3.34** 'The Yellow Gulf Stream', *Punch*, 29 March 1888. Courtesy National Library of Australia.

David Walker described Australia as an 'anxious nation'. Individually, in pairs or small groups evaluate the extent to which you agree with this statement. Use the sources throughout this chapter to help construct your argument.

FOCUS QUESTIONS 3.7

1. The historian David Walker wrote 'The invasion story was always there to say as much about "us" as about "them"'.[11] What hopes and fears do the invasion stories reveal?
2. We know that The Battle of Mordialloc did not occur, so what aspects of the Australia of 1888 might have made it seem credible?
3. In cartoons like 'The Yellow Gulf Stream' and stories like The Yellow Wave, the Chinese threat is depicted as a 'wave', 'tide' or 'stream'. What did such metaphors suggest? Were the suggestions accurate? Why were they persuasive?

DID YOU KNOW?

In 1888 Melbourne was Australia's biggest and richest city. A visiting English journalist called it 'Marvellous Melbourne'. Only 50 years earlier it had been just a cluster of huts by the river Yarra. To celebrate the centenary of Australia, Melbourne hosted a magnificent international exhibition. 'It was high tide in the fortunes … of the whole community', the novelist Ada Cambridge recalled. But its prosperity rested on shaky foundations and when the boom burst it became 'Miserable Melbourne'.
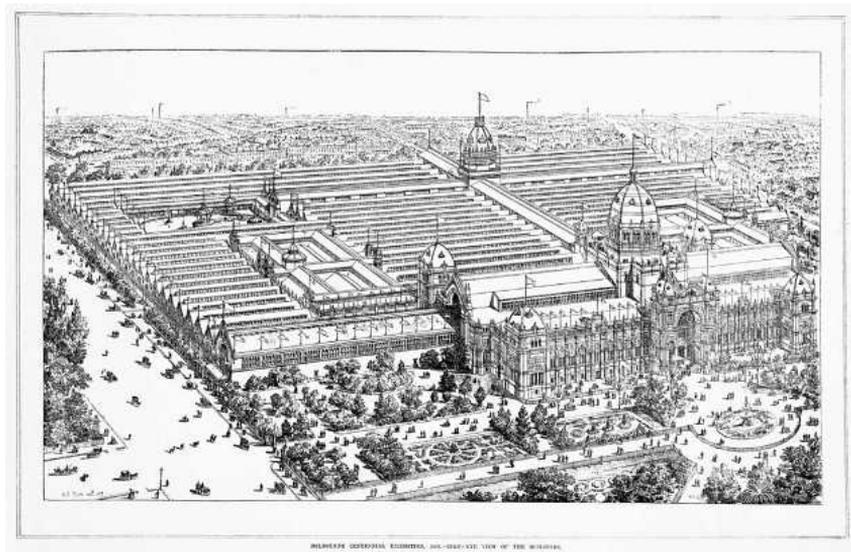
↑ **Source 3.35** A bird's-eye view of one of the most famous products of 'Marvellous Melbourne': the Royal Exhibition Building, under construction in Carlton, from *The Australasian Sketcher*, 30 August 1879. Courtesy State Library Victoria.

Race and Empire

Colonial Australians, who were creating their own nation through a growing population and a belief in a national character (identity), were still bound to the British 'Motherland' by links that were racial, as well as historical, cultural and political. To be British was also to be White. In 1890, New South Wales Premier Henry Parkes celebrated what he called 'the crimson thread of kinship', or blood tie, between his fellow Australians and their British ancestors as the foundation for the coming federation of the colonies (see Source 3.36).

Source 3.36

The crimson thread of kinship runs through us all. Even the native-born Australians are Britons as much as those born in London or Newcastle. We know the value of that British origin. We know that we represent a race which for the purpose of settling new countries has never had its equal on the face of the earth. We know that the acquisition of territory and the civilizing of communities is far a nobler and more immortalizing achievement than an acquisition accomplished by feats of arms. As separated communities we have fought our way. We have had rivalries which at times, I dare say, have degenerated into antagonism … Is there a man living in any part of Australia who will say that it will be to the advantage of the whole of the colonies to remain separated? … It follows that at some time we must unite as one great Australian people.

The Age, 7 February 1890.

In an influential article (see Source 3.37), the Canadian historian Douglas Cole drew on the anthropological concept of 'ethnocentrism' (see also in Ideas in Area of Study 2) to explain how ideas of British 'blood' could not only promote national unity but also exclude those who were not of the same blood. Australian Federation and **White Australia**, he suggests, were two sides of the one coin.

Historian Douglas Cole explains the ties he discovered between the ideas of blood and national identity held by Australians around 1900.

White Australia a term popularised by Labor Leader William 'Billy' Hughes in 1901 to describe the belief and policy that Australia should be reserved for British and other Caucasian peoples

Source 3.37

Ideas of race and stock, of blood and breed, played upon Australian thought on at least three levels in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and they furnished a connection between the 'nationalism', the 'imperialism' and the 'racialism' of the period. On their broadest level, haematic [relating to blood] ideas were a significant force behind the desire for a 'White Australia' policy. Here the idea of race and blood was expressed in its most raw and virulent form, excluding from the blood-bond all those with pigmented skin. On an intermediate and more selective level, the corpuscular [referring to red blood cells] concept was put forward as Anglo-Saxonism, a racial concept only slightly more sophisticated than

Continued…

the broader idea of a Caucasian kinship. Finally, at the most narrow level were the audacious preceptors of a new southern race, exponents of the Coming Australian Man.

These three perceptions of Australian ethnic identities were never rigidly distinguished; they blended easily and emphasis flowed from one to another because they expressed facets of a more or less consistent ethnocentric ideology. Ethnocentrism is the belief in the unique value and lightness of one's own group, an approval of one's fellows and their ways, and an aversion and contempt for outsiders and their ways … Functionally, ethnocentrism enforces loyalty to the group, strengthening its solidarity in conflict with a threatening group. This functional ethnocentrism fluctuates, therefore, with the degree of contact and competition and the extent of cultural divergence. In times of stress, it may be deliberately evoked with the in-group elevating its conception of itself as superior in morality, ability, and general development and accusing out-groups of lesser morality, lower development and, where possible, biological inferiority.

The White Australia ideal laid stress upon a consciousness of white kinship. It expressed feelings of fear and aversion towards non-whites whose activities were condemned as immoral, whose civilization was at a lower level, and whose breeding was inferior. The superiority of the white race was accepted without serious reservation. As the distinguished Melbourne scholar, Professor W. E. Hearn, wrote, the Aryan race was 'confessedly the foremost in the world'. The history of that race 'is more glorious, its renown more diffused, its progress in science and in art is more advanced, its religion is more pure, its politics are more beneficent and just, than those which prevail elsewhere upon earth'. In material progress, in the arts of government, in the development of liberty and democracy, the white races had shown their superiority over others. The white ethnocentric aversion to out-groups found expression in racial slurs: non-whites were spotted lepers, foetid masses of humanity, bearers of strange vices, smellful, and unwashed …

Assuming a higher civilization and biological superiority, the developed ethnocentrism expressed its hostility to out-groups through the usual appeal for the preservation of the purity and strength of the in-group, and elevated this appeal into a moral category. Race purity not jobs, a natural instinct not selfishness, became the moral justification for exclusion. Fear of blemishing 'race purity' became an obsession. Race mixture meant an inevitable mental, moral, and physical decay, a tainting of the pure blood of the Caucasian race, a fouling of the life-blood of future generations by an infusion of the sluggish fluid of a petrified and animalized race. Such ideas became accepted dogma [a settled belief], and an unblemished

…Continued

White Australia became a matter of ethics, rather than economics; as the 'one absolutely vital plank of Australian policy', it came to represent 'a principle, not an expediency, a religion, not a view'.

Douglas Cole, '"The Crimson Thread of Kinship": Ethnic Ideas in Australia 1870–1914', *Historical Studies*, vol. 14, no. 56, 1971, pp. 511–12.

A note on terminology

Some of the terms that Cole refers to in this article may be unfamiliar to us, although they would have been familiar to educated readers at the time and were indeed frequently used. One of the reasons they are less familiar now is that the racial thinking on which they were based is now largely discredited. Nineteenth-century views that skin colour determined inherent abilities is now rejected by scientists, and supposed racial difference seen to be just a way of thinking, not a scientific fact. The word 'Aryan', for example, which Professor Hearn used in the title of his book *The Aryan Household*, referred to the Indo-European

↑**Source 3.38** 'Australia for the Australians', by cartoonist Phil May, *The Bulletin*, 23 July 1887

group of languages. It was misappropriated by Adolf Hitler and his followers to define a Nordic 'master race'. Similarly, the word 'Anglo-Saxon', originally referring to the Germanic tribes that invaded Britain in the fifth century, was used to refer to the supposed superiority of the British, northern European and American peoples.

USING HISTORICAL SOURCES AS EVIDENCE 3.10

1. We have already met Henry Parkes as an opponent of Irish immigration. In appealing to 'the crimson thread of kinship', which peoples did he include and exclude from his national ideal?
2. Map the points in Douglas Cole's article (see Source 3.37) for yourself to master what he is arguing. Be sure you understand the word 'ethnocentrism'.
3. Cole suggests that ethnocentrism may flourish especially in times of stress. Review the events – the Seamen's strike, the Russian scare, the Queen's Jubilee – studied in this chapter: what light does Cole's analysis throw on them?
4. Was racism an essential, or only an incidental, aspect of Australian nationalism?
5. Was heredity as important as environment in the development of an Australian national identity?
6. What light does Cole's analysis throw on the position of Aboriginal people, and especially on those of mixed descent?
7. What is the point of Phil May's cartoon 'Australia for the Australians – The Present Version' (see Source 3.38)? Is the artist being funny, ironic or angry?
8. Was the appeal of imperialists to maintain the British tie incompatible with the aspiration of Australian nationalists to become an independent nation?

In 1890 Henry Parkes, who emigrated to NSW in 1839 (Chapter 1, Sources 1.32–1.33) and was now Premier of NSW, set aside his previous coolness towards Victoria's campaign for Federation to offer himself as its leader: 'I could confederate these colonies in twelve months', he boasted.[12]
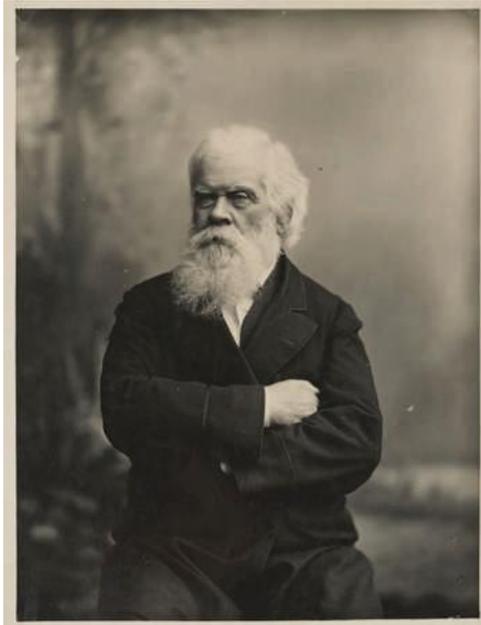
←**Source 3.39** Henry Parkes c.1890. Courtesy State Library of Victoria.

3.6 Chapter summary

Here are some dot-points for you to consider and add to:

Continuities
- Australia remained a group of self-governing colonies under the British Crown.
- Australia's predominantly British (English and Irish) population was reinforced with new influxes of English and Irish immigrants.
- Irish Catholic immigrants remained the largest non-British sub-group subject to some discrimination by the majority.
- During the 'long boom' from 1860 to 1890, Australia enjoyed a period of general prosperity interrupted only by short recessions.

Changes
- Children born in the colonies (called 'Australian natives') increased from about one-quarter to three-quarters of the population.
- Despite the small and diminishing numbers of non-European immigrants, the colonies became increasingly committed to policies of racial exclusion.

- Official attitudes towards First Nations Peoples took a more radical turn, with racialised attempts to discriminate between 'full-blood' and 'half-caste' people.
- Australians became more aware and fearful of real or imagined threats from other colonial powers or races.
- Public and political life became increasingly concerned with questions of national character and identity, often defined in racial terms.

3.7 End-of-chapter activities

The following tasks are designed to help strengthen your understanding of the material explored in this chapter and to encourage you to further analyse and evaluate the events, ideas, perspectives and experiences that shaped the new nation between 1860 and 1890.

Consolidating your understanding

Events and ideas

Copy and complete the following table summarising the key events in this chapter. For each event explain what idea/s influenced the event. Choose from the list below.

imperialism, national identity, race, sectarianism, assimilation

Event	Summary info (What happened? When? Who was involved?)	Idea/s that influenced the event
Attempted assassination of Duke of Edinburgh		
The Seamen's strike		
Foundation of the *Aboriginal Protection Act, 1869*		
The Queen's Jubilee and Republican riots of 1887		

Ideas, perspectives and experiences

Complete the following questions to further consolidate your understanding on the ideas, perspectives and experiences during this time.

1. Compare *The Age*'s view of the situation in 1881 (see Source 3.17) with that of the Select Committee in Chapter 2 (see Source 2.30). What changes do you notice and how do you explain them?
2. Make a list of the hopes and fears that were shaping the emerging national character in the late nineteenth century.

3. Explain how the values of Christianity were used to both justify and challenge attitudes towards race. Refer to at least two sources within your response.

Asking historical questions

As individuals, in pairs or small groups create your own source analysis activity using the documents provided in this chapter. Follow the instructions below:

- Choose three sources (at least one visual source should be included).
- Create three or four questions that require different skills from comprehension to analysis.
- Some suggested command terms to use for your questions are below:
  - Identify, describe, outline
  - Explain, discuss, compare
  - Analyse, evaluate, examine

Once you have completed your source analysis activity, swap with another group and brainstorm your responses to their questions.

Using historical sources as evidence

Analyse the following political cartoon from the late 1800s, drawn as Jews were fleeing persecution in Russia to England, some reaching Australia. Answer the questions that follow.

↑**Source 3.40** 'More Desirable Colonists' cartoon from *The Bulletin*, 9 May 1891. Courtesy State Library of Victoria.

1. Explain the context for Source 3.40. Why do you think this was created?
2. Describe what you can see in Source 3.40. How has the artist used a racial stereotype and in what light are they portrayed (positive or negative)?
3. Describe how the source suggests a desire at the time for strict control of immigration to Australia.

Analysing causes and consequences
1. What were the ideas that led to the creation of the *Aboriginal Protection Act, 1869* in Victoria?
2. What were the consequences of this Act? Refer to the sources in this chapter, as well as your own research.

Constructing an argument: essay writing
The Bulletin's masthead was 'Australia for the white man'. To what extent was this vision of the Australian colonies true during the late nineteenth century? You may find the following template useful in planning your response.

Contention:
Outline main points:

Body paragraph 1:
- Point 1
- Point 2

Evidence 1:

Evidence 2:

Body paragraph 2:
- Point 1
- Point 2

Evidence 1:

Evidence 2:

Body paragraph 3:
- Point 1
- Point 2

Evidence 1:

Evidence 2:

Conclusion:
• Reinforce argument and key points:
• Optional final quote to reinforce your position:

CHAPTER 4
Making Australian Britons, 1890–1913

Source 4.0 This image shows emigrants arriving to Australia by steamship. *Engraving of migrants disembarking from a ship*, c.1885. John Oxley Library, State Library of Queensland.

Chapter timeline

World events	Date	Australian events
	1890	
		1891: First National Australasian Convention – delegates from colonial parliaments met in Sydney and drafted a Federal Constitution
1893: New Zealand becomes the first country to enact women's suffrage		
		1897: *Queensland Aboriginal Act 1897*– designed to protect and control Indigenous peoples
1899: Aspirin patented		**1889–99:** Australians vote twice on Constitution Bill; first fails in NSW; more democratic version passes
	1900	
1901: Boxer Rebellion in China ends		**1901:** Inauguration of the Australian Commonwealth – First Commonwealth Parliament opened by the future King George V
		1901: *Immigration Restriction Act 1901* – Dictation Test used to bar 'coloured' immigrants from Australia – commonly called the White Australia Policy
		1901: *Pacific Islanders Labourers Act 1901* – managed their expulsion from Australia
		1902: *Commonwealth Franchise Act 1902* – gave women the vote and denied it to Indigenous Australians
		1904: NSW Royal Commission on the Decline of the Birth-rate declares contraceptive use in Australia equal to 'race suicide'
	1905	
1905–07: The first revolution in Russia		
		1907: The Harvester Judgement – Justice Higgins sets a 'fair and reasonable' minimum wage for Australian male workers

World events	Date	Australian events
	1910	
1912: RMS *Titanic* sinks in the Atlantic	↓	**1912:** *Maternity Allowance Act 1912* [the 'Baby Bonus'] – Labor federal government gives £5 per child born to white Australian mothers

4.1 Introduction

INQUIRY QUESTIONS

- How did the Australian colonies change between 1890 and 1913 in terms of their relationship with each other and with Britain?
- Did immigration change the social, political and demographic shape of Australia and the Australian colonies between 1890 and 1913?

The Australian colonies in 1890

In 1890 the Australian colonies had been enjoying economic prosperity for several decades. British money fuelled the expansion of the pastoral industry and mining, and the growth of capital cities and their suburbs.

Of the three million people in Australia in 1890, about one million lived in Victoria and another one million in New South Wales. Victoria was the most heavily urbanised, with almost 40% of its population living in Melbourne, and the most industrialised; its workshops and small factories were protected by tariffs (taxes) on imported goods. New South Wales followed a 'free trade' policy favouring imports from Britain and the Empire. Depression and drought would see both colonies temporarily lose population in the 1890s.

Queensland was next in size, with nearly 400 000 people, then South Australia with about 300 000. Queensland's growth was due to natural increase, inter-state movements and an active policy of assisted immigration (see Source 4.5 below). New South Wales and Western Australia also offered assisted passages, but on a much smaller scale. Victoria and New South Wales later benefited from Queensland's generosity, with many immigrants moving on to the southern colonies. South Australia grew steadily in the mid-century but suffered depression and loss of population in the 1880s and the 1890s.

Tasmania and Western Australia carried much smaller populations: Tasmania less than 145 000 people and Western Australia less than 50 000. Both populations were shaped by a convict legacy. Convicts continued to be sent to Tasmania until 1853, more than a decade after the system was phased out in New South Wales. Tasmanian ex-convicts – mainly single men – remained a large percentage of the population there. Western Australia failed to prosper in its first decades, and in the 1850s the colonists invited London to send convicts to remedy their labour shortage; the last convict ship arrived in 1868. Western Australia would see spectacular population growth in the 1890s, with gold rushes attracting many thousands of immigrants, both from the eastern colonies and from overseas. Tasmania by contrast stagnated economically and demographically although its population grew by 17% in the 1890s.
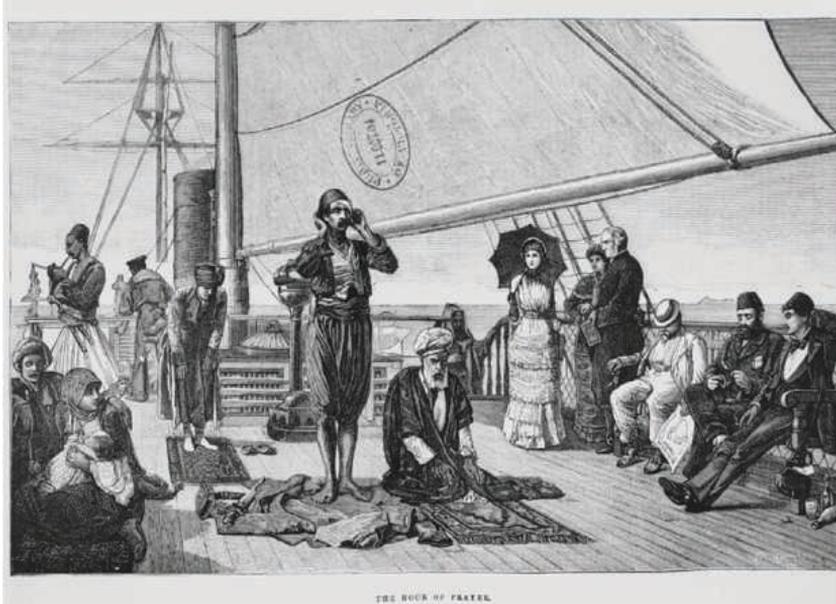
↑**Source 4.1** Afghan men at prayer on deck of a ship from *Illustrated Australian News*, 26 November 1884. Courtesy of State Library of Victoria.

4.2 Significant events, 1890–1913

INQUIRY QUESTION

How did immigration change the Australian colonies between 1890 and 1913?

Population and immigration

The depression of the 1890s led to a rapid slowing of immigration to the Australian colonies. However, by 1905 there was concern with the level of population growth for national reasons. The Immigration League of Australia was formed in 1905 to increase the population by state-assisted immigration and the states began schemes to attract immigrants. An English-born journalist, William Goodge, who migrated to Australia in the 1880s wrote that the population of the whole Australian continent only equalled that of London, and he argued:'Australia must have more white men, or must someday cease to be a white man's country'.[1] In 1908 the first edition of the *Commonwealth Year Book* observed: 'As regards race and nationality … the population of Australia is fundamentally British'.[2]

The following sources will reveal how successful the efforts were in boosting the population and reasons for the attempts. Here is what the Labor federal politician (and future Prime Minister) Billy Hughes said of Australia's population needs in an increasing world population, especially that of Japan, where there were:

80 million of people confined within an area less than one twentieth of that of Australia. Saturation point has been reached … The alternative to the migration of these surplus millions is starvation. Where can they find a country as inviting and as vulnerable as Australia. And if they come here, what shall we do? To whom shall we turn to for help? [He believed Australians] must recognise our duty to populate and develop this great heritage of ours. We must build up our defences. Press forward with a vigorous policy of immigration of people that can be assimilated into the Australian community and by raising the birthrate to a healthy level satisfy the world of our fitness to remain in control of this great country.

Quoted in Eric Richards, *Destination Australia. Migration to Australia since 1901*, UNSW Press, Sydney, 2008, p. 53.

In the decade after 1905 the states, which still controlled immigration policy, made concerted efforts to attract immigrants. The historian Eric Richards concluded that:

Source 4.3 Between 1905 and 1909 Australia came to the view that it desperately needed immigrants, yet it stuck to the assumption that its supply would come exclusively from the good yeoman stock of Britain. The idea was to 'settle the lands of our vast interior' and to sustain 'the very existence as a free Commonwealth under the British flag'. Australia wanted 'agriculturalists or yeomen of the British stamp' …

Ostensibly the campaign to revitalise immigration was a success and migrant numbers rose rapidly after 1905. Between 1906 and 1914 official records show that 393,048 immigrants arrived in Australia of whom 184,605 were assisted in one way or another. Immigration between 1907 and 1912 exceeded all previous records, rising to a crescendo in 1912 with 91 891 migrants, which was the greatest intake until 1949. The growth was impressive but the extravagant expectations of the time were disappointed. Australia was not able to rival its North American competitors in the race for migrants even in the British supply, and this led to recrimination among the states, there was poor coordination and no uniformity of administration. This was most obvious in the case of the Irish who had contributed so prolifically to the colonial migration schemes. In the migration boom before the First World War only 2 per cent of Irish immigrants chose Australia while 86 per cent went to America. Throughout the rest of the 20th century the Irish component in Australian immigration continued to decline

The population of Australia doubled between 1890 and 1920 (from 2.25 to 5 million), but only 12 per cent was attributable to net immigration. The nomination system was the most important vehicle and this tended to reinforce the urban orientation of the recruitment.

Eric Richards, *Destination Australia. Migration to Australia since 1901*, UNSW Press, Sydney, 2008, pp. 40, 45.

FOCUS QUESTIONS 4.1

1. What fears were held by W.T. Goodge and Billy Hughes?
2. What were their solutions?
3. Analyse Source 4.2 and consider how successful Australia was in meeting the population challenges that Hughes had outlined.
4. Did immigration meet expectations?

Source 4.4 gives the main birthplaces of those living in Australia between 1891 and 1911.

Main birthplaces of the Australian population 1891–1911

	1891	1901	1911
Australia	2 166 259	2 913 997	3 692 825
England	456 723	381 323	350 727
Scotland	125 043	102 707	94 349
Ireland	229 156	185 807	141 331
Total British Isles	829 495	685 754	601 753
Northern Europe	70 048	61 372	53 875
Eastern Europe	4713	5417	7531
Southern Europe	6206	8151	10 163
Western Asia	601	1892	1762
British India	5697	7681	6700
British Eastern and Southeast Asia	562	1162	1345
China	36 049	29 907	20 918
Africa	2923	2840	4939
Canada	3553	3193	3101
USA	7957	7517	6703
Pacific Islands	10 621	10 231	2958
New Zealand	23 974	25 881	32 130
Total foreign born	1 008 133	859 804	762 180
Grand total of all birthplaces	**3 174 392**	**3 773 801**	**4 455 005**

←**Source** 4.4 Extract from Table IEO42–54, Birthplaces of the Population 1861–1981, in Charles Price, Chapter 1: 'Immigration and Ethnic Origin', *Australians: Historical Statistics*, Fairfax, Syme and Weldon, Sydney, 1987. This is a sample of the birthplaces listed in the original table; places with totals of less than 1000 have not been included. First Nations Australians are not included in these figures.

USING HISTORICAL SOURCES AS EVIDENCE 4.1

Use Source 4.4 to answer the following questions.

1. Use a calculator to discover the percentage of those born in Australia out of the total Australian population in 1891, 1901 and 1911.
2. Use a calculator to discover the percentage of those who were born in the British Isles out of the total number of those born overseas in 1891, 1901 and 1911.
3. Do you agree with the statement in the 1908 *Commonwealth Year Book* that Australia was 'fundamentally British'?

Assisted British immigrants to Australia, 1891–1915

	1891–95	1896–1900	1901–05	1906–10	1911–15
NSW	593	66	0	15 929	42 061
VIC	0	0	0	2829	43 250
QLD	5279	5636	2858	14 034	29 789
SA	0	0	0	0	7359
TAS	0	0	0	0	492
WA	980	586	1001	8148	26 592
AUSTRALIA	6852	6288	3859	40 932	150 570

USING HISTORICAL SOURCES AS EVIDENCE 4.2

1. Using Sources 4.3–4.5, explain what the data tells us about the demographics of the Australian colonies.
2. Is the data what you expected or were there things that surprised you?

Identity

The 'fundamentally British' nature of the Australian colonies underpinned every aspect of colonial life. Until Federation, colonists imagined their identity as Victorian, or South Australian, or Queenslander, and then as British. In the Victorian mining settlement at Wood's Point, high in the Gippsland mountains, schoolgirl Margaret Knopp wrote in her scrapbook:

'Margaret Knopp is my name,
Victoria is my nation,
Woods Point is my dwelling place and
Heaven is my expectation'.[3]

Australia as a 'nation' had no place as yet in Margaret's scheme of things; her broadest location under Heaven would have been the British Empire.

↑**Source 4.6** Margaret Knopp's scrapbook from 1884

For a digital copy of the whole scrapbook, see https://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/9643

In Australian cities, architecture, institutions, what people wore and ate and read were mainly shaped on British models, often the most up-to-date models. By 1890 the 'tyranny of distance' identified by historian Geoffrey Blainey[4] had largely been overcome, at least in terms of people's self-understanding. Perhaps the most potent factor in dissolving that tyranny was the undersea cable that stretched from the northern Australian coast to Singapore, and then across Asia and Europe to London. This brought British news and fashion to colonial newspapers and breakfast tables almost as quickly as in the imperial metropolis.

The connection was not entirely secure; volcanic activity near Java broke the cable periodically, raising colonial fears of sabotage by the European powers who were Britain's rivals in the Pacific. In July 1890 *The Leader*, a Melbourne newspaper, reported on 'The Cable and Its Tidings'.

FOCUS QUESTIONS 4.2

1. Identify images present in Source 4.6.
2. What do these images suggest about a sense of Australian identity?

Source 4.7

Sunday last the customary quietude of the city and suburbs was broken by the cry of the newsboy proclaiming the fact that Australia was once more linked on to the outer world. For nine days our antipodean position in respect to the ancient centres of civilised activity had been forced upon public attention in consequence of the suspension of electric intercourse. Had we been denizens of another planet we could not have been more completely cut off from all knowledge of contemporary history outside the bounds of our own continent and seas adjacent. The European millions straining in the leash of Militarism might have grappled, and oceans of blood let flow; thrones might have been shaken and revolutions consummated, and we should have been none the wiser. Happily, no such startling incidents were presenting themselves for record. The budget of suppressed news when it came to hand proved to be of the least sensational character. No one could conjure up any thrill of excitement over the items of intelligence, domestic or foreign … Although no harm has come of the cable rupture on this occasion, it would be unwise of Australians to be lulled into a false sense of security. If the accident has done nothing else it has proved that continuous communication with England is no more to be relied upon now than when the line was first opened out.

'The Cable and Its Tidings', *The Leader*, 26 July 1890, p. 25.

FOCUS QUESTIONS 4.3

1. Describe the tone of the writing in Source 4.7.
2. Compare the reaction of the colonists to the loss of 'electric intercourse' with the world to the feelings you might experience today if the internet was lost.

Federating the nation 1890–1901

Through the 1880s the Victorian government was the main advocate of Australian Federation. Successive governments in New South Wales refused to cooperate with Victorian initiatives. Then in October 1889 the Premier of New South Wales, Sir Henry Parkes, announced his immediate commitment to Federation: that 'the best interests and the present and future prosperity of the Australasian Colonies will be promoted by an early union under the Crown'. The Victorian government received Parkes's proposal with scepticism and initially refused to cooperate. But

Parkes persevered, and in February 1890 the colonial premiers' meeting in Melbourne agreed that a convention to consider Federation should be held in Sydney, with delegates appointed by the colonial parliaments. Parkes had won the title he was seeking: 'Father of Federation'.

Constitutional Conventions were held in 1891 in Sydney, in 1893 in Corowa, New South Wales, and in 1897–98 in Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide. The First Referendum to approve federation failed in New South Wales. Voters there believed that the balance of power between the federal houses of parliament was weighted too heavily towards the Senate – the states' house – against the interests of the House of Assembly – the people's house. In early 1899 yet another premiers' meeting agreed to several changes to the Constitution requested by the New South Wales government, including a reduction in the powers of the Senate.

In 1899 the revised Constitution was again put to the electors of all the colonies except Western Australia, and it was accepted by them all. In July 1900 the *Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act, 1900* was passed by the British Parliament, with Western Australia voting to join the Federation in the same month.

On 1 January 1901 the Commonwealth of Australia was proclaimed by Lord Hopetoun, the Governor-General and representative of Queen Victoria. Australia had achieved Federation, but not yet independence; it was as Henry Parkes had hoped 'union under the Crown'.

↑**Source 4.8** *The Opening of the First Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia by H.R.H. The Duke of Cornwall and York (later H.M. George V) May 9, 1901, by Tom Roberts – Parliament of Australia*

A note on the above painting

The artist Tom Roberts[5], whom we met in the last chapter, first made his reputation in Australia as a painter of scenes celebrating bush-workers, men whom he pictured as embodying something essentially Australian. By 1901 he was better known for his portraits of urban middle-class men and women.

Roberts was commissioned to paint a record of the opening of the first federal parliament as 'a gift to the nation'. It was a huge project. The finished painting measured more than 300 by 500 centimetres and included 269 separate portraits. It took him two and half years to complete the painting, and his eyesight was weakened by the strain.

All the women pictured in the painting are wearing black, observing a period of mourning after the recent death of Queen Victoria. Roberts lightened his canvas by emphasising the choir, dressed in white, and by introducing a shaft of sunlight focused on the Duke of Cornwall and York, the future George V. He also took some artistic licence by introducing a painting on the wall high above the dais, a portrait of 'the Father of Federation', Henry Parkes, dead since 1896. That painting was not present on the day.[6]

RESEARCH TASK 4.1

In pairs or small groups research the process of federation and complete the following tasks.

1. Create an infographic that explains the arguments for federation. Make sure you think about how shared colonial attitudes towards race and immigration might have been an argument for federation. Also ensure you explore the economic reasons.
2. Present your groups' viewpoint to the class on the following prompt, 'To what extent was the Australian Federation the work of the people?'

4.3 Influential ideas, 1890–1913

INQUIRY QUESTION

What were the influential ideas from 1890 to 1913?

Nation and Empire

When Sir Henry Parkes declared himself in favour of 'Federation now' in October 1889, he sparked a debate about the future directions of a federated Australia – towards Parkes's vision of closer union with Britain in some kind of Imperial Federation, or towards full independence with 'separation' from Britain. However, few colonial leaders at the time argued for separation from Britain.

↑**Source 4.9** Portrait of Edmund Barton and Alfred Deakin 1898. Barton was to be the first Prime Minister of Australia and Deakin the second.

Edmund Barton was leader of the federal movement in New South Wales and when Federation was achieved he was to be the first Prime Minister of Australia.[7] In this address, in February 1890, Barton distanced himself from Parkes's endorsement of Imperial Federation, without endorsing separation.

Source 4.10

… Many thought that Australian federation was but the prelude to separation from the mother country, and many others hailed it because they believed it would be the prelude to Imperial federation … He failed to see that the tendency of Australian federation was towards a severance of the bond of union that connected Australia with the mother country. (Hear, hear.) Neither did he see, on the other hand, that the tendency of Australian federation was in the direction of that which he described as the larger or Imperial federation … At one time, he would admit, he was to a certain extent allured by the prospect of what had been called the great and glorious union of Great Britain with her colonies, together with the rest of her dominions. But now he had concluded that such a union was not worthy of serious consideration … there were so many various races engaged in, and degrees of experience of self-government, and of such various degrees of aptitude for self-government, that it would be absolutely impossible to weld them together on equal terms of electoral rights and rights of citizenship … he was now satisfied that Imperial federation could not be accomplished … [Perhaps the time would come] in the interests of

Continued…

FOCUS QUESTIONS 4.4

1. Why was Barton lukewarm towards the idea of Imperial Federation (see Source 4.10)?

2. Henry Parkes supported Imperial Federation partly due to racial ideas. Did the same apply to Barton?

the mother country and of Australia, that each should go its own way …
but he believed that the tendency of the present movement for Australian
federation would be to give a longer life and greater strength to the present
relationship between the old country and these colonies. (Cheers.)

'Federation and the Unity of the Empire', *Sydney Morning Herald*,
4 February 1890, p. 4.
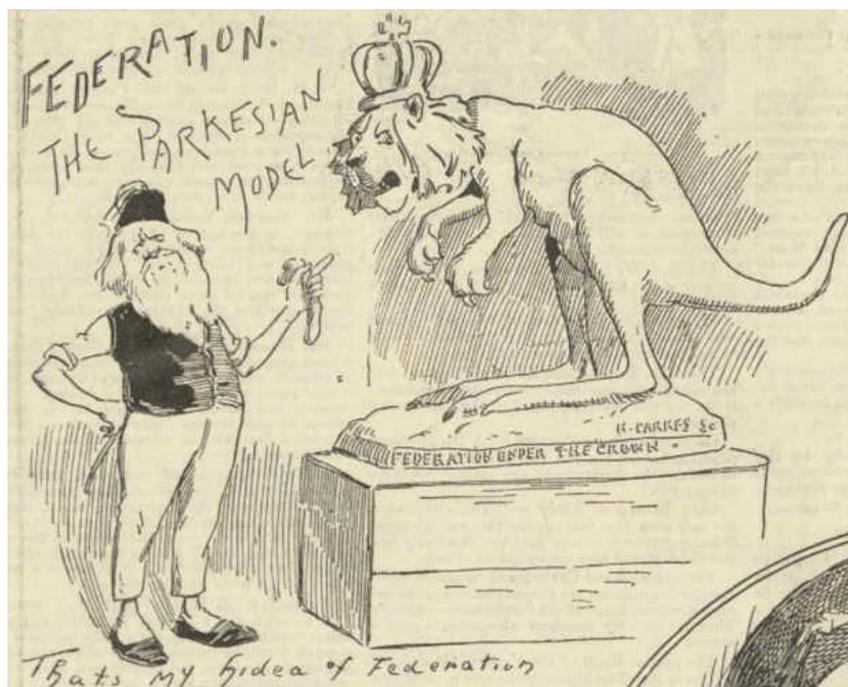
←**Source 4.11** *The Bulletin*, 7 March 1891, p. 12

USING HISTORICAL SOURCES AS EVIDENCE 4.3

1. Using Source 4.10, what do the words suggest about Parkes's ideas?
2. Analyse the animal that Parkes has carved in Source 4.11. What vision for Australia does it represent?

Parkes celebrated the conclusion of the 1891 Convention by hosting a banquet for hundreds of guests. He invited all the leading men in Sydney – politicians, businessmen, bishops, even trade unionists. The Sydney Trades and Labour Council, the peak body for metropolitan unions, refused his invitation and was criticised for lacking patriotism by the Sydney press. *The Australian Workman* was a newspaper newly founded to promote the interests of outback workers like shearers and miners. In 1890 and 1891 the unions representing these workers had been defeated in a series

of great strikes. These industrial defeats persuaded many unionists to turn to political action, promoting the rapid growth of Labor parties in most of the colonies.

The rural-based *The Australian Workman* leapt to the defence of the metropolitan Trades Hall Council.

Source 4.12

It appears to be necessary to defend the Trades and Labour Council in their action in refusing to accept the invitation to be present at the Federation Banquet … In the first place, what is there in this federation of the colonies, so as lies in the intentions of Sir Henry Parkes and his co-federationists, that is likely to benefit the toilers in Australia? All that we can glean is that there is to be a 'union of the colonies under the Crown', that far from 'loosening the ties of loyalty' that bind us to a country whose institutions produce on the one had a small class of extremely wealthy and generally idle persons, and on the other hand a very large class of starving, semi-starving and poverty stricken unemployed and employed wage slaves, it is intended to further 'cement the true fabric of loyalty to the Empire and to our beloved Queen' … This is all we can expect from the federation in the interests of which 900 persons (principally employers of labour) assembled at the Town Hall, on last Monday night, and had a gorgeous feed at the expense of the people.

The Australian Workman, 7 March 1891, p. 2.

The people's voice

'The people' were a category often invoked by editors and orators at this period. Source 4.13 is an instance of this from the first National Convention. It concerns the constitutional relationship between the Senate and the House of Assembly, and the means by which disputes between the houses should be resolved. Debates on this issue were among the most heated in the conventions, and certainly the most prolonged, dividing the delegates in all three sessions.

The issue was partly demographic: the combined populations of New South Wales and Victoria outnumbered the sum of those of all the other colonies. Delegates from the smaller colonies feared that their interests might be ignored, or damaged, by the majority vote of the larger colonies, and they wanted to give the 'states house', the Senate, the right to block legislation from the 'people's house', the House of Assembly.

Alfred Deakin was perhaps the finest orator among the delegates, if not the most logical. Present at all three conventions, he was a passionate advocate of 'strong government upon the broadest possible base'. There is a subtext to his speech: it refers indirectly to the history of the American Civil War, arising out of 'discord and disunion' between the federated United States.

Alfred DEAKIN … if we establish two chambers of equal authority, we prepare the way for dissension, and encourage deadlocks … Australia is entitled to **absolute enfranchisement**. In our union we attain political manhood and the stature of a full-grown democracy. We can wear no constitutional garb capable of cramping a muscle or confining an artery of national life. We claim the fullest means of developing all its energies and all its aspirations, and of encountering all that can oppose them. Why place whisps of straw upon the arms of the young giant, only to become a cause of complaint and to be burst the first time his strength is put forth? Establish a constitution 'broad based upon the people's will', we shall be securing the safety and security of the state which we propose to raise; but to do anything short of this would be to sow the seeds of discord and disunion … What we should aspire to see is a strong government upon the broadest popular base, and with the amplest national power.

Source 4.13

absolute enfranchisement
the full and free right to exercise the vote

Official Record of the Debates of the National Australasian Convention held in the Parliament House,
Sydney, 5 March 1891, pp. 41–2.

FOCUS QUESTIONS 4.6

1. What context, if any, does Deakin give to the idea of 'a full-grown democracy' (see Source 4.13)?
2. Why does he suggest that the security of a federated Australia might be threatened if the Senate has the power to block the wishes of the House of Assembly?

4.4 Perspectives and experiences, 1890–1913

INQUIRY QUESTION

What do perspectives and experiences from 1890 to 1913 reveal about ideas of who was to be part of the new Australian nation?

Exclusions from 'the people'

Democrats like Deakin imagined 'the people's voice' as including all Australians, but in practice there were significant exclusions from the new national citizenship as it was shaped by the conventions. Exclusions were based on gender and race.

Women as citizens

As we have seen in Chapter 2, the 'universal' suffrage achieved in the 1850s was based on a masculine brotherhood excluding women. From the 1880s women's groups called on colonial legislators to give women the vote on the same basis as men. Much of the support for women's suffrage came from men and women who were committed churchgoers and **temperance** advocates.

↑**Source 4.14** 'Fourteen delegates who attended First Convention Melbourne 1891 and Eighth Convention 21 years later, in Brisbane', Woman's Christian Temperance Union, 19122001.0085.00071

The Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) was an American organisation founded in the 1870s, aiming to combat drunkenness and immorality among men. Its leaders saw women as innately more spiritual than men, more self-disciplined. In the 1880s the Union spread rapidly internationally and to the Australian colonies, becoming the largest women's organisation in the world. The Victorian branch of the WCTU was founded in 1889.

In 1891, early in the proceedings of the Federal Convention, an address was presented to the delegates from the WCTU:

Source 4.15

Gentlemen, it is with deep interest that the Woman's Christian Temperance Union regards the movement which has called your body together, namely, the federation of the Australian colonies. May they hope that in this enlightened age the last-born nation of the world may have embodied in its constitution the universal suffrage without regard to sex; and the prohibition of the drink traffic by the vote of the people, except for medicinal and scientific purposes. We ask this in the name of the God of heaven, and in the interests of the home, the church and the state.

Convention Debates 1891, 5 March 1891, p. 66.

Other suffragists – advocates of woman's suffrage – based their claim for the vote on women's rights as citizens equal to men. Rose Scott, a wealthy and influential suffragist, was the leader of the women's movement in Sydney.

In the following extract, published in an Australian journal in the mid-1890s, she argues for the suffrage as a right – though in other venues she could also invoke the special qualities of 'the nurturing arms of womanhood'.

… what is a vote? It is a certain factor in the system of our government. [Are we] merely fighting for this piece of machinery … ? No, we are battling for the liberty, the freedom of women. We claim that as a human being, she should have from the parent State the same rights and privileges as that other section of humanity called men, and we affirm that the sex of a human being is, like race and colour, a secondary matter, and that it has never been the highest vocation of women to be wives and mothers any more than it has ever been the highest vocation of men to be husbands and fathers. The highest vocation of either sex is to be a noble, honest, loving human being, and it follows that if they fulfill their vocation, they will also nobly fulfill the duties which their individuality decides may or may not belong to them as creatures of sex … The vote is given to the men of the country in spite of their follies, wisdom, or mistakes, because they are human beings with an interest in the country and its government. On this ground the vote is given to men – on this ground do we demand it for women. It is given to men on logical grounds – it is withheld from women on sentimental grounds.

Rose Scott, 'Discussion on "Women and the Franchise"', *The Australian Economist*, vol. 4, no. 16, June 1895, pp. 495–7.

USING HISTORICAL SOURCES AS EVIDENCE 4.4

1. Using Source 4.16, outline Rose Scott's arguments for female suffrage.
2. How did the arguments of the Women's Christian Temperance Union in Source 4.15 differ?

In its final form as adopted in 1899, the Australian Constitution made no direct reference to women's suffrage. But one clause opened the way for women to be accepted as full citizens.

Section 41 of the Constitution reads:

'No adult person who has or acquires a right to vote at elections for the more numerous Houses of Parliament shall while the right continues be prevented from voting at elections for the House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Australia'.

A South Australian delegate introduced this provision during the first session of the Federation Conference in April 1897. His intention was to protect the voting rights of South Australian

women, who had won the franchise in 1894. There was no debate about rights or citizenship. Delegates opposed to women's suffrage were persuaded to drop their opposition by the argument that the electors of South Australia would not vote for Federation if their women were excluded.[8] Women were granted the federal suffrage by the *Commonwealth Franchise Act, 1902*. State suffrages followed in the next decade. Victoria was the last state to admit women as full citizens, in 1908.

Chinese and other 'alien' races

Coloured races were never considered for inclusion within Australian citizenship; one of the first acts of the new federal parliament would be to exclude them from entry to Australia. Charles Pearson, a university Professor, historian and politician,[9] wrote an essay in 1894 considering Australia's present and future as a white nation in an Asian region.

Source 4.17

Australia is an unexampled instance of a great continent that has been left for the first civilised people that found it to take and occupy. The natives have died out as we approached; there have been no complications with foreign powers: and the climate of the South is magnificent. Nevertheless, it is still a question whether the white race can ever be so acclimatised as to live and labour in the Northern parts; and it seems certain that neither Englishman nor German can ever colonise New Guinea. The fear of Chinese immigration which the Australian democracy cherishes, and which Englishmen at home find hard to understand, is, in fact, the instinct of self-preservation, quickened by experience. We know that coloured and white labour cannot exist side by side; we are well aware that China can swamp us with a single year's surplus of population; and we know that if national existence is sacrificed to the working of a few mines and sugar plantations, it is not the Englishman in Australia alone, but the whole civilised world, that will be the losers. We … are guarding the last part of the world in which the higher races can live and increase freely for the higher civilisation.

    The resources of China are immense, the capacity of its people for toil is almost unlimited, and their wants are of the slenderest. The great mass of the people lives ascetically [frugally and simply], and retains its habits, even when it is thrown among wasteful races like the English of America and Australia, who despise and distrust asceticism … A hundred years hence, when these [Asian] races, which are now as two to one of the higher, shall be as three to one; when they have borrowed the science of Europe, and developed their still virgin worlds, the pressure of their competition upon the white man will be irresistible. He will be driven from every neutral market and forced to confine himself within his own. Ultimately he will have to conform to the Oriental standard of existence, or, and this is the

Continued…

probable solution, to stint the increase of population … With civilization equally diffused, the most populous country must ultimately be the most powerful; and the preponderance of China over any rival – even over the United States of America – is likely to be overwhelming.

Charles H. Pearson, *National Life and Character: A Forecast*, Macmillan, London, 1894, pp. 17–19, 137–8.
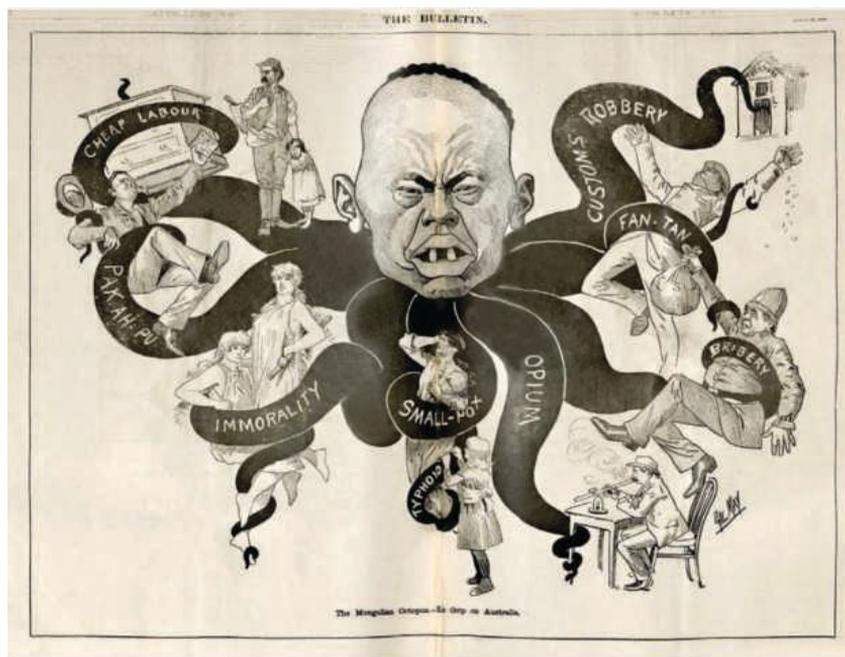
↑**Source 4.18** 'The Mongolian Octopus – His Grip on Australia', from *The Bulletin*, 21 August 1886. Courtesy of State Library of Victoria.

USING HISTORICAL SOURCES AS EVIDENCE 4.5

1. Using Source 4.17, write a paragraph summarising Pearson's view of the 'races' inhabiting the world. Who are 'the higher races'? What is 'the higher civilisation'?
2. What role does Pearson see for Australia in preserving 'the higher races'?
3. Does Pearson's argument justify the exclusion of the 'coloured races' from Australia in 1901? Why? Why not?
4. Explain the context for Source 4.18. Who produced the source? Why do you think this was created?
5. Describe what you can see in Source 4.18. How has the artist blended a racial stereotype with an animal and in what light are they portrayed (positive or negative)?
6. Why do you think that particular animal was chosen? What characteristics suit the message the artist is trying to convey?
7. Describe how both Sources 4.17 and 4.18 suggest a desire at the time for strict control of immigration to Australia.

Experiences from implementing Federation 1901–1913

↑**Source 4.19** An invitation to Arthur Searcy to attend celebrations in Sydney on 1 January 1901 in connection with the inauguration of the Commonwealth of Australia

USING HISTORICAL SOURCES AS EVIDENCE 4.6

Examine the image in Source 4.19 and analyse the flags shown and why the occupants of the boat were drawn this way.

The *Immigration Restriction Act, 1901*

White Australia Policy
while it referred to restrictions on the entry of non-whites into Australia by various mechanisms, it also shaped the internal policy of states by legislation to control the movements and lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples within Australia; it also shaped legislation in 1906 that expelled Pacific Island labourers from Australia

In Sources 3.36 and 4.1–4.2 we saw that the ideal of a White Australia had become dominant by 1901. When the Immigration Act was passed, it soon became known as the **White Australia Policy**. In its first form the Immigration Restriction Bill directly excluded from entry to Australia all 'natives of Asia, the Pacific, and Africa' – the 'coloured races'. Britain retained the right to approve all laws passed by the new Australian nation, and the British government asked the Bill to be amended to include a less direct way of banning unwanted immigrants – the 'Dictation Test'. This was a device already used in the province of Natal in Southern Africa. This article from *The Bulletin*, a newspaper which often expressed the racist views of the day, describes how this method of exclusion would work. *The Bulletin* openly used racist language such as the 'n' word. Its use is totally unacceptable today as most thinking people now reject such offensive terms. It is retained in this source to show students of history how publicly acceptable words and sentiments can change over time.

… The Immigration Restriction Bill is rather more than a plain hypocrisy: it almost rises to the dignity of a lie. At the same time it is a lie forced upon us by Joseph Chamberlain and the British Ministry generally … The object of the Immigration Restriction Bill is to keep out paupers, diseased persons, and above all, 800,000,000 closely adjacent niggers with whom the white Australian can't intermarry or associate with without lowering the national type. Every one knows this; but in order to satisfy a ridiculously hypocritical pretence that nobody wants to maintain the purity of the Anglo-Saxon type … the persons barred out by the Federal Immigration Restriction Bill are mainly these:

ANY PERSON WHEN ASKED TO DO SO BY AN OFFICER, FAILS TO WRITE OUT AND SIGN IN THE PRESENCE OF THE OFFICER A PASSSAGE OF FIFTY WORDS IN LENGTH IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE, DICTATED BY THE OFFICER …

Of course, it is not intended to apply this test indiscriminately … The apparent idea is that the authorities will ask the man they want to keep out, and the man they want to let in won't be asked …

It is announced, apparently on official authority, that the British Government will assent to this kind of Bill, and will not assent to any other kind … The brown and black and yellow Powers would be offended if their people were shut out because they are black and brown and yellow, and Britain, it appears, can no longer afford to offend the varied niggers of the globe with its old aggressive courage …

The British Government insists on preserving appearances in the matter, regardless of the fact that appearances deceive no one …

'The Anti-Alien Bill', *The Bulletin*, 17 August 1901.

USING HISTORICAL SOURCES AS EVIDENCE 4.7

1. Using Source 4.20 why does *The Bulletin* describe the Immigration Restriction Bill as amended at the request of the British government as 'hypocrisy' and a 'lie'?
2. Why, according to *The Bulletin*, has the British government requested this change?
3. To what extent does Source 4.21 reflect the new nation's emerging national identity and independence, or lack of independence?
4. Describe how Source 4.21 relates to the ideas in Source 4.20.

Source 4.22 shows an image of instructions issued in 1913 to immigration officials regarding how records should be kept about any tests given in case litigation arose from the testing.

Source 4.22 has been annotated with handwritten notes and other insertions by the Collector of Customs, Adelaide. It gives an insight into how the White Australia Policy was administered at the local level. From 1905 the dictation test could be given in any language, so that a 'prohibited immigrant' fluent in English could be given the test in French or German, as dictated by a customs official who spoke neither language.
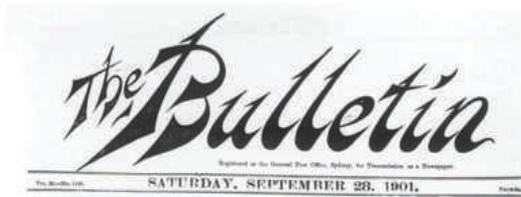
←**Source 4.21** 'Australia's lie for Britain's sake' cartoon, satirising the Dictation Test, from the front cover of *The Bulletin* (Sydney), 28 September 1901. Courtesy of State Library of Victoria. Britain wanted Australia to use a dictation test, instead of a more direct immigration ban based on race, to maintain good relations within the British Empire of diverse peoples, many of them non-white.

↑**Source 4.22** The original volume is titled *Immigration Act Instructions together with Immigration Act 1901–1912 and Immigration Regulations 1913* and was produced by the Department of External Affairs in 1914.

FOCUS QUESTIONS 4.7

1. Which immigrants would be asked to take a dictation test?
2. Did the test assess the qualities of citizenship of the immigrant?

1897 – Torres Strait Islanders

British control of the Torres Strait Islands began in 1862 and the London Missionary Society arrived on Darnley Island in 1871. In 1872 Queensland's borders were extended to include Thursday Island, and the other Torres Strait Islands were annexed (taken control of) in 1879.

Queensland assumed control because rich pearl shell beds were found off the Queensland coast in the 1870s and an industry began using Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander divers, as well as Japanese pearl divers. Soon a thousand men and women were combing the sea floor for the precious shell, which was to be made into buttons and other goods. The historian Richard Broome outlined the work.

> **Source 4.23**
>
> The work was strenuous, with long hours and little pay. Many in fact were forced to work … Some became accustomed to the life and stayed willingly. Women proved to be the best divers, but the 1871 Pearl Fisheries Act forbade their use because of the moral dangers of having women on luggers.
>
> By the 1880s, new techniques for suited divers ushered in skilled Asian divers and Aboriginal men were relegated to work as deckhands. From providing 500 workers to each colonial branch of the industry [WA and Queensland] in the swimmer phase, Aboriginal involvement declined. In Broome there were fewer than 50 Aboriginal men in pearling by 1900. Aboriginal deckhands had more work in Queensland, where they gathered trepang as well. Aboriginal communities also provided goods and sexual services to the fleets, much to the disapproval of the authorities, who tried to stop this race mixing, fearing it would undermine white Australia. Many permanent liaisons and marriages developed.

Richard Broome, *Aboriginal Australians. A History Since 1788*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 2019, pp. 115–16.

In theory the Torres Strait Islanders were ruled in the same manner as Indigenous peoples in mainland Queensland, although the sea protected them somewhat from some of the strictest controls. The colony of Queensland was still a wild frontier until the 1890s when the first Act over them was introduced: the Queensland *Aboriginals Protection and Restriction of the Sale of Opium Act, 1897*.

Richard Broome describes the nature and provisions of the 1897 Act:

> **Source 4.24**
>
> The Queensland Act of 1897 expressed not only humanitarian concern but racist assumptions. These twin forces—white racism and humanitarian paternalism—converged to control Aboriginal lives for the next three generations. All people who were deemed 'Aboriginal', no matter their degree of descent or self-definition, or whether they needed protection or
>
> *Continued…*

not, were placed under the Act. They or their children could be moved to a reserve and kept there against their will with no right of appeal. They were denied other rights, such as the vote or the freedom to drink alcohol. A 1902 amendment, which reflected European obsessions about purity of race and fears of contagious diseases, prohibited sexual fraternisation with Europeans and Asians, and prevented Chinese from employing Aboriginal workers. The minister's approval was needed for interracial marriages, and was rarely given. Exemptions existed, but after 1902 could be revoked by the Chief Protector of Aborigines. The able-bodied were encouraged to work, but were regulated in yearly contracts like serfs, not free workers, whether they needed these or not. Compulsory labour contracts stipulated Aboriginal wages and minimum standards of food and accommodation, which were not always fulfilled, due to inadequate inspection.

Richard Broome, *Aboriginal Australians. A History Since 1788*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 2019, pp. 118–19.

The *Commonwealth Franchise Act, 1902*

The *Commonwealth Franchise Act, 1902* established that 'all persons not under twenty one years of age, whether male or female, married or unmarried … shall be entitled to vote at the election of Members of the Senate and the House of Representatives'. But it also enacted that 'No aboriginal native of Australia Asia Africa or the Islands of the Pacific except New Zealand shall be entitled to have his name placed on an Electoral Roll unless so entitled under section forty-one of the Constitution'. Some Indigenous men and women were enrolled to vote in elections at the state level, and so were entitled under this provision to enrol to vote federally, but the Franchise Act effectively denied this privilege to their children.

The following extracts are from the debates on the Franchise Bill in the Senate. The great majority of the senators agreed with Senator Matheson.

Source 4.25

Senator O'Connor, New South Wales.

I think it will be recognised that the question of whether aboriginals should vote or not is not a matter to be seriously taken into consideration where they are settled members of the community. Where they have settled down in occupations of some kind, I fail to see why they should not be allowed to vote in the same way as is any other inhabitant of the country. I think that we might treat this question of the position of aboriginals under our electoral laws not only fairly, but with some generosity. Unfortunately they are a failing race. In most parts of Australia they are becoming very largely civilized, and when they are civilized they are certainly quite as well qualified to vote as are a great number of persons who already possess the franchise … What is one of the strongest arguments for a white Australia?

Continued…

Surely it is that we do not want to have in our community any section which is in a servile [submissive] condition; we do not want to have any proportion of our community disenfranchised and in a position of political inferiority, having no right to a voice in the making of the laws.

Senator Matheson, Western Australia

We do not want – at least speaking for myself – a single coloured person whom we can exclude, to have the right to vote in this Legislature. I do not think they are mentally qualified to vote, for this reason: None of them have been brought up to exercise the franchise. We may fairly say that none of them are capable of realizing the responsibility of exercising the franchise responsibly. Under these circumstances they are all of them likely to be actuated by undesirable influences, and are not likely to exercise the franchise in that straightforward and independent manner which is desirable … To a very large extent these aliens and members of coloured races are idolaters … They are not people to whom we should give the right of influencing legislation in matters of education, religion and of marriage.

Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates, Senate Hansard Commonwealth Franchise Bill, 9 April 1902.
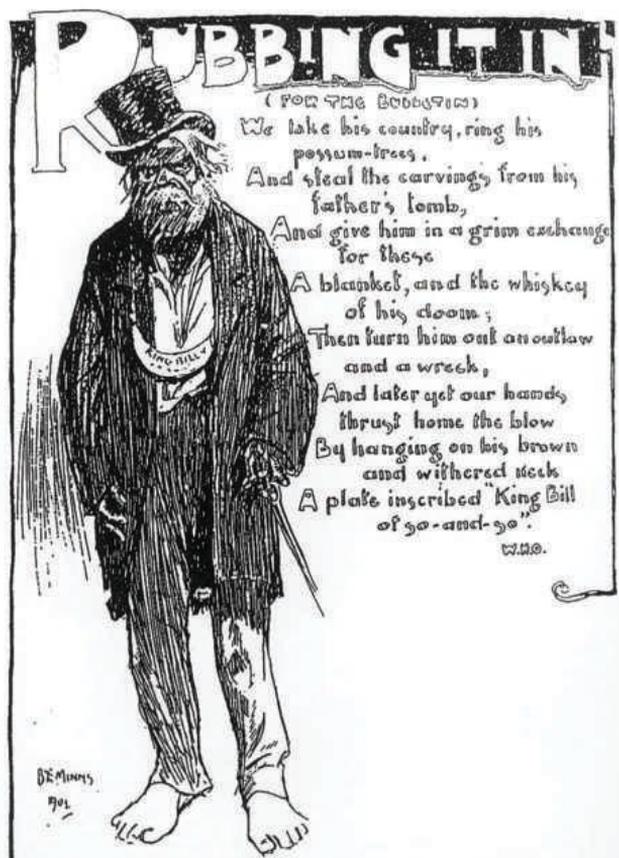
←**Source 4.26** 'Rubbing it in', *The Bulletin* (Sydney) on the plight of Aboriginal people, 1902. Artist: B.E. Minns. Courtesy of State Library of Victoria.

1. The speakers in Source 4.25 agree that 'a white Australia' is desirable. They disagree about what this should mean for the citizenship rights of Indigenous Australians. Summarise the reasons they give for their different conclusions.
2. Analyse and describe Source 4.26.
3. Are you surprised or conflicted about this perspective from *The Bulletin*?
4. Research the term 'noble savage'. To what extent does this source use that form of stereotyping?

NSW Royal Commission on the Decline of the Birth-rate 1903

In the era of national building, national strength was at the forefront of people's minds, and national strength depended upon population size, both from immigration and the birth-rate of Australians.

In the middle of the nineteenth century, a woman marrying in Australia could expect to be pregnant or nursing a young baby for the next 20 or 25 years of her life. Many women bore eight children or more, and families of 12 and 13 were not uncommon. From about 1880 women began to bear fewer children. The decline was partly due to the fact that women were marrying later and shortening their child-bearing years. In addition, some couples were choosing to limit their children by forms of contraception: devices like condoms and diaphragms, and perhaps most commonly the withdrawal method. Christian churches objected to all forms of contraception, believing that intercourse was not intended for pleasure but for the procreation of children.

The 1901 census appeared to show a dramatic decline in the Australian and especially the New South Wales birth-rate. In 1903 the New South Wales parliament established a Royal Commission on the Decline of the Birth-rate. Here is an extract from its Final Report.

Source 4.27

In conclusion, we desire to reiterate our opinion that there has been a very serious decline in the birthrate of New South Wales since the year 1889 … we have been reluctantly, but inevitably, driven to the conclusion that the people – led astray by false and pernicious [evil] doctrine into the belief that personal interests and ambitions, a high standard of ease, comfort, and luxury, are the essential aims of life, and that these aims are best attained by refusing to accept the consequences which nature has ordained shall follow from marriage – have neglected, and are neglecting, their true duty to themselves, their fellow countrymen and to posterity [future]. Forgetful of the lessons of history, ignoring the teachings of science, bent on gratifying their selfish desires, and on pursuing social advancement, they are seeking to follow the dictates of narrow reasoning, and blindly imagine that, in raising the standard of their own physical comfort, they are smoothing the path of life for themselves and for posterity, while leaving to others the creation of that posterity for which they profess to be so concerned. They seem to think that, in the deliberate curtailing of reproduction,

Continued…

…Continued

they have found a panacea [solution] for the ills of life. The time must come, however, when there will be a cruel awakening to a realisation of the truth. Already we see, in the injury to health, the wrecking of life, which is manifesting itself, how nature has begun to avenge herself on those who oppose her laws. We see, in the lessening of parental control, the commencement of the dissolution of the family bond; and in the dwindling of the size of families, the dying out of nature's best school for the teaching of the lessons of life and the weakening of the social structure at its base … in the course of the next few years … the material provided by the present generation for the continuance of the race in New South Wales will be inadequate to maintain even its present rate of increase in the numbers of the native-born.

We find also that the practices and habits which the doctrines of limitation inculcate tend to undermine the morality of the people, to loosen the bonds of religion, and to obliterate the influence of those higher sentiments and sanctions for conduct with which the development of high national character has ever been associated. Duty we recognise as being conduct favourable to the safety of the race; virtue as an attitude of life and character consistent with the preservation and continuance of man on earth; and since vice is the reverse of virtue, it must include all conduct that is an attack upon the race.

Royal Commission on the Decline of the Birth-rate and on the Mortality of Infants, *NSW Parliamentary Papers*, 1904, vol. 4, pp. 52–3.

USING HISTORICAL SOURCES AS EVIDENCE 4.9

1. Using Source 4.27, make a list of the moral failings which the Royal Commission discovered among 'the people' of New South Wales.
2. Remember Charles Pearson's hope that Australia might nourish the development of 'the higher races', at least in the short term. With this in mind, explain why the limitation of offspring is 'an attack upon the race'.
3. Does Source 4.27 show a continuity or change in expectations of the role of women in the new nation?

The Harvester Judgement 1907

For working-class Australians, the legislation enacted to keep out Asian immigrants was justified as a way of protecting wages and living standards. Many understood the tariff barriers erected to protect Australian industry as serving the same ends. When the first federal tariffs were legislated in 1905 and 1906, Liberal and Labor members of parliament co-operated to make tariff protection available only to industries which paid a 'fair and reasonable wage'. In 1907 Justice Higgins of the

federal Arbitration Court was asked to decide whether the wages paid by H.V. McKay's Sunshine Harvester Factory were 'fair and reasonable'. He decided that they were not; he determined that the 'basic wage' for labourers should be at least 7 shillings a day.

Here is an extract from his judgement.

Source 4.28

The provision for fair and reasonable remuneration is obviously designed for the benefit of the employees in the industry; and it must be meant to secure to them something which they cannot get by the ordinary system of individual bargaining with employers. If Parliament meant that the conditions shall be such as they can get by individual bargaining – if it meant that those conditions are to be fair and reasonable, which employees will accept and employers will give, in contracts of service – there would have been no need for this provision. The remuneration could safely have been left to the usual, but unequal, contest, the 'higgling of the market' for labour, with the pressure for bread on one side, and the pressure for profits on the other. The standard of 'fair and reasonable' must, therefore, be something else; and I cannot think of any other standard appropriate than the normal needs of the average employee, regarded as a human being living in a civilized community … as wages are the means of obtaining commodities, surely the State, in stipulating for fair and reasonable remuneration for the employees, means that the wages shall be sufficient to provide these things, and clothing, and a condition of frugal comfort estimated by current human standards.

I come now to consider the remuneration of the employees mentioned in this application. I propose to take unskilled labourers first. The standard wage – the wage paid to the most of the labourers by the applicant – is 6s per day of eight hours … Some very interesting evidence has been given, by working men's wives and others; and the evidence has been absolutely undisputed … The usual rent paid by a labourer, as distinguished from an artisan, appears to be 7s; and taking the rent at 7s., the necessary average expenditure for a labourer's home of about five persons would seem to be about £1 12s 5d … I have confined the figures to rent, groceries, bread, milk, fuel, vegetables, and fruit; and the average of the list of nine housekeeping women is £1 12s 5. The expenditure does not cover light (some of the lists omitted light), clothes, boots, furniture, utensils … rates, life insurance, savings, accident or benefit societies, loss of employment, union pay, books and newspapers, tram and train fares, sewing machine, mangle school requisites, amusements and holidays, intoxicating liquors, tobacco, sickness and death, domestic help or any expenditure for unusual contingencies, religion or charity.

EX PARTE H.V. McKay: Excise Tariff 1906 (no.16 of 1906), Application for Declaration that Wages are Fair and Reasonable, pp. 3–4, 6.

FOCUS QUESTIONS 4.8

1. The principle applied here in Source 4.28, that the court should intervene in the 'higgling of the market' to guarantee a basic wage to employees, was novel, even revolutionary, in 1906. Are there some people who might still find it revolutionary today?

2. Look at the long list of items not included in calculating the appropriate wage level for 'a human being living in a civilised community'. Is this wage 'fair and reasonable' by today's standards?

Justice Higgins's imagined worker was a male breadwinner supporting a family of about five persons – husband, wife, and three children. When he was asked in 1912 to make a judgement on women's wages, Higgins determined that as women were not 'normally' breadwinners supporting families, their basic wage should be fixed at no more than 50% of a male wage. Historians Edna Ryan and Anne Conlon wrote in 1975 that 'The imposing edifice [creation] of a "family wage" was to bar the progress of women's pay rates for over half a century'[10] – and one might argue that it still impedes that progress today.

The *Commonwealth Maternity Allowance Act, 1912*

The electoral strength of the Australian Labor Party increased steadily across the decade after Federation. Labor first took office briefly in 1904 – the first Labor government in the world – then shared government with Deakin's Liberals. In 1910 the Labor leader Andrew Fisher won the federal election with a large majority, and over the next three years his government carried out a significant program of reform including legislation to strengthen the Arbitration Court, a Land Tax Act intended to break up large estates, and the establishment of a Commonwealth Bank.

In 1912 Fisher introduced to parliament the Maternity Allowance Bill – popularly known as 'the Baby Bonus' – which gave £5 to every white Australian mother on the birth of a child. Church groups immediately opposed the inclusion in the Bill of unmarried mothers, fearing 'lest the importance of marriage should become belittled and illegitimacy encouraged'. A delegation from the Australian Council of Churches asked Fisher not to reward 'that kind of woman'. He replied: 'Let us not use the phrase "That kind of woman." We do not use that in Parliament.'[11]

Fisher was born in Scotland, the son of a coalminer who was crippled by lung disease. He understood the impact of poverty on family life.[12] Here is an extract from his speech introducing the Maternity Allowance Bill to Parliament.
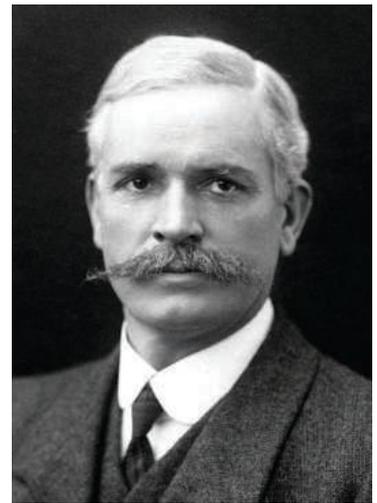
↑ **Source 4.29** Andrew Fisher, Prime Minister of Australia, pictured in 1912

Mr Fisher:

The object of this short Bill is to provide for the payment, under prescribed conditions, out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund, of maternity allowances to women who give birth to children after it has become law. The amount that will be paid to a mother in respect of each occasion on which a birth occurs is £5 …

The maternity allowance will be payable only to women who are inhabitants of the Commonwealth, or who intend to settle therein … Women who are Asiatics, or who are aboriginal natives of Australia, Papua, or the islands of the Pacific, shall not be paid a maternity allowance …

[The Bill is proposed] with the object of protecting the present citizens of the Commonwealth, and of giving to coming citizens a greater assurance that they will receive proper attention at the most critical period in their lives … It is a maternity allowance for the protection and care of the mother, which is tantamount [equivalent] to the protection and care of the unborn child … To bring any heat into the discussion of this Bill was the very last thing that I desired, but honorable members opposite know that many women go through the most trying period of their lives ill-fed, ill-clad, ill-equipped, without assistance, and with nothing left to them but a proud spirit – a proud womanly spirit, and good luck to them. We intend to put a little between them and dire poverty, without degradation …

When this Bill becomes law a woman will know, and everybody acquainted with her will know, that there is £5 awaiting her … The butcher, the baker, the tinker, the tailor, the medical man, and others, will all remember that there is £5 about, and although the money is not in their hands, the credit will be good … That this proposal will relieve misery, I have not the shadow of a doubt. It will also save lives …

Maternity Allowance Bill, 2nd reading, Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates, House Hansard, 24 September 1912.

USING HISTORICAL SOURCES AS EVIDENCE 4.10

1. Outline Prime Minister Fisher's reasons for introducing the Maternity Allowance Bill using Source 4.30.
2. Explain how this legislation underpins the idea of a White Australia.
3. To what extent did the experiences of women change in the new nation? Refer to at least three sources from this chapter within your response.

Citizenship

Billy Hughes on military training

The *Defence Act, 1901* was one of the first pieces of legislation debated and passed by the federal parliament in 1901. The Act provided for a small professional army under Commonwealth control.

William (Billy) Hughes was a Labor member of the House of Assembly. Before coming to Australia as an assisted immigrant from England, Hughes had served in a volunteer battalion of the Royal Fusiliers, and he was an enthusiastic advocate of **compulsory military training** for all Australian men and boys. He failed to have the Defence Bill amended in 1901, but continued to press for a national training scheme, achieving his aim in 1909.[13]

compulsory military training the belief that all males over 14 years in the nation should be trained in military skills ready to defend the nation

↑ **Source 4.31** Labor Minister of Parliament and future Prime Minister of Australia Billy Hughes pictured in 1908

Source 4.32

All democracies had been notoriously short-lived, and all had perished under the heel of military despotism. The remedy for the defects he had pointed out in the bill was that the responsibility of citizenship carried with it the right of defending one's country. ('Hear, hear.') Therefore, the only sure and certain method of defence was a scheme of militia. He believed that every man should serve as in Switzerland. His proposal was that every adult male in Australia, from the age of 18 to 40, should undergo a period of training. From 18 to 21 every man should put in a period of six weeks, of which three weeks should be continuous training, and the remaining three weeks of isolated drills. All men from the age of 21 to 30 should also put in six weeks, of which ten days should be continuous training, and the remainder should be isolated drills; and for all men from 31 to 45 the period should also be six weeks, of which seven days should be continuous training, and the remainder spread over isolated drills. The object of this was to perfect him in everything that went to make an efficient soldier. Reasons might be urged against this, but all men would be on a similar footing. The proposal was not opposed to common sense because the privilege of citizenship was that every man should defend his country. They must be prepared to show such an undaunted front that no nation would dare to attack them.

The Daily Telegraph, 1 August 1901, p. 6.

Hughes's compulsory training scheme met with some opposition when it was introduced; conscientious objectors who refused to serve were jailed.

1. 'The privilege of citizenship was that every man should defend his county'. Did the making of the Australian nation create a new citizenship criterion for Australian men?

2. Discuss in pairs or small groups the arguments for and against compulsory military training.

Advance Australia on women's citizenship

Advance Australia was the journal of the Australian Natives' Association (ANA) and of its 'sister' organisation, the Australasian Women's Association (AWA). The ANA founded the AWA in 1901, to offer a political education to native-born women. The ANA chose this path rather than allowing women to join its ranks, lest the presence of women disturb the enjoyment of alcohol at ANA 'smoke nights'. When the editor of *Advance Australia* considered the question of women's citizenship in 1906, he saw it in similarly binary terms.

Source 4.33

The Australian woman is destined to occupy a conspicuous position in her own land and in the broad affairs of the globe … she can exercise her birthright in national affairs, and her vote will have a marked influence for good, and the nation will be elevated, for her instinct, as well as her education, fits her to think and to vote intelligently and with a moral purport. In the responsibilities and dignity of citizenship the Australian woman is a peeress amongst the women of the nations …

In Australia men and women are really companions with a common comradeship and a national citizenship with mutual co-existent hopes and aspirations. The theory of the subordination of women held by Conservative nations … 'that she is only the shadow and attendant image of her lord, owing him a thoughtless and servile obedience', has been exploded and shattered by an intelligent democracy …

[The editor concluded by quoting the philosopher John Ruskin]

'Now the man's work for his own home is to secure its maintenance, progress, and defence; the woman's to secure its order, comfort and loveliness'. Expand both these functions. The man's duty as a member of a Commonwealth is to assist in the maintenance, in the advance, in the defence of the State. The woman's duty, as a member of the Commonwealth, is to assist in the ordering, in the comforting, and in the beautiful adornment of the State … what the woman is to be within her gates, as the centre of order, the balm of distress, and the mirror of beauty, that she is also to be without her gates, where order is more difficult, distress more imminent, loveliness more rare.

'The Australian Woman and Her Work', *Advance Australia*, vol. X, no. 9, 15 September 1906, pp. 241–2.

Australian women were among the first in the world to gain the right to vote. To claim for women a duty to 'assist in the ordering, in the comforting, and in the beautiful adornment of the State' was a progressive move in 1906.

USING HISTORICAL SOURCES AS EVIDENCE 4.11

Use Source 4.33 to answer the following questions.

1. What role was the editor offering for women as citizens?
2. How did the editor think women's citizenship functioned alongside male citizens?

↑**Source 4.34** Two female pioneers. (Left) Australia's first female political candidate, South Australian suffragette Catherine Helen Spence (1825–1910). South Australian women won the parliamentary vote in 1894 and Spence stood for office in 1897. (Right) Edith Cowan (1861–1932) was elected to the Western Australian Legislative Assembly in 1921 and was the first woman elected to any Australian parliament.

Walter Murdoch on being a citizen

Walter Murdoch was both an academic, specialising in studying and teaching literature, and a journalist writing a weekly column for the papers. The extract below was first published in the *Argus* newspaper.

Murdoch's short essays discussed complicated topics in simple, direct language which appealed to all kinds of readers. His biographer writes that 'No other writer in the history of Australian letters has built so wide a reputation on the basis of the essay as a form of communication'.[14]

Source 4.35

You and I are citizens whether we like it or not. It will not do to say that we prefer to be private individuals, and will leave others to be citizens if they like. 'Citizens' is simply the name we give to a human being when we think of the political side of him; you may say you have no political side, but it would be just as sensible to say that you have no left side. Man is by nature, as a great Greek political philosopher said, a political

Continued…

animal; you may determine not to be political but it would be just as sensible to determine not to be an animal. No, we are wheels in the great machine, whether we like it or not – but we are free wheels, free to choose between doing our work well and doing it badly. We are citizens and we cannot help being citizens; all that is left for us is to choose whether we will be good or bad citizens … the citizen's chief concern is with the community of which he is himself a member. To make the society in which we live a true *Commonwealth,* in the best sense of the term – not a mere collection of persons scrambling for wealth, each one seeking his own selfish ends without regard for others, – but a hearty comradeship for all noble purposes, each one striving for the good of all, and all together seeking for the most splendid and beautiful life possible to human beings, – that is the task of citizenship.

Walter Murdoch, *The Australian Citizen: An Elementary Account of Civic Rights and Duties*, Whitcombe and Tombs, Melbourne, 1912, p. 17.

FOCUS QUESTIONS 4.10

1. Writing in 1912, Walter Murdoch certainly intended 'man' to include 'woman' (see Source 4.35). Compare his description of 'the task of citizenship' with the quotation from Ruskin presented by the editor of *Advance Australia* (see Source 4.33). What are the similarities, and what are the differences?

2. All three of the writers quoted in this section describe citizenship not in terms of rights, but in terms of duties. Why do you think they took this so seriously?
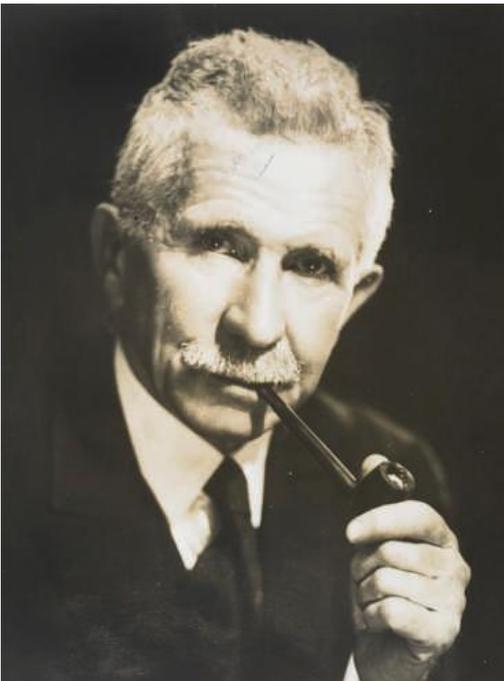
←**Source 4.36** *Sir Walter Murdoch,* 1920s (printed later) by an unknown artist. National Portrait Gallery, Australia.

Wealth and status

In the second half of the nineteenth century most of the Australian colonies experienced a long economic boom, leading to a high standard of living. This had an impact on the social and economic experiences of the new nation.

The historian Tony Dingle had this to say of Melbourne workers.

Average incomes in Australia during the gold rush years were the world's highest. Thereafter the American economy grew faster but Australia probably took second place on the international incomes table by 1891. Conclusions based on a comparison of international averages are notoriously suspect but other information supports the conclusion that Melbourne's working men were exceptionally well off when compared with workers elsewhere. Wage rates were far higher than in Britain – which migrants knew most about – while prices were roughly the same. Per capita meat and tea consumption were often twice as high as in Britain while home ownership was perhaps more widespread in Melbourne than in any other city of comparable size.

Tony Dingle, *Settling*, Fairfax, Syme and Weldon, Sydney, 1984, p. 116.

Although a severe depression dampened prosperity in the early 1890s, Dingle explains that in Victoria, especially from 1896, the government established wages boards in particular industries to set minimum rates for wages. The Harvester Judgement in 1907 (see Source 4.28) did the same for most workers in all states. These measures put Australian working men in a different position than working men in the United Kingdom.

However, there is little doubt that wealth and status was still uneven in Australia, but the gap between rich and poor was far smaller than in the United Kingdom. A study of wealth in Bendigo in 1890 found that the top one per cent held a third of all wealth, while in England the richest one per cent held over two-thirds of all wealth. There were also measures in Australia to help equalise wealth, including wages boards, the growth of unions, the Harvester Judgement 1907, and Commonwealth *Maternity Allowance Act, 1912*.

Also, there was as we have seen, a belief by the early 1900s in the 'voice of the people'; votes for women; equal and one citizenship between men and women; and other social attitudes about Australian identity that helped reduce the gap between rich and poor.

Of course, these ideas of equality did not extend to First Nations peoples who were controlled by special Aboriginal Acts. Nor did it extend to people of colour, with an Immigration Restriction Act that prevented them from entering the country; nor to Pacific Islander labourers and their families who, by the *Pacific Islander Labourers Act, 1901*, were sent back to their homelands.

4.5 Chapter summary

Here are some dot-points for you to consider and add to:

Continuities
- Ties to Britain were maintained in terms of immigration, sentiment and governance.
- White Australia and the British race were preserved.
- Indigenous citizenship was denied.
- Race decline in Australia was feared by many.
- Nationalism/Imperialism – Australian Britons.

Changes
- The Labor Party rose to the stage of taking government.
- Women's citizenship rights were redefined.
- The 'New Protection' linked wages to tariffs.
- The concepts of the basic wage and the family wage were begun.
- The definition of Australian citizenship changed.

4.6 End-of-chapter activities

The following tasks are designed to help strengthen your understanding of the material explored in this chapter and to encourage you to further analyse and evaluate the events, ideas, perspectives and experiences that shaped the new nation between 1890 and 1913.

Consolidating your understanding
Answer the following questions using the information in this chapter.

Events
1. Australia's federation has been described as unique. Explain why.
2. Explain the *Immigration Restriction Act, 1901*. What did it do and how did it reinforce ideas about race and national identity?
3. What did the *Commonwealth Maternity Allowance Act, 1912* provide women? Why was this considered progressive at the time? Why was a declining birth-rate concerning?

Research task
The *Immigration Restriction Act, 1901* was one part of what became known as the White Australia Policy. Other Acts also managed people of colour. Research the *Pacific Island Labourers Act, 1901* and complete the following questions:
1. Summarise the *Pacific Island Labourers Act, 1901*. What did it do? How many people were deported?
2. While race was arguably a key factor in driving this legislation, what else drove politicians to vote for this, particularly in Queensland?

3. To what extent were the White Australia policies introduced by the new nation effective in achieving their objectives? (Consider the information in Source 4.4 as you construct your response.)

Ideas, perspectives and experiences

1. Make a list of the ways ideas of race, national identity and class were present in the material discussed throughout this chapter.

Race	National identity	Class

2. Aboriginal people were only mentioned twice in the Constitution, both times were exclusionary. To what extent were the experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples unchanged by the creation of a federated Australia? Use the sources in this chapter, as well as your own research, to justify your response.

Research task

In pairs investigate the life of Quong Tart. You may find this website a useful place to start, https://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/9644.

To what extent does his experience reinforce and challenge ideas about race at this time in Australia?

Using historical sources as evidence

Analyse Sources 4.38 and 4.39 from 1910 and answer the questions that follow.

↑ **Source 4.38** 'Unoccupied White Australia' political advertisement 'Something for the Rising Generation', 1910. Artist: Gordon H. Woodhouse. Courtesy of State Library of Victoria.

↑**Source 4.39** Sheet music by W.E Naunton & H.J.W. Gyles, 'White Australia', 1910. Courtesy of Museums Victoria.

1. Copy and complete the following table for Sources 4.38 and 4.39.

Question	Answer
AUTHOR Who made the source and what do you know about them?	
CONTEXT When was the source made? What was happening during that time?	
AUDIENCE Who was the source made for? Who was going to read it?	
PURPOSE Why was the source created? What goal or purpose did it have?	
SIGNIFICANCE Why does the source matter? What changed because of it?	

2. Describe what you can see in Source 4.38. What solution are the creators putting forth for occupying central Australia?
3. What problems can you see with their plan?

Constructing an argument: essay writing

Evaluate the ways in which the experiences of people within Australia were changed as a result of constitutional and legislative decisions between 1900 and 1913. Use evidence to justify your response.
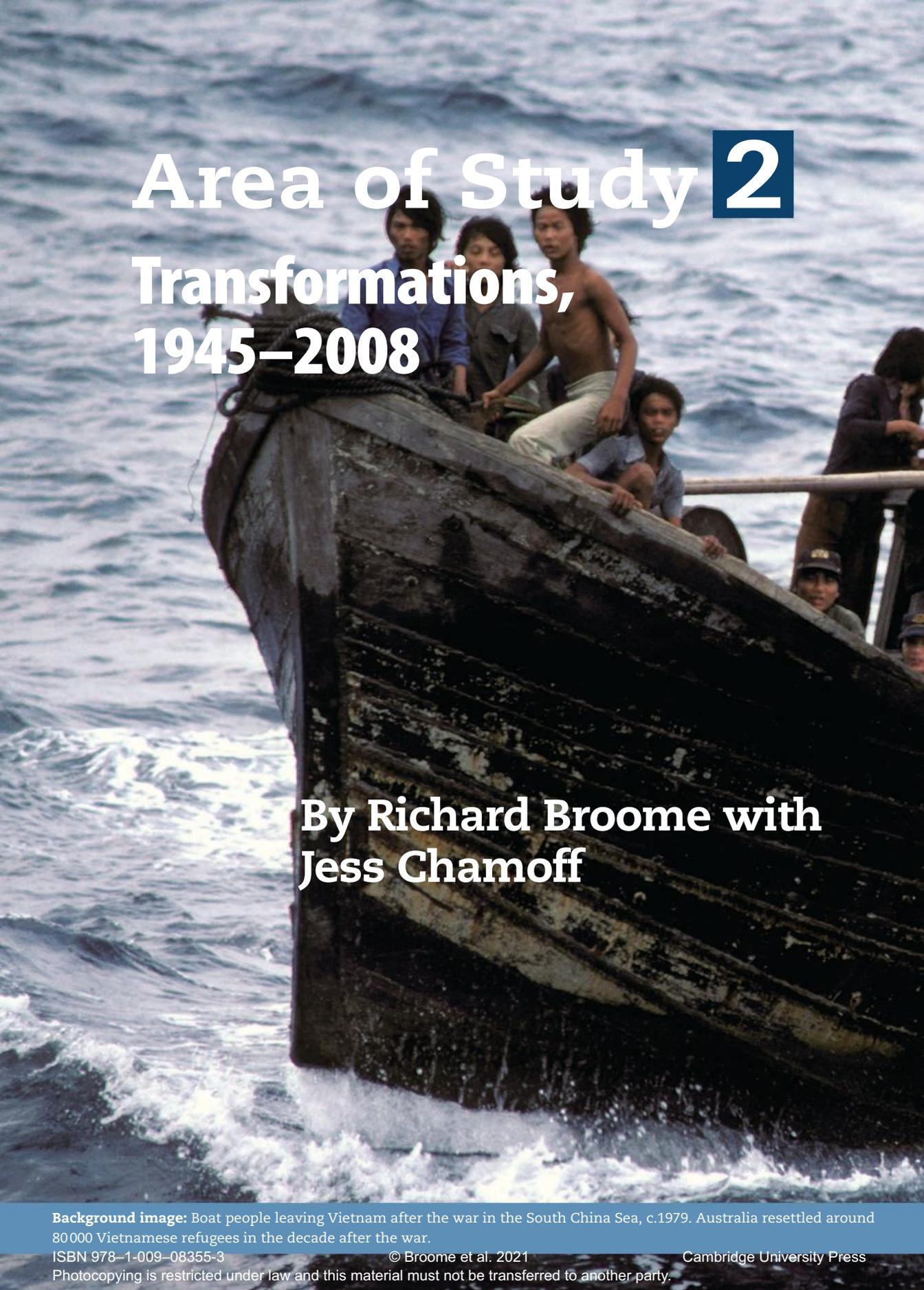
Area of Study **2**

Transformations, 1945–2008

By Richard Broome with Jess Chamoff
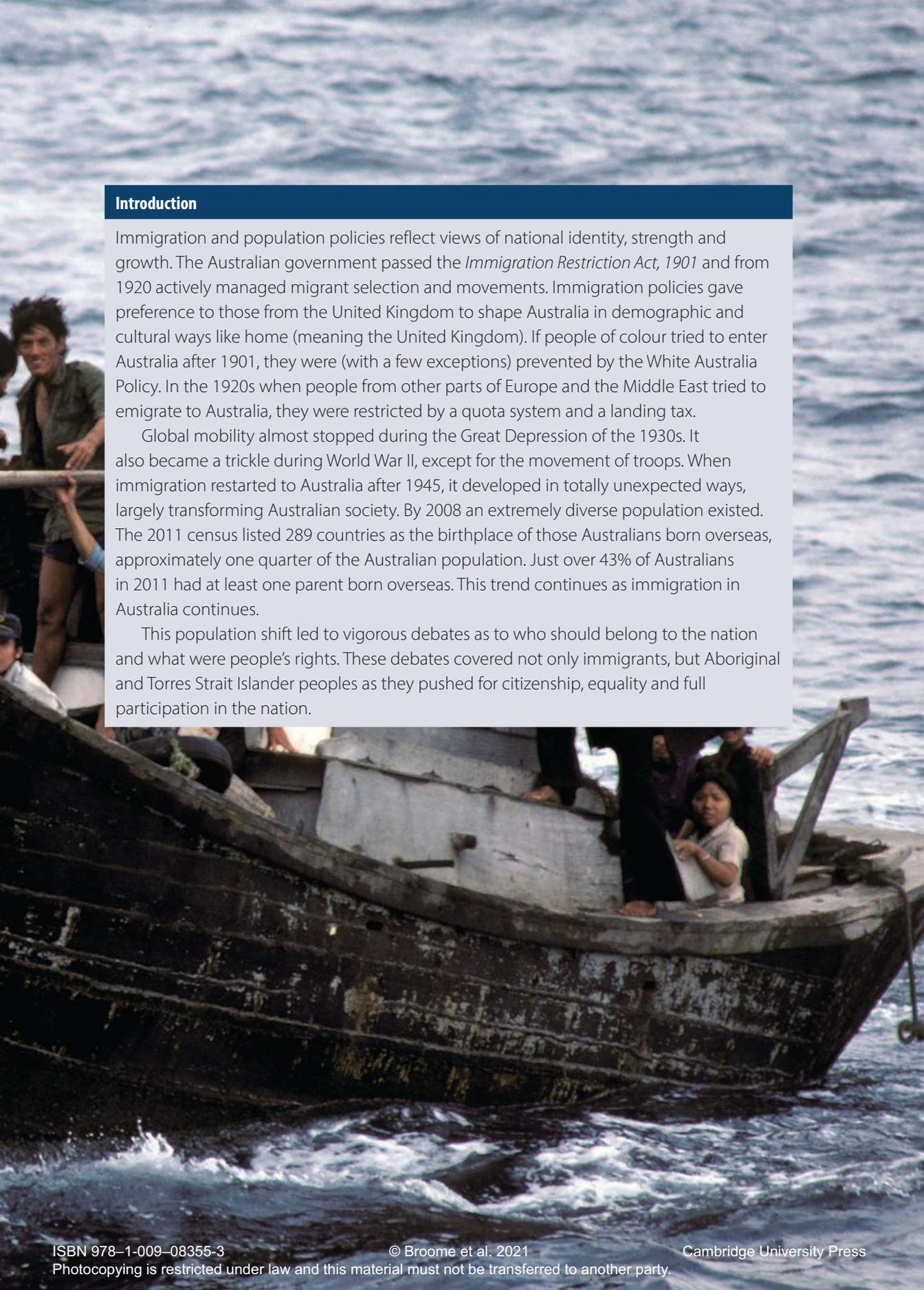
Introduction

Immigration and population policies reflect views of national identity, strength and growth. The Australian government passed the *Immigration Restriction Act, 1901* and from 1920 actively managed migrant selection and movements. Immigration policies gave preference to those from the United Kingdom to shape Australia in demographic and cultural ways like home (meaning the United Kingdom). If people of colour tried to enter Australia after 1901, they were (with a few exceptions) prevented by the White Australia Policy. In the 1920s when people from other parts of Europe and the Middle East tried to emigrate to Australia, they were restricted by a quota system and a landing tax.

Global mobility almost stopped during the Great Depression of the 1930s. It also became a trickle during World War II, except for the movement of troops. When immigration restarted to Australia after 1945, it developed in totally unexpected ways, largely transforming Australian society. By 2008 an extremely diverse population existed. The 2011 census listed 289 countries as the birthplace of those Australians born overseas, approximately one quarter of the Australian population. Just over 43% of Australians in 2011 had at least one parent born overseas. This trend continues as immigration in Australia continues.

This population shift led to vigorous debates as to who should belong to the nation and what were people's rights. These debates covered not only immigrants, but Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as they pushed for citizenship, equality and full participation in the nation.

Timeline

World events	Date	Australian events
	1945	
1945: World War II ends		**1945:** Department of Immigration established – Australia's first Ministry of Immigration formed
		1945: British Agreement signed – £10 fare for British immigrants only
1947: Cold War starts between the US and the USSR and their respective allies		**1947:** International Refugee Organization (IRO) Agreement – Displaced Persons refugees to come to Australia
1948: Universal Declaration of Human Rights – United Nations issues this key declaration		
1948: Beginning of the apartheid policy in South Africa		
	1950	
		1950: Australia's population reaches eight million
1951: The Colombo Plan regional organisation of 27 countries in the Asia–Pacific region commences		**1951:** Other Agreements to bring European immigrants
1953: First colour television released		
1955: Start of the Vietnam War		
		1958: Immigration Restriction Act and dictation test abolished
1959: World population reaches three billion		
	1960	
1963: Martin Luther King Jr delivers 'I Have a Dream' speech against racism		
1965: International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination		
		1966: Migration Act change – small relaxation of Asian entry requirements
		1967: Referendum on counting of and federal legislation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
1968: Martin Luther King Jr assassinated		

World events	Date	Australian events
	1970	
		1973: Migration Act change – end of the White Australia Policy
		1975: Queensland Aboriginal Act finally abolished (culmination of a process begun in 1961) – improving the civil rights of Indigenous peoples
		1975: *Racial Discrimination Act 1975* – landmark legislation against discrimination
1975: Fall of Saigon – this event marked the end of the Vietnam War		
		1977: In September boats from Vietnam arrive
	1980	
		1984: Historian Geoffrey Blainey queries the level of Asian intake, causing controversy
1986: Fire at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant		
1989: Tiananmen Square Massacre, Beijing – 4 June attack on student protesters		
1989: The fall of the Berlin Wall		
	1990	
1990–91: Gulf War between coalition forces led by the US and Iraq		
1991: The end of the Cold		**1992:** Redfern Speech – Paul Keating's address of reconciliation
		1996: Pauline Hanson's maiden speech in parliament on the politics of grievance
		1997: Bringing Them Home report released
	2000	
		2000: The Australian Declaration towards Reconciliation issued
2001: September 11 terrorist attacks in the US		**2001:** *Tampa* crisis – refugee boat controversy affects election
		2008: The Apology – PM Rudd apologises for stolen children

CHAPTER 5
Displaced Persons, 1945–1960

Chapter timeline

World events	Date	Australian events
	1945	
1945: World War II ends		**1945:** Dept of Immigration established – Australia's first Ministry of Immigration formed
		1946: British Agreement signed – £10 fare for British immigrants only
1947: Cold War starts between the US and the USSR and their respective allies		**1947:** International Refugee Organization (IRO) Agreement – Displaced Persons refugees to come to Australia
1948: Universal Declaration of Human Rights – United Nations issues this key declaration		
1948: Beginning of the apartheid policy in South Africa		
	1950	
		1950: Australia's population reaches eight million
1951: The Colombo Plan regional organisation of 27 countries in the Asia–Pacific region commences		**1951:** Other Agreements to bring European immigrants
1953: First colour television released		
1955: Start of the Vietnam War	**1955**	
		1958: Immigration Restriction Act and dictation test abolished
1959: World population reaches three billion		
	1960	

5.1 Introduction

INQUIRY QUESTIONS

- What shifts occurred in immigration policy in the late 1940s and why?
- How were immigrants received in the first 15 years after 1945?

In response to World War II (1939–1945), governments and public servants in Australia began planning in 1941 for the postwar world. Immigration and population policy were high on their reconstruction agenda. The veteran nationalist and former Prime Minister Billy Hughes, who was worried about population numbers, exclaimed to the House of Representatives in 1943: 'Australia is bleeding to death'. This was a call by Hughes to '**populate or perish**'. It was similar to Charles Darwin's natural selection defined next to Source 3.2 on p. 80: Would Australia be able to continue its policy of preference for British immigration, placing quotas on non-British subjects called 'aliens' and prohibiting all but a few token non-whites?

populate or perish this slogan, which rolled off the tongue, meant that nations needed large and strong populations, or they would be overtaken by stronger nations and perish

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Policies were developed in the context of low global immigration in the two previous decades and unprecedented wartime misery, economic upheaval and the death of at least 50 million combatants and civilians in Europe and Asia. Civilians were bombed, pushed from their homes by the tide of war and forced to flee. Many were transported to other places to become forced labourers. Millions faced internment and incarceration in death camps.

As the war wound down in Europe, the peace was marked by looting, revenge and rape, as well as acts of kindness as people scrounged for survival. Millions fled the growing control of Soviet Russia over eastern Europe. As the war ended, about 60 million people were officially designated as **Displaced Persons** and found refuge in camps in Germany set up by the International Refugee Organisation. For more on this period see Richard Broome's *Arriving*.[1]

5.2 Significant events, 1945–1960

INQUIRY QUESTION

How did immigration change Australia between 1945 and 1960?

Population facts

W.D. Forsyth, a historian and researcher at the University of Melbourne and later a diplomat, wrote *The Myth of Open Spaces. Australian, British and World Trends of Population and Migration*, but its publication was prevented by the outbreak of war. However, debates about postwar reconstruction stimulated its publication in 1942. Forsyth, a demographer (one who studies populations), argued two main points.

First, most of Australia was not suitable for settlement due to low rainfall and infertile soils. Only one per cent of Australia was cultivated, 10% of which was purchased so far, and a half was under pastoral leases being marginal land. Forsyth added (from a European perspective): 'Over a third of the area of the continent remains entirely unoccupied because it is economically valueless'.[2]

Second, population and migration policy should be based on the view that the age of migration had ended: 'nations can no longer hope to solve or even much alleviate their difficulties by shifting people around the globe'.[3] The best source of immigrants was now Asia, but this was impossible due to prevailing social attitudes in Australia symbolised by the White Australia Policy.[4]

Forsyth's major research findings were:

Source 5.1

We have reached the end of an era of unprecedented European emigration.

The Australian population is now only maintaining a rate of growth sufficient for replacement [of its population] … probably around 1970–80, the population would not increase further and would decline somewhat, unless fertility increased meanwhile.

Large scale migration from Britain is a thing of the past.

If it is politically desirable for Australia to have a considerably larger

Continued…

population … the prejudice against immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe will have to be overcome by careful selection, by education, by investigation of causes of friction. Refugee migrations should be regarded as potential sources of selected new citizens.

Whatever arrangements are made about immigration, the permanent addition by these means to the Australian population appears likely to be limited by the difficulty of absorbing large numbers and by the declining fertility of the immigrant peoples as well as the tendency of immigrants to adopt the reproductive fashion of the country they enter … Hence a recovery of population growth in Australia must be chiefly a matter of social and not of migration policy. The principal population problem of Australia is not migration but fertility.

W. D. Forsyth, *The Myth of Open Spaces. Australian, British and World Trends of Population and Migration*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1942, pp. 202–5.

In 1944 Dr Frank Gaha, the Labor Member for Denison, added to the population debate with this graph tabled in the House of Representatives:
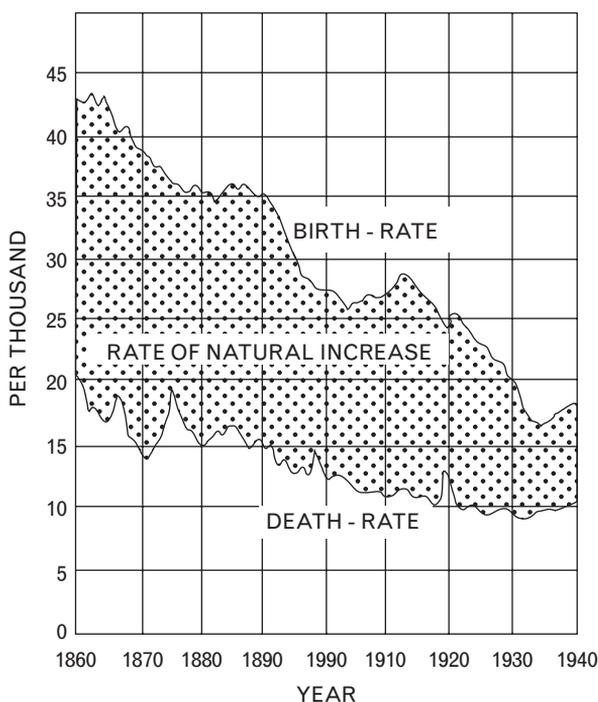
←**Source 5.2**
Australia's birth, death and natural increase rates 1860–1940, *Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates*, v. 178, 16 March 1944, p. 1493

Those who read Forsyth's book or studied population issues in the early 1940s were aware of the factors in population growth in Australia over the previous three generations.

Here are the figures listed concisely by the Department of Immigration. 'Natural increase' is the growth in population from births each year in Australia. 'Net overseas migration' is the difference between the number of those arriving and departing Australia in any one year.

Components of population increase in Australia 1860–1945

Period	Pop. in millions at period's start	% gain net overseas migration	% gain natural increase	Migration gain as % of pop. increase
1860	1.097	2.18	2.22	50
1861–70	1.145	14.54	29.30	33
1871–80	1.647	11.64	23.79	33
1881–90	2.231	17.15	24.07	42
1891–00	3.151	0.79	18.69	4
1901–10	3.765	3.14	16.45	18
1911–20	4.425	5.02	17.60	23
1921–30	5.411	5.62	14.35	28
1931–40	6.500	0.47	8.24	5
1941–45	7.077	0.11	4.77	2

Adapted from *Australian Immigration Consolidated Statistics*, no. 6, 1972, table 2, Department of Immigration, Canberra, 1972.

The population debate of the 1940s became even more pertinent once the nation was in crisis. Australia declared war on Japan on 8 December 1941 after the bombing of the American naval base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. On 15 February 1942 Japan stunned the Allies when it captured the British base in Singapore along with many British and Australian troops. On 19 February the Australian Prime Minister John Curtin made the following announcement:

Source 5.4

I have been advised by the Department of the Air that a number of bombs were dropped on Darwin this morning. Australia now has experienced physical contact of war within Australia. As the head of the Australian Government I know there is no need to say anything other than these words – total mobilisation is the Government's policy for Australia. Until the time elapses when all necessary machinery can be put into effect all Australians must voluntarily answer the Government's call for complete giving of everything to the nation.

Quoted in F.K. Crowley, ed., *Modern Australia in Documents 1939–1970*, Wren Publishing, Melbourne, 1973, vol 2, p. 60.

Curtin downplayed the destruction, given much of Darwin was destroyed. About 250 people were killed and 400 wounded; airfields, aircraft and shipping were damaged; and eight ships destroyed.[5]

USING HISTORICAL SOURCES AS EVIDENCE 5.1

1. Identify the key arguments Forsyth makes in Source 5.1.
2. Using Sources 5.2 and 5.3, what was concerning about Australia's population statistics in the 1930s and 1940s?
3. Suggest some reasons why Curtin would have downplayed the bombing of Darwin.

Populate or perish: postwar immigration schemes

←**Source 5.5**
Arthur Calwell, Minister for Immigration in 1947

In 1945, the federal Labor government formed the first Ministry of Immigration in Australia's history and appointed Arthur Calwell as Minister for Immigration. This is what Calwell said in his first Ministerial Statement, which signalled possible new directions in Australian immigration policy.

Source 5.6

> The attraction of new residents to Australia is, however, unlikely to be an easy task. The birth-rate in Britain and European countries has been declining to an extent alarming to their governments, and we may be faced with the position that those governments will not willingly encourage their nationals to immigrate … Apart from schemes of organised and assisted British migration, the door to Australia is always open within the limits of our existing legislation to people from the various dominions, the United States of America, and from European continental countries who are sound in health and who will not become a charge on the community, to come here and make their homes.

Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates, v. 184, 2 August 1945, pp. 4911–15.

In 1946 Calwell admitted a small number of Jewish refugees, some of whom had been trapped in transit by the outbreak of war in 1939. Australia had agreed in 1938, at the Evian Conference on Jewish refugees from Nazi oppression, to take 15 000 over three years, but only 3000 arrived before the war. Calwell also allowed another 1000 to enter under a 'close relative' scheme. However, an outcry from the public (see below and Sources 5.28 to 5.34) ended the 'close relative' scheme and slowed the Evian refugees to only a quarter of passengers on any one ship.

Calwell hoped to resume immigration from the United Kingdom, topped up with northern European immigration. In March 1946 he signed a bilateral agreement with the British government by which both would contribute to the cost of British immigrants sponsored by churches, employers and other bodies in Australia. The cost to the adult emigrant was capped at a mere £10 (several weeks wages at the time), hence the later common term '£10 Poms'.

By December 1947, 400 000 people from the United Kingdom (England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland) had applied for an assisted passage to Australia, so desperate were they to escape the harsh conditions of postwar Britain and Ireland. Only a fraction of these arrived, as shipping was unavailable at the end of the war to bring them. However, by 1970, 1.5 million Britons had emigrated to Australia, most under the £10 scheme.

James Hammerton and Alistair Thomson commented:

Source 5.7

> These British immigrants comprised one of the largest planned migrations of the twentieth century … Throughout the postwar period more Australian immigrants came from Britain than from any other country (it was not until 1996 that Britain was pushed into second place by settlers from New Zealand), and though Australia's massive postwar immigration scheme included large numbers of migrants from other, non-English-speaking countries, throughout the 1950s and 1960s the British comprised never less than one third and at times more than half of all settler arrivals.
>
> And yet the British were to become invisible migrants, in a number of ways. The British had controlled and dominated the European settlement of Australia in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and thus ensured the predominance of the English language and the adaptation of Australian cultural and political life to British ways … Immigration Minister Harold Holt claimed in 1950, 'this is a British community, and we want to keep it a British community'. It was assumed that British migrants would fit easily into Australia's 'British way of life'.

A James Hammerton and Alistair Thomson, *Ten Pound Poms. Australia's Invisible Migrants. A Life History of Postwar British Emigration to Australia*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, 2005, p. 9.

↑**Source 5.8** British ex-servicemen bound for jobs at the Snowy Mountains Hydro-electric Scheme, 1950. Courtesy *Australia Today*, Commercial Travellers Association of Victoria Collection, University of Melbourne Archives.

Of the 100 000 people who worked on the Snowy Mountains Hydro-Electric Scheme between 1949 and 1974, more than 65% were migrants from over 30 countries. Most of the workers were men, having left wives and children back home to come to work on the Snowy.

The Australian government also encouraged northern Europeans to immigrate to Australia as they were also considered white. See the table below for the approximate numbers from the main preferred groups who came to Australia in the three decades after 1947. Most of these groups, except those from the United Kingdom (UK), had arrived by the early 1960s.

Country of origin of preferred immigrants to Australia 1947–1981   ←Source 5.9

UK 1 247 000	Holland 174 000	Germany 148 000	Austria 32 000	France 18 000
Switzerland 17 000	Finland 16 000	Denmark 10 000	Sweden 5000	Norway 5000

Richard Broome, *Arriving*, Fairfax, Syme & Weldon, Sydney, 1984, pp. 197–8.

The Australian government hoped for 70 000 immigrants a year, but in 1947 only 30 000 arrived and not all of them were the preferred British immigrants. In November 1947 Calwell announced a new policy to parliament following a trip to the Displaced Persons camps of the International Refugee Organisation in Europe.

He told parliament:

Source 5.10

Today, there are in Germany some 850,000 displaced persons, mainly of Baltic, Polish and Yugoslav origin. Their occupations are many and varied, and they include agriculturalists, hospital workers, shipwrights, light manufacturing workers, building workers, engineers as well as dentists, doctors and other professional men. These people, whose normal standards of living have been compatible with our own, and who even now do not, in a large proportion of cases, consist of oppressed classes, represent an ideal source of migrants who will fit in smoothly into our way of life and who will help to meet Australia's labour shortages in the fields of industry and agriculture …

To implement this agreement, an Australian selection team, including doctors, has been appointed, and operates under the aegis [protection] of the head of the Australian Military Mission at Berlin. Migrants are selected on the basis of their suitability for employment and absorption into our Australian community. They undergo medical examination by Australian doctors, including X-ray examinations for tuberculosis, and are subject to a triple security screening. While waiting for ships, selected migrants are accommodated in a transit camp under the Australian flag and are given preliminary instructions in elementary English, arithmetic – including weights and measures, coin values, etc – and social studies, including our

Continued…

…Continued

way of life. These studies will be continued during the voyage to Australia … [and also at Bonegilla a former military camp near Wodonga]. The decision to accommodate these migrants on arrival in a well organised reception and training centre is an entirely new departure from previous immigration plans. It is, in fact, revolutionary, and is the first experiment of its kind to be undertaken in this country.

Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates, v. 195, 28 November 1947, pp. 2916–28.

←**Source 5.11** A young couple at a Displaced Person Residents IRO camp, Uelzen, West Germany, 1949. Who knows where they ended up?

In 1947 Australia agreed to take 12 000 Displaced Persons a year over four years, but soon increased this number to 20 000 and then to 45 000 per annum. Overall 182 000 came under the program, proportionally a greater intake than any country except Israel.

→**Source 5.12** Displaced Persons to Australia by 1951 showing country of origin (in thousands)

Poland 60 000	Latvia 20 000	Czechoslovakia 10 000	Romania 2000
Yugoslavia 23 000	Hungary 13 000	Estonia 6000	Others 13 000
Ukraine 20 000	Lithuania 10 000	USSR 5000	Total 182 159

Malcom J. Proudfoot, *European Refugees 1939–1945. A Study in Forced Population Movement*, North Western University Press, Evanston, Illinois, 1956, p. 427.

When the Displaced Persons program ended in 1951, Australia formed immigration agreements with eight European countries: Malta in 1949; Netherlands and Italy in 1951; Germany, Austria and Greece in 1952; Spain in 1958; and Belgium in 1961, to maintain the supply. However, White Australia remained a rock-solid policy as the historian Geoffrey Bolton explained:

In his anxiety to prove that large-scale European migration would not threaten Australian living standards, Calwell administered the White Australia Policy with all the thoroughness of his bureaucratic training. Several hundred South East Asian refugees from the Japanese invasions of 1942 remained in Australia after the war; Calwell determined that all should be deported … Calwell stood firm against the slightest tincture or Asianization in Australia, believing that future security lay in the rapid and successful encouragement of more and more Europeans.

Geoffrey Bolton, *The Middle Way. The Oxford History of Australia*, volume 5, 1942–1988, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1990, p. 56.

5.3 Influential ideas, 1945–1960

INQUIRY QUESTION

What were the influential ideas from 1945 to 1960?

Britishness and whiteness

What ideas shaped the reception of these ethnically diverse postwar immigrants? Australians in the 1950s still considered themselves to be British. Young Queen Elizabeth was the much-admired monarch, children sang 'God Save the Queen' at school assemblies and adults stood as the anthem was played at public gatherings, including before a film was screened at the cinema. Indeed, 70 years later Australia is still not a republic.

In 1930 the young and later eminent Australian historian W.K. (Keith) Hancock wrote this of Britishness.

Among the Australians pride of race counted for more than love of country. They exalted in the … crimson thread of kinship which ran through them all; and declared that the unity of Australia meant nothing if it did not imply a united race. Defining themselves as 'independent Australian Britons' they believed each word essential and exact, but laid most stress upon the last … Our fathers were homesick Englishmen, or Irishmen, or Scots; and their sons, who have made themselves at home in the continent, have not yet forgotten those tiny islands in the North Sea. A country is a jealous mistress and patriotism is commonly an exclusive passion; but it is not impossible for Australians, nourished by a glorious literature and haunted by old memories, to be in love with two soils.

W.K. Hancock, *Australia*, Ernest Benn Ltd, London, 1930, pp. 56–8.

The historian W.D. Forsyth, in 1942, wrote this of Australia's past immigration.

Source 5.15

Scratch White Australia and you find British Australia. In practice the policy of excluding Asiatics meant preserving Australia for British people …

Politicians are fond of asserting that Australians are ninety-eight per cent British. This is one of the myths of the twentieth-century. Jens Lyng, in his book *Non-Britishers in Australia*, traces the history and achievements of the many foreign elements which have intermingled with the British stock. The gold rushes of the 'fifties, the decade of greatest immigration throughout Australian history, doubled Australia's population and brought in a varied assortment of national types … While it is impossible to estimate accurately what is the percentage of the Australian population of British origin, there is good reason to believe it to be rather below than above ninety per cent.

Australian customs and culture are none the less almost wholly British. Some Australians think that a more varied, interesting and fruitful life, in a word a richer civilization, would be achieved by a population which comprised more diverse traditions. But this view applies to European peoples only, very few Australians are prepared to experiment with intermixtures of colour. Before the present war there was a considerable section of public opinion in favour of white alien immigration [non-British], but very little support indeed for suggestions for small annual quotas of immigrants from the various countries of Asia.

W.D. Forsyth, *The Myth of Open Spaces. Australian, British and World Trends of Population and Migration*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1942, pp. 175–6.

Below is a recent definition of 'whiteness'. The word 'white' was used in Australia from the 1850s and the *Immigration Restriction Act, 1901* was called in popular terms the 'White Australia Policy'. The word 'whiteness' was rarely used until recently but refers to the identity and privileges of those who identify as white.

Source 5.16

White people often have White skin, which actually is not really White, of course, but a pale/pinkish/ off-White shade that has come to be labelled as White. Associated with that skin pigmentation are a variety of other physical traits regarding especially, the shape of noses and lips and the texture of hair. White people typically can trace their ancestors to Europe, especially the United Kingdom, northern Europe, and Scandinavia – what many think of as the places that are the source of the people who are most authentically White. But being White is not really about how people look or where our ancestors come from.

White people are most clearly defined as those people living in a White-supremacist society who are understood to be White by other individuals, especially those who make and/or execute political, economic, and social policies in the institutions of that society. People are White, in this sense,

Continued…

…Continued

when they are perceived as being White by a police officer, by the person interviewing job candidates, or by the loan officer of a bank. A person is White if people with power believe the person to be White.

At the collective level, therefore, 'White' also is not a description of biology but a term that simply means that an identifiable group of people are perceived as White by those with power.

Robert Jensen, 'Whiteness', *The Routledge Companion to Race and Ethnicity*, Stephen M. Caliendo & Charlton D. McIlwain, Routledge, London, 2nd ed., 2021, pp. 26–7.

Size matters

Immigration is often justified in terms of national strength: to populate or perish. Here is what Arthur Calwell said in his first Ministerial Statement in August 1945.

Source 5.17

If Australians have learned one lesson from the Pacific war now moving to a successful conclusion, it is surely that we cannot continue to hold our island continent for ourselves and our descendants unless we greatly increase our numbers. We are but 7,000,000 people and we hold 3,000,000 square miles of this earth's surface. Our coastline extends for 12,000 miles and our density of population is only 2.5 persons per square mile. It would be prudent for us, therefore, not to ignore the possibility of a further formidable challenge within the next quarter of a century to our right to hold this land. We may have only those next 25 years in which to make the best possible use of our second chance to survive. Our first requirement is additional population. We need it for reasons of defence and for the fullest expansion of our economy …

It has been proven by hard experience over long periods that the maximum effective population absorption capacity in any expanding country is usually somewhere about 2 per cent of its numbers. This figure includes the net increase of population, either by the excess of births over deaths, or the excess of arrivals over departures, or a combination of both. Two per cent of the present Australian population is approximately 140,000. The net increase, being the excess of births over deaths, has averaged, during the last five years, approximately 70,000 a year. This would leave, therefore, a migration ceiling of 70,000 a year, assuming that the economy was fully expanded to take the maximum number.

Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates, v. 184, 2 August 1945, pp. 4911–15.

Robert Menzies, Leader of the Opposition, concurred:

Source 5.18

So long as we are a population of only 7,000,000 or within measurable distance of that number, holding this vast continent, it is absurd for us to pretend that we can describe ourselves in real terms as an independent power … From the point of view of Australian independent existence and national integrity, it is vital that our population shall be increased.

[Menzies added a second point]

Either we shall place upon a static number of people in Australia a steadily increasing burden so as to maintain a rising level of social benefits, or we must get into this country from other parts of the world a few million people over some period of years, if we are to have the working, producing, contributing population that will be needed to sustain what everyone wants to see in the way of social betterment.

Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates, v. 184, 2 August 1945, pp. 4976–80.

←**Source 5.19** 'They'll Help Make Australia Great'. Courtesy *Australians of Tomorrow*, Department of Immigration, 1948.

Assimilation

Joseph Yi, a South Korean political scientist, recently defined assimilation as being:

Source 5.20

From the Greek *assimilatio* ('to render similar'), 'assimilation' refers to the complex processes in which immigrants and their descendants integrate themselves into the host country.

Joseph Yi, 'Assimilation', *The Routledge Companion to Race and Ethnicity*, Stephen M. Caliendo & Charlton D. McIlwain, Routledge, London, 2nd ed., 2021, p. 114.

In 1945 Calwell said this about potential non-British new arrivals:

Source 5.21

The Australian people must help newcomers to become assimilated. We have been too prone in the past to ostracise those of alien birth and then blame them for segregating themselves and forming foreign communities. It is we, not they, who are generally responsible for this condition of affairs.

Continued…

…Continued

…. Unfortunately, campaigns are fostered in this country from time to time on racial and religious grounds by persons who have ulterior motives to serve. The activities of such people cannot be too strongly condemned. They are anti-Australian and anti-Christian, and make not for national unity and national well-being but for the creation of discord and bitterness that is harmful to Australia at home and abroad.

Ministerial Statement, *Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates*, v. 184, 2 August 1945, pp. 4911–15.

Robert Menzies, Leader of the Opposition, supported mass immigration, adding:

Source 5.22

In the first place, we must not think of migrants into Australia as competitors; we must think of them primarily as assets and as those who, by becoming consumers, will themselves stimulate production in this country. If we are continually to harp in our minds on the aspect that they are coming here to snatch a job, to take business, to compete with us in this or that avenue, we shall have such a false view of migration that we shall never be able to attract real migrants. If we think of migrants, when they arrive here, as outsiders and not as new Australians, then again we shall make a blunder, the repercussions of which may in the long run serve to destroy the best devised migration scheme that can be introduced … [we] must say to the immigrant to Australia, 'The moment you arrive on this soil you are an Australian citizen'.

Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates, v. 184, 29 August 1945, pp. 4976–80.

In 1950 the first of many annual Citizenship Conventions was held to facilitate the assimilation of New Australians. The Good Neighbour Council was formed in 1950 with many local committees to facilitate migrant absorption.

FOCUS QUESTIONS 5.3

1. What is assimilation?
2. Outline Calwell and Menzies's views on assimilation and non-British migration using Sources 5.17, 5.18, 5.21 and 5.22.
3. To what extent did World War II change political attitudes towards immigration?

Ethnocentrism, prejudice and xenophobia

The next three terms are important to understand how groups interact.

An American academic Davia Cox Downey defined '**ethnocentrism**' as:

ethnocentrism a term commonly used to describe a group-held belief that one's group is the centre of everything

Ethnocentrism is a term commonly used to describe a group held belief that one's group is the center of everything, and that all others should be rated with reference to it. This term has been extended to understand in-group/ out-group violence, intolerance and … by the mid-1900s, **ethnocentrism** had come to stand for individuals' unsophisticated reactions to cultural differences … Ethnocentric persons will express their disdain by criticising the outgroup in moralistic or pseudo-patriotic terms.

Davia Cox Downey, 'Ethnocentrism', *The Routledge Companion to Race and Ethnicity*, Stephen M. Caliendo & Charlton D. McIlwain, Routledge, London, 2nd ed., 2021, p.149.

prejudice learned beliefs and values that lead an individual or group of individuals to be biased for or against members of particular groups

Ellis Cashmore, a British sociologist, defined '**prejudice**' this way:

Source 5.24

Prejudice: From the Latin *prae*, before, *judicium*, judgement, this may be defined as learned beliefs and values that lead an individual or group of individuals to be biased for or against members of particular groups prior to actual experience of those groups. Technically then there is positive and negative prejudice, though, in race and ethnic relations, the term usually refers to the negative aspect when a group inherits or generates hostile views about an undistinguishable group based on generalisations. These generalisations are invariably derived from inaccurate or incomplete information about the other group.

Ellis Cashmore, ed., *Encyclopedia of Race and Ethnic Studies,* Routledge, London, 2004, p. 329.

xenophobia literally means 'fear of strangers'

Two political scientists defined '**xenophobia**' this way:

Source 5.25

The etymological meaning of xenophobia comes from the Greek words 'xeno' that means stranger and 'phobia' that means fear. Thus, xenophobia literally means 'fear of strangers' … the stranger has come to be equated with foreigners or immigrants and second, xenophobia has come to always include a derogatory understanding of immigrants. Thus, a contemporary understanding of xenophobia is to view it as an antipathy of immigrants or foreigners based upon fear. Xenophobia is partly an attitude, but it also includes an affective part, fear, that is intrinsic to xenophobia. The fear results from a situation where individuals perceived that their individual or their group's position is being threatened. The threat does not have to be based on real circumstances but is almost always being perceived by the xenophobic person as being a real existing threat.

Beyza Buyuker and Eduardo Salinas, 'Xenophobia', *The Routledge Companion to Race and Ethnicity*, Stephen M. Caliendo & Charlton D. McIlwain, Routledge, London, 2nd ed., 2021, p. 272.

1. In pairs or small groups, make a list of recent examples of xenophobia, prejudice and ethnocentrism.
2. Write each definition in Sources 5.23 to 5.25 in your own words.
3. Are these terms complimentary? Why/why not?
4. Which of these three terms describe Britishness?
5. Which of these terms describe support for the White Australia Policy?

←**Source 5.26** 'Nearer, Clearer, Deadlier than Before', by Norman Lindsay, *The Bulletin*, 18 December 1946. Courtesy Norman Lindsay estate.

USING HISTORICAL SOURCES AS EVIDENCE 5.2

1. Using Source 5.26, outline Norman Lindsay's argument. (Remember to include specific references to the image and the caption within your response.)
2. Explain which terms in Sources 5.23–5.25 best describe the emotions in the image.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948

Australia played a key role in the creation of the United Nations in 1945. Herbert Vere Evatt, a former Australian Attorney General and High Court judge, was a key figure in that move. In 1948 he became President of the United Nations General Assembly. He was a champion of civil liberties and supported the creation and adoption by the United Nations of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. An Australian diplomat William Hodgson was one of the nine people who drafted the Declaration, which Australia voted for at the General Assembly.

This is part of its text, which contained a preamble and 30 articles. Articles 13 and 14 are pertinent to our study investigation.

… Whereas the peoples of the United Nations have in the Charter reaffirmed their faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person and in the equal rights of men and women and have determined to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom, …

Now, Therefore THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY proclaims THIS UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations, to the end that every individual and every organ of society, keeping this Declaration constantly in mind, shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms and by progressive measures, national and international, to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance, both among the peoples of Member States themselves and among the peoples of territories under their jurisdiction.

Article 1 All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.

Article 2 Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self-governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty.

Article 13.

(1) Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each state.

(2) Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country.

Article 14.

(1) Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution.

(2) This right may not be invoked in the case of prosecutions genuinely arising from non-political crimes or from acts contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

United Nations, 'Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)', proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly in Paris on 10 December 1948, UN website.[6]

INQUIRY QUESTION

What do perspectives from 1945 to 1960 reveal about who was to be allowed to enter Australia?

Although Australia signed up to support the voluntary code of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and Arthur Calwell and Robert Menzies called for tolerance towards newcomers, tensions arose due to the new sources of Australian immigration. The following documents will allow you to understand the range and depth of attitudes.

Perspectives on Jewish refugees

In 1946 the arrival of a few thousand Jewish refugees created controversy. Cartoonists Norman Hetherington and Unk White of *The Bulletin* weekly newspaper drew these three images.

→**Source 5.28** 'The Promised Land' by Norman Hetherington, *The Bulletin*, 4 December 1946

'The Promised Land' by Norman Hetherington (*Bulletin*, 4 December 1946).
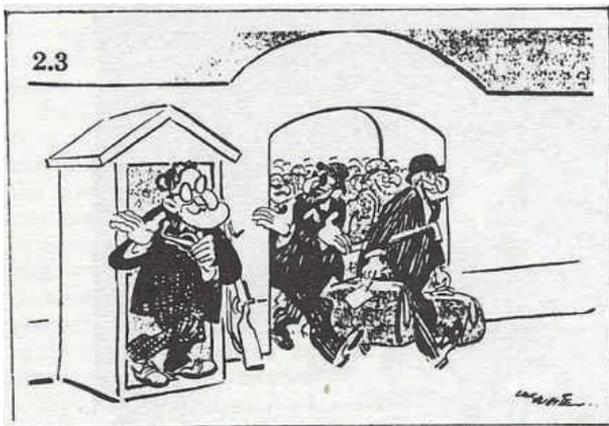
↑**Source 5.29** This cartoon by Unk White, *The Bulletin*, 22 January 1947, had this original caption. 'When the Hwalien berthed in Darwin nearly 500 "European" refugee immigrants swarmed along the wharf and overran the town. They are a section of more than 2000 "European" immigrants in Shanghai who have been granted permission to land in Australia.' 'Halt! Who goes dere?'/'Anodder five hundred of your Jewish Brotérés.'/'Pass, vriendts!/All's vell'.

↑**Source 5.30** 'The Pied Harper', by Norman Hetherington, *The Bulletin*, 19 February 1947. The original caption included the words: 'In August, a year after the end of the war with Japan, Australia received 1,941 immigrants, but persons departed totalled 2,606'.

1. Identify and describe the message of each cartoon (see Sources 5.28–5.30).
2. Explain how these sources challenge Menzies and Calwell's views on postwar migration.
3. To what extent are the ideas of ethnocentrism, prejudice and xenophobia present in Sources 5.28–5.30?

Sources 5.31–5.33 reveal newspaper comments from February 1947 on Jewish refugee settlers.

Source 5.31

In 1947, Communists were the most feared group in Australia. The Soviet Union (Russia) established control over much of Eastern Europe after World War II and even Germany was divided into East and West, the East being Communist and under Soviet influence. Also, in early 1947 Communist forces under Mao Tse-tung were close to taking control of China. *The Bulletin* was suggesting some Communists might enter Australia posed as refugees.

Scared by public reactions to the arrival of the *Hwa Lien* from Shanghai with 300 European Jews, alleged victims of the Nazi terror, though they were decidedly not penniless and all had accommodation provided for them in advance, Mr Calwell announced that no more landing permits would be issued on 'humanitarian' grounds. People who have made a study of the workings of his crooked mind … looked for nasty sequels, and in that sense they were not disappointed.

… it was stated that thousands more could be expected in the next few months. Mr Calwell denied the thousands, for what his denial may be worth, and went through the motions of declaring that ships carrying refugees from European ports would in future be limited to a 25 per cent portion of Jews. It is beyond his power to impose any such limit unless he cancels the equivalent landing permits in advance: and according to Australia House about 10,000 persons have them.

Parliament meets today. The Opposition should at once move for a select committee to go into the whole matter of Jewish immigration. Apart from the obvious danger of creating an alien problem by introduction of foreign Jews in numbers sufficient to swamp the Australian-born Jewish community – and among them there are certain to be many Communists, if not others with terrorist sympathies – the business has an ugly look and a rank smell. In three or four months there will have come to Australia nearly twice as many foreign Jews as the number of British immigrants assigned to any of the States for the whole of 1947.

The Bulletin, 19 February 1947.

The Sun newspaper reported:

Source 5.32

Scores of Europeans, bearing concentration camp numbers and the marks of years of ill treatment yesterday reached Melbourne after a three month journey from France. They were passengers from the French steamer *Monkay*, which arrived in Sydney on Tuesday. There were hysterical scenes at Spencer St when families broken up before the war were reunited. … Mrs A. Friedman who had a grim time in Belgium during the war was met by her grand-daughter Helen, who lives in Melbourne. Mrs W. Klein of Melbourne greeted her niece, Mrs Alla Tran from Belgium …

The Sun, 13 February 1947.

The *(Melbourne) Herald* published an article headlined: 'Gallup Poll Finds Most Australians Oppose Taking Homeless Jews'.

According to a recent **Gallup Poll**, almost 6 out of every 10 Australians think this country should not join in a world-wide plan to take in some of the homeless. There are said to be 600,000 Jewish people in Europe looking for homes in other countries. … People interviewed were told of this suggestion and were then asked: 'Do you think Australia should, or should not, take part in such a plan?'

Of every 100 interviewed: 58 say Australia should not take part, 37 say Australia should, and five are undecided. Neither sex, age, nor political affiliation makes any difference to people's opinions. Analysis by occupation, however shows that professional people and business executives are almost equally divided on the question. On the other hand, 2 out of 3 semi-skilled and unskilled workers are opposed to any extension of Jewish immigration to Australia. Analysis of comments indicates that much of the opposition to Jewish immigration arises from the acute housing shortage.

(Melbourne) Herald, 10 May 1947.

Ernest Platz conducted research with 1322 Jewish refugees who arrived in Australia between 1936 and 1948 and used government data to produce a report in 1950. He found:

Source 5.34

Of the 8000 Jewish men, women and children who, before the war sought refuge in Australia from the Nazi Terror in Europe, 3,500 men between the ages of 18 and 45 years volunteered for military service as soon as they were permitted to join the forces (February 1942) … On the home front, many of them who did not qualify for military service worked in essential occupations … There were scientists and research workers, and experts who set up new industries, manufacturing goods which were previously imported. Refugees contributed in particular to the manufacture of optical instruments and other precision work … These immigrants have created jobs far in excess of the number of jobs taken by the wage-earners. For every refugee in employment, there was many a one who created a job for himself and two new jobs for Australians. These facts disprove the charge that Jewish migrants take jobs from Australians.

Ernest Platz, *New Australians. An Occupational Analysis of Jewish Migrants in Victoria,* Jewish Council to Combat Fascism and Anti-Semitism, Melbourne, 1950.

Platz listed 43 Jewish individuals who had made significant contributions to the sciences, manufacturing and the arts.

Perspectives on Displaced Persons

Australia's new directions in immigration came at a difficult time. There was an acute housing shortage, Victoria being short 70 000 housing units in 1943, which blew out to 120 000 by 1951. Wartime rationing continued until 1948 and price control led to tensions. A militant coal miners' strike erupted in mid-1949 causing the Army to be called in, which was an unprecedented move in Australia. A Cold War erupted in Europe and on 1 October 1949 Communist forces assumed control in China, creating the People's Republic of China.

After Calwell signed the agreement to bring Displaced Persons to Australia, controversy erupted. Ken Bolton, Victorian State President of the Returned and Services League of Australia, asked: 'Why Aliens before British stock', and declared:

Source 5.35

> The signing of the agreement … to admit a yearly quota of 12,000 displaced Europeans as migrants should make every Australian hold his breath with fear … many Australians, including returned servicemen, felt alarm at the housing position and the proposed influx of Europeans would make it even worse. They should be warned of the danger of Australia being swamped by people of alien thought and dubious loyalty.

The Sun, 24 July 1947.

Robert Hodges, a former AIF army captain and an Australian Executive of the United Nations Refugee Relief Association, hit back:

Source 5.36

> The displaced persons are very largely 'Nordics' – fair-haired, handsome, blue-eyed Balts from Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania … In spite of wartime privations most were fine physical specimens, excellent workers, and accustomed to relatively high standards of living. They were well disciplined in camp and he imagined, would have a high sense of civic responsibility. There should not be any talk of compassion in receiving these people. On the contrary, if the picking is sensibly done at the European end, Australia will be lucky to get such types. They will bring to Australia all the talents and the skills of Europe … Most of the Balts were refugees from democratic republics conquered by the Soviets. They value freedom so much that, rather than live under alien rule, they had endured the perils and hardship of the DP [Displaced Persons] life.

(Melbourne) Herald, 25 July 1947.

← **Source 5.37** Baltic women pictured in *The Sun*, 5 January 1948

The first Displaced Persons who arrived in Melbourne in December 1947 were specially selected.

Source 5.38

Eight hundred and thirty-nine clear-skinned, sun-bronzed, flaxen-haired Balts – generally acclaimed as the finest looking batch of post-war migrants – filed off the *SS Kanimbla* at Port Melbourne today and entrained for Bonegilla camp. Most carried only a small suitcase. They had no money. They were overwhelmed by the kindness shown to them on the vessel and ashore, and amazed to find 'everything so free' after the restrictions and horrors of several bitter years …

Most of the newcomers, who are from Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia, on the shores of the Baltic, resemble Scandinavians more than other Europeans, and seemed likely to be quickly absorbed as 'new Australians'. As the photograph shows, most of the girls are very attractive – and well educated. Most of the 112 girls were specially picked to come to Australia to relieve the typist shortage. About 30 of them have already been selected for Canberra, where they will work in government departments. The men are mainly artisans, tall, sturdy youths, who have been chosen to help relieve the Australian labour shortage.

(Melbourne) Herald, 8 December 1947.

The refugees' skills were often under-used, as their labour was tied for two years to work assigned to them by government. This was done to ensure Australian workers were not concerned about labour competition, which might threaten public support for the program. But as historian Jane Persian wrote, refugees who mostly did manual work 'may have been a Professor of Philosophy in Lithuania, a poet of renown in Poland, a bank-manager in Prague, or a Cabinet Minister in Latvia. He probably speaks seven languages, and now is learning English'.[7]

However, despite the two-year rule to ward off the concern of Australians, opinion polls revealed considerable unease and ignorance about the Displaced persons immigration program:

Source 5.39

A Gallup Poll of 1,600 people in August 1947 asked: 'Are you for or against 12,000 DP immigrants to Australia each year'? Of the respondents, 54% did not know what 'DP' meant, 23% were in favour and 19% were opposed. A year later 36% did not know the meaning of 'DP', 19% were opposed to their entry and 41% in favour. In both polls 9% had no opinion.

A poll by the University of Melbourne Psychology Department in 1949 of 115 people found that 23% of respondents were not happy with the government's immigration policy; 20% were satisfied, while the remaining 57% wanted the maintenance of the White Australia Policy with some form of British or white alien immigration.

In 1949 the Psychology Department polled 400 Melbournites and found that 12% opposed DP immigration, while 37% wanted to let a few in and 51% wanted to let them all in.

Richard Broome, *Australia's Refugee Immigrants 1945–1951, La Trobe Studies in History*, La Trobe University, Melbourne, 1990, pp. 31–2.

↑**Source 5.40** 'The Land of Opportunity', cartoon in *The Bulletin*, 11 May 1949

In May 1949 Jack Lang, the veteran Labor politician with his own Non-Communist Labor Party, membership of one, made these points about Displaced Persons in a speech to the House of Representatives about immigrants.

1. Some were bound to be Communists, perhaps ten per cent
2. Too many are coming, 140,000 in 1949, to be absorbed.
3. The housing shortage of 500,000 homes will become worse
4. Australia is 97.7% British stock which should not be diluted
5. The DPs may be 'the scrapings from the bottom of the [refugee] barrel'
6. Full employment will be endangered
7. Trade unions could be weakened by a surplus of labour
8. Holding immigrants in labour camps will prevent assimilation

[Leslie Haylen, a playwright, journalist and Labor politician, answered Lang's views with these points:]

1. All immigrants are thoroughly screened by health and security checks
2. The increase to 140,000 was carefully considered and due to the International Refugee Organisation program ending
3. The housing shortage is due to a lack of materials, fixable by more, not less, labour
4. It is a Nazi idea that there are pure races. We need the white races of northern Europe
5. Displaced Persons had to work where the government directed for two years
6. The government will not endanger workers' conditions
7. Displaced Persons are joining unions and industrial awards are unchanged
8. Lang's views represented 'fear of the stranger'

Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates, v. 202, 31 May 1949, pp. 303–14.

In 1948 Calwell wrote:

Since organised immigration began just over a year ago, the Australian people have seen thousands of immigrants arrived from overseas … Some of these new Australians could not even speak our language when they landed here, yet the public accepted them with grace and justice, with that spontaneous hospitality which is inborn in every true Australian. British, Americans and Europeans were welcomed equally and impartially by all sections of the community.

True, we have among us the handful of Anglophobes and foreign haters, the anti-Australians who tried to foment suspicion against migration for their own nefarious [wicked] purposes. But I am happy to say that in many cases, responsible sections of the community – sometimes the press, sometimes leaders in the community, sometimes a citizen writing a letter to a newspaper – have not been slow to rebuke the ill-informed critic with a statement of the facts.

Continued…

AA Calwell, *Immigration Policy and Practice*, Department of Immigration, Canberra, 1949, pp. 66–7.

USING HISTORICAL SOURCES AS EVIDENCE 5.5

1. Complete the table below on each of the Sources 5.35–5.42 to help you assess perspectives on Displaced Persons.

Source number	Perspectives on Displaced Persons	Key quote/s	Does this source link to any key ideas?
5.35			
5.36			
5.37			
5.38			
5.39			
5.40			
5.41			
5.42			

2. Using your table, did Australian perspectives change over time?
3. To what extent was Calwell (see Source 5.42) correct to say only a 'handful' opposed immigration?

5.5 Experiences, 1945–1960

INQUIRY QUESTION

What were the experiences of new migrants to Australia from 1945 to 1960?

Economic effects

Despite fears of unemployment after the war, as happened in 1918, Australia's unemployment after World War II was nil and remained very low until the credit squeeze in 1961. Home building boomed as well, although some immigrants resorted to being DIY homebuilders.

Frank and Maria Cehun and their two children Theo and Brigita, Displaced Persons from Slovenia, arrived at Bonegilla migrant hostel in June 1949. Frank lived at a labour camp in Bandiana, seeing the family only at weekends. Frank Cehun then gained a position with the Country Roads Board.

Frank recorded how they gained a house in Benalla after Maria got a job in the clothing factory there in late 1949.

By December 51 we had saved £600 and at Christmas time started to build our present house. There was no labour obtainable and timber was scarce. Bit by bit material was purchased and the house was completed, enough to have moved in June 1952 … We were happy to have our own home having been for three years in Australia's immigration camps we felt again to belong somewhere. In spite of being over-charged and cheated by local tradesmen as well as by the new Australian carpenters working on this building we soon came over it … On the 25th May 1956 we were naturalized … After the ceremony of naturalization which lasted with tea etc until 11:00 PM we came home … I was sitting in the kitchen until about 1:00 AM, feeling sort of sad. As a matter of fact all evening I could not warm up to the occasion, as if I knew something had been torn away from us, forever.

Source 5.43

Frank Cehun 'Reminiscences' quoted with permission from Brigita Kelleher, in Richard Broome, *Australia's Refugee Immigrants 1945–1951*, La Trobe Studies in History, La Trobe University, Melbourne, 1990, pp. 25–6.

↑**Source 5.44** Theo and Brigita Cehun outside their parents' Benalla home, 1952. Courtesy Theo Cehun.

Displaced Persons like the Cehuns did well because the economy boomed as Geoffrey Bolton explains:

During each year of Menzies's prime ministership [1949–1966] the average weekly earnings of the Australian worker increased by about 4 per cent in real terms. This represented roughly five times the annual average rate of advance in living standards between 1901 and 1940 … Australia's good fortune during the 1950s and the 1960s was founded on a continually expanding world trade and a stable international monetary system, both largely the result of measures initiated by the United States to safeguard western capitalism. Between 1952 and 1965 Australian gross domestic product rose annually at a little less than 5 per cent, a rate somewhat greater than that of the United States or Britain …

Geoffrey Bolton, *The Middle Way. The Oxford History of Australia*, volume 5, 1942–1988, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1990, pp. 89–90.

By 1954, many Displaced Persons found a place in the economy as Richard Broome explains:

Source 5.46 In the 1954 census, central and east Europeans were under-represented among employers and the self-employed and over-represented among employees. They were below average in rural occupations, commerce and the professions, but heavily over-represented in manufacturing, public utilities and construction work. Many were attracted to the utilities because of the good wages and job security. About seventy per cent of them who worked at the State Electricity Commission in 1954 had been there for more than three years and three-quarters were in unskilled work. Overall, only a few refugees ever attained a position here which required more qualifications than the job they had held at home. Some eventually moved into higher skilled areas but most remained in low status work. Yet a study at the La Trobe Valley in 1960 found that while the Poles and Yugoslavs were over-represented in unskilled work, Estonians, Latvians and Lithuanians were very under-represented. Indeed these latter groups had a smaller proportion in such work than any other immigrant group.

Richard Broome, *Arriving,* Fairfax, Syme and Weldon, Sydney, 1984, p. 189.

Communities, exchanges, contributions to society

A sociologist, Jean Martin wrote two books about Displaced Persons. Richard Broome summarised her work in his own book *Arriving* (1984), writing:

Source 5.47 Jean Martin, who in 1962 followed up a group of refugees she interviewed in 1953, found that the degree of anxiety among them had diminished and most had a greater self-esteem, based on new-found financial stability and a standard of living comparable with most Australians. Many of her sample still believed they were not fully accepted by Australians, but they had

Continued…

developed thicker skins and also learned to avoid humiliating situations by limiting contacts to known people and retailers. Most claimed to have Australian friends and were more attuned to their adopted land. The criticisms of Australian life were now muted and were replaced with concerns about their own family life … Half the refugee settlers claimed to have Australian friends at work, although less than a third included Australian homes in their round of visits. There were no continental Europeans in Rotary or the Chamber of Commerce, although a few were members of Apex. These Australian contacts were important, but not so much as the network of ethnic social relations and activities in which most of these people were involved. These encompassed ethnic schools, religious groups, sporting, folk dance, choir and scout groups, ethnic publications and welfare groups. Most groups tried to avoid political divisions, and all could to various degrees find unity in their opposition to continued Soviet control of their former homelands.

The only east Europeans in difficulty, besides those who suffered mental or physical breakdowns, were men who never married because of the shortage of their own countrywomen and the prejudice of some Australian women. These men often lived lonely lives in boarding houses and drifted into alcoholism, excessive gambling and antisocial behaviour at their own community's functions. Their ranks were swelled by a number of failed marriages, particularly mixed ones.

Richard Broome, *Arriving*, Fairfax, Syme and Weldon, Sydney, 1984, p. 191.

Most Displaced Persons became naturalised knowing they could not return to their Soviet-controlled homelands. One study of 1815 found 60% were naturalised within nine years (the minimum allowable was five years) and 84% within 20 years. Most still held two identities. In his book *Settlers of the La Trobe Valley* (1964), the sociologist Jerzy Zubrzycki found considerable mixing of new and old Australians.

One of Zubrzycki's informants, a Yugoslav engine driver from Yallourn, commented:

Source 5.48

I honestly try to become a good Australian citizen and I endeavour to fulfil my duties as such. However, if I fail, there is still one consolation for Australia. I have given six young citizens to this country, six of the many hundreds of thousands of young children, who are as fair dinkum already as any of the Australian children. One can build a nation on a young generation … Let us therefore unite in mutual respect and understanding, and build Australia into a greater place in which to live.

Quoted in Jerzy Zubrzycki, *Settlers of the La Trobe Valley. A Sociological Study of Immigrants in the Brown Coal Industry in Australia*, Canberra, 1964, p. 183.

↑**Source 5.49** Portrait of the late sociologist Professor Jerzy Zubrzycki at his home in Yarralumla, Canberra, 14 August 2007. Courtesy of The National Library of Australia.

Discrimination and racism

In early 1951 Dr Kajica Milanov, a former philosophy professor from Belgrade now resident in Australia, wrote that the decision 'to take 100 000 so-called Displaced Persons from European camps is undoubtedly the most important change yet made in Australia's immigration policy. From the foundation of the first colonies till now the main principles of our immigration policy have always been to take mostly citizens of Great Britain'.[8] There was bound to be tension.

An advertisement in a newspaper said this in 1952.

| Source 5.50 | Vacancies. DP's and New Australians Need not Apply |

The Sun, 9 April 1952.

Arthur Calwell wanted the newcomers to be called 'new Australians' but in slang language they were called 'balts' (short for people from the Baltic countries of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia) or 'reffos' (slang for refugees).

These terms were captured in novels of the day.

| Source 5.51 | Dorothy Hewitt's *Bobbin Up* (1959): 'Look at them bloody Balts all with their heads down and their arses up', old Betty grumbled … 'They'll never be Aussies while they keep that up. They'll work us all out of jobs'. Patrick White's *Riders in the Chariot* (1961) 'he was, in any case, a blasted foreigner, and bloody reffo, and should have been glad he was allowed to exist at all'. |

G.A. Wilkes, *A Dictionary of Australian Colloquialisms*, Sydney University Press, Sydney, 1985, pp. 17–18, 340.

5.6 Chapter summary

Here are some dot-points for you to consider and add to:

Continuities
- Australia remained committed to strong immigration programs for growth and defence.
- Australia remained committed to the White Australia Policy.
- Australia still clung to the dream of remaining British despite being unable to get the number of British immigrants it wanted, due to Britain's own falling birth-rate.
- The United Kingdom still remained the largest source of Australia's immigrants.
- Assimilation remained the goal of immigrant reception.

Changes
- Australia formed its first Ministry of Immigration and created a bureaucracy to manage Australia's immigration.
- Australia emphasised immigration for defence in the light of Japanese wartime aggression, and the decline of British sea power after World War II.
- Australia created an ambitious immigration program in 1947 to boost its population by two per cent per year with one per cent from immigration.
- Australia's immigration policy pragmatically actively welcomed non-British immigrants, forming agreements with both northern and southern European countries.

5.7 End-of-chapter activities

The following tasks are designed to help strengthen your understanding of the material explored in this chapter and to encourage you to further analyse and evaluate the events, ideas, perspectives and experiences that impacted Displaced Persons from 1945 to 1960.

Consolidating your understanding
Events
Answer the following questions to help consolidate your understanding of the events in this chapter.

1. Suggest how the bombing of Darwin may have impacted the population debate.
2. Using Sources 5.1–5.3, outline Australia's population facts at the end of World War II.
3. Explain Australia's postwar immigration schemes.
4. Who are Displaced Persons? Where did they come from?
5. Read Source 5.13 and explain the policy tightrope that Calwell walked when reshaping immigration policy in 1946.

Ideas

Complete the following table for your notes on the ideas in this chapter. An example has been completed for you.

Ideas	Summary	Evidence
Size matters	• Size of nation reflects strength of the nation • Calwell asserted the aim was 2% (140 000) increase per annum • After births and deaths that left roughly 70 000 • Arguments for increased population from Calwell and Menzies included: • Defence: Larger population required for the defence of the continent should another conflict arise • Economic: Increased population and greater migration would aid economic recovery of the nation after World War II • Social: A strengthened economy would lead to improved social conditions for all Australians • Political: The nation's independence and national honour would be reinforced by an increased population.	• 'Our first requirement is additional population.' (Calwell, Source 5.17) • 'From the point of view of Australian independent existence and national integrity, it is vital that our population shall be increased.' (Menzies, Source 5.18) • 'a migration ceiling of 70,000 a year.' (Calwell, Source 5.17) • Source 5.19 reinforces economic benefits of increased population to the workforce
Britishness and whiteness		
Ethnocentrism		
Prejudice		
Xenophobia		
Human rights		
Assimilation		

Perspectives

Create two mind maps outlining the various attitudes of Australians to Jewish refugees and Displaced Persons. For each point, try to find a piece of evidence to support it.

'among them there are certain to be many communists' (Source 5.31)

'dubious loyalty' (Source 5.35)

Fear of communism

Attitudes to Jewish refugees

'They will bring to Australia all the talents and the skills of Europe' (Source 5.36)

Positively contribute to nation

Attitudes to Displaced Persons
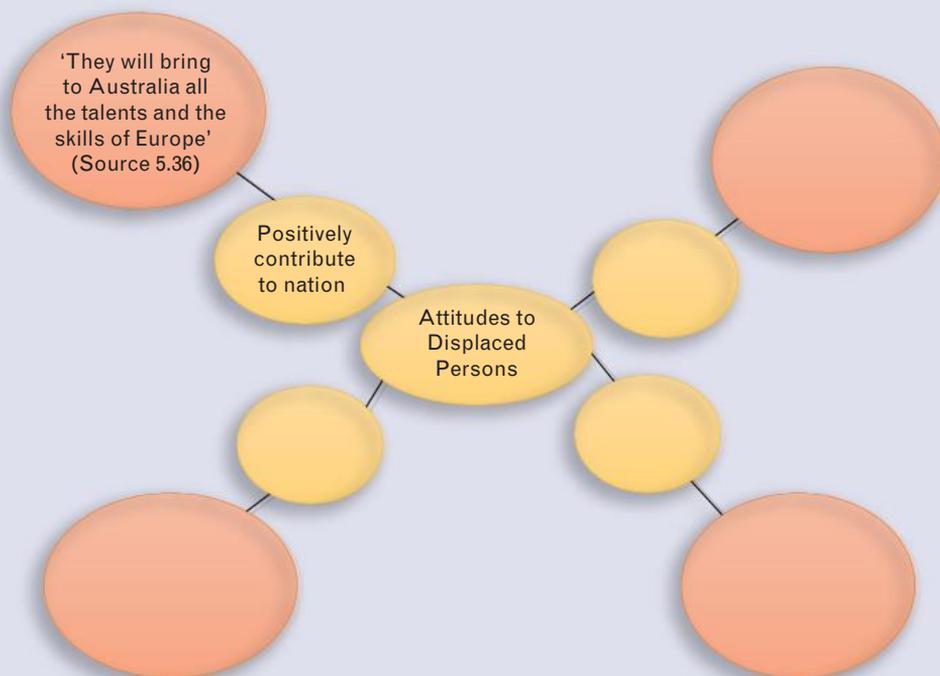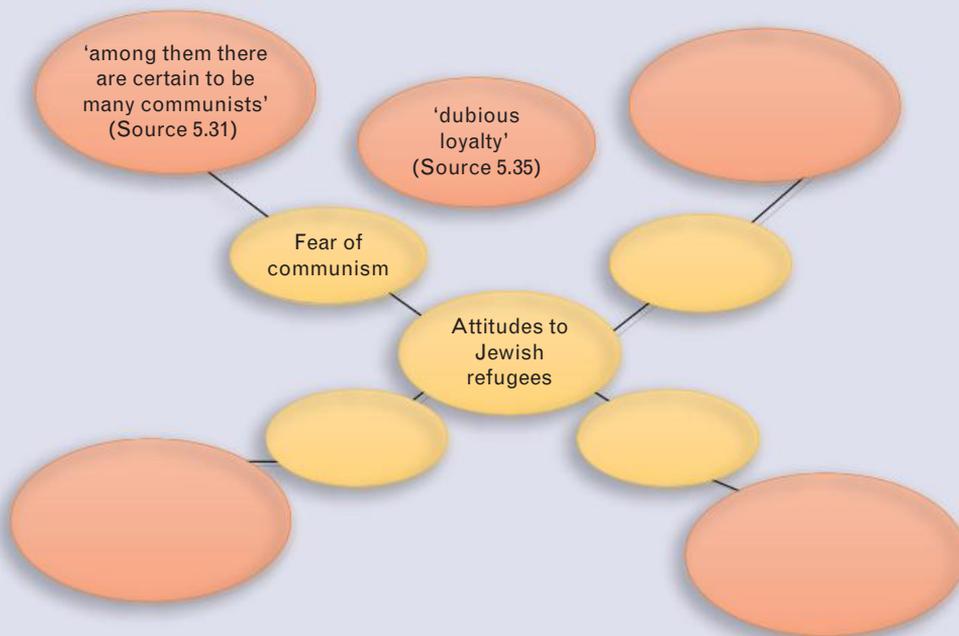
Experiences

Complete the following questions to help consolidate your knowledge about the experiences of Displaced Persons in Australia.

1. Explain how the state of Australia's post–World War II economy contributed to the experiences of those who arrived as Displaced Persons.
2. Outline the challenges faced by those arriving in Australia. Use evidence from at least two sources to support your discussion.
3. Based on the sources outlined in this chapter to what extent was assimilation successful.

Asking historical questions

Using the sources in this chapter, create your own source analysis activity following the instructions below:

*   It should have three sources (with at least one visual)
*   Three or four questions that require different skills from comprehension to analysis.
*   Some suggested command terms to use are below:
    *   Identify, describe, outline
    *   Explain, discuss, compare
    *   Analyse, evaluate, examine.

Analysing causes and consequences

1. How did World War II reshape the Australian government's attitude to migration?
2. Examine the impacts of post–World War II migration schemes on the nation and those arriving in Australia to start a new life.

Constructing an argument: essay writing

To what extent did World War II change Australian attitudes to migration? Use evidence to justify your response.

The planning template in Chapter 3 may be useful in aiding your response to this prompt and ensuring you are engaging with evidence throughout your discussion.

CHAPTER 6
Rise of diversity and demise of White Australia, 1958–1972
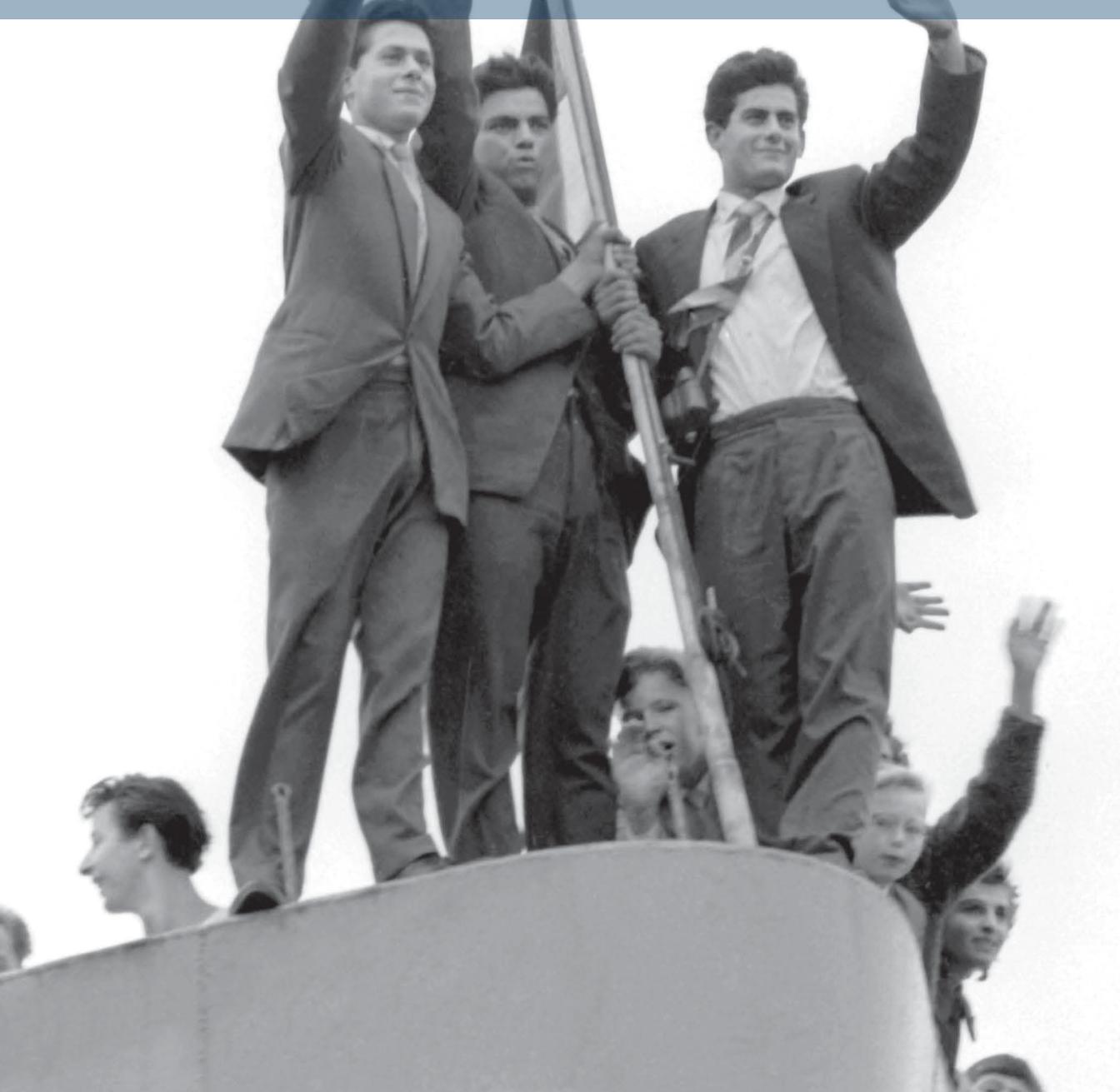
Source 6.0 Perched on the bow of the Dutch ocean liner that brought them from Cyprus to Australia, Christoforos Anastasi, 21, Georgios Demetriou, 17, and Nicolas Papanicolas, 20, wave to friends behind the gates at Woolloomooloo wharf in Sydney, 2 April 1960.

Chapter timeline

World events	Date	Australian events
		1958: Immigration Restriction Act and dictation test abolished
1959: World population reaches three billion		
	1960	
1963: Martin Luther King Jr delivers 'I Have a Dream' speech against racism		
	1965	
1965: International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination		**1966:** Migration Act change – some relaxation of Asian entry requirements
		1967: Referendum – on counting of and federal legislation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
1968: Martin Luther King Jr assassinated		
	1970	
		1973: Migration Act change – end of the White Australia Policy
		1975: Queensland Aboriginal Act finally abolished (culmination of a process begun in 1961) - improving the civil rights of Indigenous people

6.1 Introduction

INQUIRY QUESTIONS

- How and why did the White Australia Policy end?
- What progress was made towards civil and Indigenous rights?

Although British immigration remained dominant, it never supplied all of Australia's immigration needs. This was despite the preferential treatment of a £10 assisted passage, not having to become naturalised to vote, and campaigns such as 'Bring a Briton' in 1958. The gap in the one per cent immigration target had to be fulfilled by increasing the diversity of intake.

Bilateral (two-way) immigration agreements were made in the 1950s with northern and then southern European countries: Turkey in 1967 and Yugoslavia in 1970. Assisted passages remained discriminatory. The proportion of each group who received an assisted passage were: British and Germans 80%; Dutch, Scandinavians and other northern Europeans 65%; Maltese 50%; Greeks 33%; and Italians 20%. When northern European immigration declined in the 1960s, assistance to less favoured groups increased: 66% of Spanish and 50% of Turkish and Yugoslav immigrants received assistance. By the mid-1960s the Department of Immigration spent 20 times the funds attracting northern Europeans than southern Europeans.[1]

These preferences for the source of immigrants reflected perceptions of who was white. As revealed in Source 5.16, that was a matter of interpretation and views changed over time. First it was applied only to the British, and then other European groups, such as Turkish and Lebanese people, were included.

The more diverse intake of migrants slowly changed aspects of Australian society and created pressures to change the assimilation policy to one of integration (see below).

In the wider world, the liberation of former colonies through the decolonisation movement (the dismantling of empires) meant 'whiteness' was no longer supreme. Also, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples asserted themselves, gaining civil rights. Australia's White Australia Policy was watered down, then abandoned in 1972.

←**Source 6.1** Italian migrants spreading ballast, Royal Park rail line, 1952. Courtesy State Transit Authority.

6.2 Significant events, 1958–1972

INQUIRY QUESTION

How did immigration change Australia between 1958 and 1972?

Immigration by the numbers

The following sources provide information about the speed and shape of Australia's immigration in the 25 years after World War II.

Components of population increase, Australia 1947–1960, select years

Year	Population	% net overseas migration gain	% natural increase	Migration as % of pop. gain
1947	7 517 981	0.14	1.45	9
1952	8 527 907	1.10	1.41	44
1960	10 160 968	0.89	1.40	39

Adapted from *Australian Immigration Consolidated Statistics*, no. 6, 1972, Table 2, Department of
Immigration, Canberra, 1972.
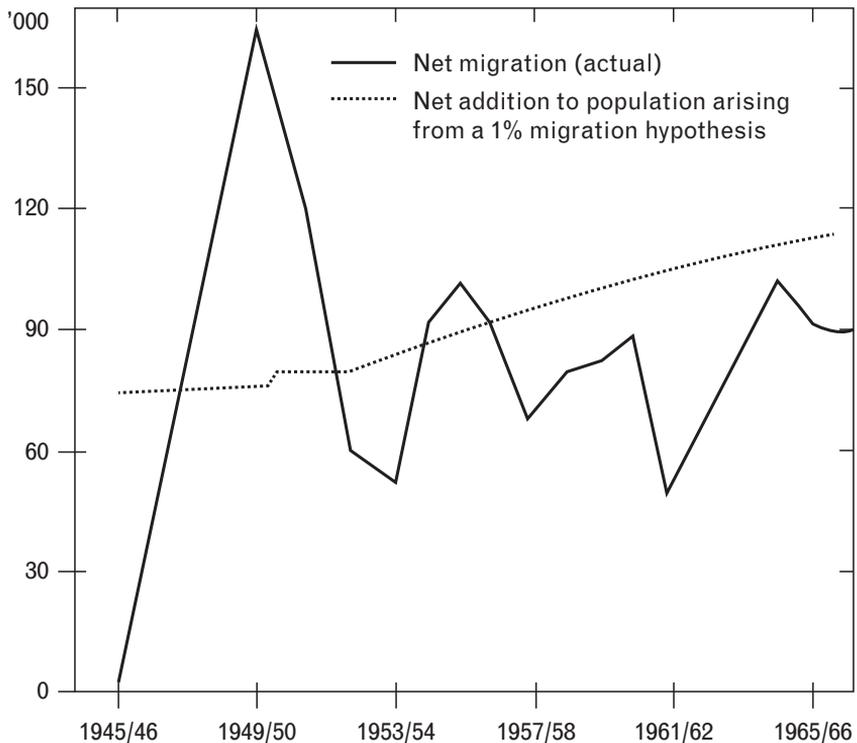
chain migration
the term to describe how immigrants bring their family and friends to a new country by official sponsorship or unofficial encouragement and support

↑**Source 6.3** Population gain in Australia from migration.
Immigration Planning Council, Commonwealth Department of Immigration,
Australia's Immigration Programme for the Period 1968–1973, Canberra, 1968, p. 17.

USING HISTORICAL SOURCES AS EVIDENCE 6.1

Study Sources 6.2 and 6.3 and evaluate whether Calwell's immigration aims as outlined in Source 5.17 were fulfilled or not by the 1960s.

Many of Australia's immigrants came via **chain migration**, encouraged by friends and relatives. Richard Broome reveals Victoria's unique migration experience.

Victoria more successfully met the one per cent target but less successfully the nine-tenths British aim than Australia as a whole. With just over a quarter of Australia's postwar population in 1947, Victoria took a third of all postwar immigrants and about forty per cent of southern European newcomers but only about twenty-five per cent of British and Irish immigrants to Australia. While the yearly one per cent target was reached on the Australian level all but once by 1956 it was met all but twice by 1967 in Victoria, but at no time thereafter.

Richard Broome, *Arriving*, Fairfax, Syme and Weldon, Sydney, 1984, p. 192.

Source 6.5 reveals the relationship of immigration and capital city growth to 1966. A one per cent increase (the target) from immigration over 19 years would be a 19% total increase over the period.

Immigration and Australian metropolitan growth, 1947–1966

←Source 6.5

City	Overseas born increase	% of the total population increase
Sydney	329 321	42.28
Melbourne	409 724	51.11
Brisbane	58 265	18.62
Adelaide	164 736	47.89
Perth	83 056	35.63
Hobart	10 661	24.83
Canberra	22 843	29.60
Major non-metropolitan		
Newcastle	10 881	16.87
Wollongong	40 097	37.77
Geelong	22 470	31.84

Geoffrey Sherington, *Australia's Immigrants*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1980, p. 140.

USING HISTORICAL SOURCES AS EVIDENCE 6.2

1. In your own words, explain what Source 6.4 tells us about postwar migration in Victoria.
2. Describe whether migrants settled evenly or unevenly across Australian society (see Source 6.5).

The table in Source 6.6 reveals the ethnic distribution of Australia's new arrivals in the period to 1970.

Origins of immigrants to Australia July 1947 to June 1969

Ethnic origin	Number	Estimated numbers	% assisted	% of total
British				
UK & Eire	798 000			
New Zealand	47 100			
Canada	8 000			
Other	27 800			
Total		880 900	84.0	42.3
North Europe				
Netherlands	111 000			
Germany	83 000			
Scandinavia	12 000			
Other	42 000			
Total		248 000	67.5	11.9
East Europe				
Yugoslavia	100 000			
Poland	82 400			
Baltic States	35 200			
Hungary	31 500			
Russia	27 500			
Other	30 500			
Total		307 100	65.0	14.8
South Europe				
Italy	278 000			
Greece	164 500			
Malta	60 000			
Other	16 600			
Total		519 100	24.5	25.0
Asia/Oceania				
Total		55 000	3.3	2.6
Other Origins				
USA	21 000			
Lebanon	17 000			
All Other	32 400			
Total		70 400	21.5	3.4
Grand Total		2 080 500	60.9	100.0

C.A. Price, 'Immigrants', A.F. Davies and S. Encel (eds), *Australian Society*, Cheshire, Melbourne, 1970, p. 181.

Using what you have learned about the origin of pre-1945 Australian immigration policies, discuss how the statistics in Source 6.6 reflect continuity and/or change in Australia's policy and attitudes to immigration from 1947 to 1969.

White Australia in operation

Source 6.6 reveals the white composition of Australian immigration to 1970. We also saw in Source 5.13 that Calwell was adamant that 6000 people classed as non-whites who took refuge in Australia during war time should leave after the war. Most returned home voluntarily, but 21 Malayan seamen who now had Australian wives and families refused to leave. Their deportation created controversy both within Australia, where the action was seen as heartless, and overseas where it reinforced views, especially in Asia, that the White Australia Policy was brutal and racist.[2]

Most deportations involved Asians, but some others were also deported. In 1939 a Black American boxer Clarence Olin Reeves, the 'Alabama Kid', toured Australia but was trapped here due to the war. He remained, boxed, married and had two children. In September 1947 the government jailed him and issued a deportation order against him. Reeves told the press:

Source 6.7

I'm black, but I've done nothing wrong. I love Australia almost as much as I love my wife and baby, but you can't love long distance. If I take my wife back her only friends will be Negroes [Black Americans]. She would probably enjoy it until the glamour wore off, and then the memory of her mother and white friends here would bring heartaches. I want my wife to be happy always. If I leave here I'd travel back and forth every year to see her and the babies, but that takes money, and I'm no millionaire. I respect the white Australia policy, but if Mr Calwell was in my place he would understand.

The News (Adelaide), 6 December 1947.

←**Source 6.8**
'Alabama Kid' with his manager Harry Johns in about 1945. Courtesy Frances Rose.

Reeves was deported on 16 April 1948 and never saw his family again. These attacks on family led to a softening of policy by Robert Menzies's Liberal government elected in December 1949. The new government promised to maintain the White Australia Policy, but with 'humane and common-sense administration in individual cases'.[3]

Other administrative changes

The Liberal government's common-sense approach did not end controversy. Asian governments, newly decolonised (see Ideas later in this chapter), were affronted by the White Australia Policy. For defence reasons Australia desired good relations with Asian countries and pursued a good neighbour policy. Under the Colombo Plan, which was established by seven Commonwealth nations to support development of member countries in the Asia-Pacific region, the Australian federal government set up an education program to help train Asian students in Australia. Others came privately to study in Australia. Another group of 800 Chinese people were allowed to stay after October 1949 as the Menzies Liberal government could not bear to consign them to Communism at the same time as condemning Communism as evil. Some sought family reunions.

Common-sense decisions became somewhat haphazard, leading the Commonwealth Immigration Advisory Council and the Department of Immigration to review policy from 1953. In 1956 Harold Holt, the Minister for Immigration, achieved minor regulatory changes, namely:

- Greater ministerial discretion on judging whether those of 'mixed race' were 'white enough' to enter
- Allowing a small number of highly qualified non-Europeans to enter for extended stays under an exemption certificate

naturalise to make someone a legal citizen of a country that they were not born in

- Permitting the few non-Europeans living permanently in Australia to be **naturalised**.

On this last point, the naturalisation of Mrs Cherry Parker, a Japanese war bride, was met with general public approval.[4]

↑**Source 6.9** The deportation of five-year-old Nancy Prasad from Australia caused great controversy in August 1965

The 1958 and 1966 Migration Acts

The *Migration Act, 1958* ended the odious Dictation Test that dated back to the *Immigration Restriction Act, 1901*. Entry restrictions remained on non-whites, but the symbolism was important. It was replaced by a permit system at the discretion of the Minister of Immigration.

Alexander Russell Downer (later Sir Alexander), who presented the Bill in Parliament, said:

Source 6.10

The dictation test … must surely appear today as an archaic [outdated], heavy-handed piece of machinery … and quite out of keeping with the ideas of the second half of the 20th century. It has been used to prevent the entry to Australia of both Europeans and Asians, and also as a means of deporting people within five years of their arrival, even though they were legally admitted to settle permanently. Its clumsy, creaking operation has evoked much resentment outside Australia, and has tarnished our good name in the eyes of the world.

Quoted in Gwenda Tavan, *The Long, Slow Death of White Australia*, Scribe, Melbourne, 2005, p. 106.

Labor's P. J. Clarey approved of the measure, commenting:

Source 6.11

I believe that we have reached a stage in the development of our society when we can, as a community, say 'You are a desirable citizen', or 'You are not a desirable citizen'. With the system of entry permits Australia will take the responsibility and the person who proposes to come here will be given some idea as to whether he will be admitted or not … it recognises more fully the rights of human beings whom we bring into this country and will give them greater protection.

Quoted in Gwenda Tavan, *The Long, Slow Death of White Australia*, Scribe, Melbourne, 2005, p. 107.
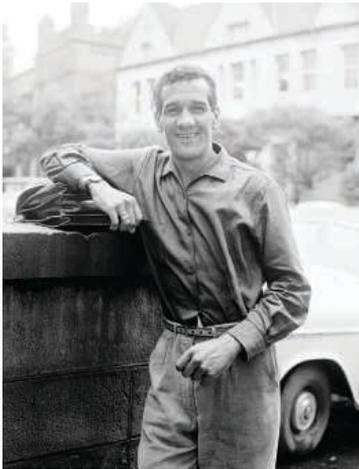
The Menzies government faced continued pressure over immigration from reformist groups, including the controversy over the deportation of Nancy Prasad, a five-year-old Fijian Indian girl, in August 1965. Many Australians felt uneasy about this case including Charles Perkins, an Arrente and Kalkadoon man from Alice Springs.

Perkins was a student activist at the University of Sydney, and one of the first Indigenous university graduates. Perkins and fellow students opposed racism in all its forms, including in the White Australia Policy. Perkins recalled in 1998:

←**Source 6.12** Aboriginal activist Charles Perkins at the University of Sydney. Perkins completed an Arts degree to become one of the first Australian Aboriginal university graduates, 19 March 1963.

We were against the White Australia Policy, which was strong at that time. Hubert Opperman, I think was the Minister for Immigration at that time. And we were sitting around there at home, just near the university, Sydney University there, and somebody came and said, 'Hey, they're deporting that Nancy Prasad out of Australia, because she's Indian. That's very racist. We've got to do something about that you know. We're a Student Action for Aborigines, but we're a student action against, you know, all forms of racism, aren't we?' … we all jumped in different cars and took off for the Sydney airport. And they were actually in the process of transferring her from a car to the counter to despatch her out to the plane which was waiting out there. So we blocked the entrance off, so they couldn't get through …

[Perkins and his fellow students rescued Prasad and took her to her uncle's place]

Then we got on to radio and television and publicised the fact that it'd happened, but no action was ever taken against us. But Opperman had to explain it and then soon after that the White Australia Policy was broken. And the Student Action for Aborigines never got any credit for that at all. It was other people who have a tendency to write history, rewrite history in their favour, that claimed all the credit for that. And that was the catalyst for it all. It had massive publicity. It had never happened before. It was under difficult circumstances, because we could have got charged with kidnapping, as would have been technically the case.

Quoted in Moreton-Robinson, A. in Sara Ahmed, Claudia Castaneda, Anne-Marie Fortier, Mimi Sheller (eds), *I Still call Australia Home: Indigenous Belonging and Place in a White Postcolonising Society in Uprootings/Regroundings: Questions of Home and Migration*, Berg Publishing, Oxford, 2003, pp 23-40.

However, not all Indigenous people acted to defend immigrants as did Perkins in the Nancy Prasad case. Some saw immigrants as just more colonisers who stole their land, disrupted their culture and ignored Indigenous sovereignty.

Aileen Moreton-Robinson, a Goenpul woman, academic and Indigenous feminist from Stradbroke Island, has written:

Indigenous people cannot forget the nature of migrancy and position all non-Indigenous people as migrants and diasporic [scattered people]. Our ontological [essence of being] relationship to land, the ways that country is constitutive [creating] of us, and therefore the inalienable [unbreakable] nature of our relationship to land, marks a radical, indeed incommensurable [unmeasurable], difference between us and the non-Indigenous. This ontological relation to land constitutes a subject position that we do not share, and which cannot be shared, with the postcolonial subject whose sense of belonging in this place is tied to migrancy.

Quoted in Toula Nicolacopoulos and George Vassilacopoulos, *Indigenous Sovereignty and the Being of the Occupier, Manifesto for a White Australian Philosophy of Origins*, Re.Press, Melbourne, 2014, frontispiece.

When Menzies retired in 1966 and Harold Holt became Prime Minister, reformists like the Minister of Immigration Hubert Opperman, aided by his departmental head Peter Heydon, created change in the *Migration Act 1966*. Opperman achieved two changes:

- Non-Europeans resident on temporary permits would not have to wait for 15 years before being eligible for permanent residence and finally citizenship.
- Small numbers of non-Europeans could gain permanent residence to Australia if they had useful skills or qualifications, were capable of integration into Australian society, and could contribute to Australia's economic, social and cultural progress.

↑**Source 6.15** Hubert Opperman, reformist Minister for Immigration

Opperman told parliament, which passed the measures:

Source 6.16

No annual quota is contemplated. The number of people entering – though limited relative to our total population – will be somewhat greater than previously, but will be controlled by the careful assessment of the individual's qualifications, and the basic aim of preserving a homogeneous [similar and unified] population will be maintained. The changes are of course not intended to meet general labour shortages or to permit the large scale admission of workers from Asia; but the widening of eligibility will help to fill some of Australia's special needs.

Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates, House of Representatives, 9 March 1966, vol. 50, p. 69.

The historian Gwenda Tavan gave this assessment of the 1966 Act:

Source 6.17

Wide disparities remained between non-European and European immigration policies. The Holt government did not attempt to establish Australian immigration offices in Asian countries, or to offer assisted passages to non-European immigrants. During a period when it was still actively pursuing low-skilled immigrants from Europe, only 'well qualified' non-Europeans and those of particular value to Australia would be allowed to enter. Economic self-interest, in other words, not principles of equality, remained the main determinant of immigration policy where non-Europeans were concerned.

Neither was there anything in the public or private language of political leaders to indicate a fundamental shift in outlook on immigration policy … Opperman was always very careful to stress the limited intent of the reforms.

Gwenda Tavan, *The Long, Slow Death of White Australia*, Scribe, Melbourne, 2005, p. 162.

In 1966 Gough Whitlam succeeded the veteran Arthur Calwell as leader of the Australian Labor Party and modernised party policies. In 1968 he declared Asian immigration would increase in the context of Australia's economic interest. 'I think it is quite odious – it's indefensible to say that you will not accept a person who has skills which Australia could use just because he's an Asian. If a man or woman has the skills which are welcome in Australia – the last thing we should have in mind is what race he or she is'.[5]

After heated debate at the 1971 ALP federal convention, a motion was passed 44 to 1 supporting: 'the avoidance of discrimination on any grounds of race or colour of skin or nationality'. The Convention also modified the preamble to the Party's immigration policy from aiming at 'a vigorous and expanding immigration' to one considering 'the capacity to provide employment, housing, education and social services'.

↑**Source 6.18** Image of Gough Whitlam and the Australian singer 'Little Pattie' Thelma Thompson (nee Amphlett), 21 July 1972, to announce the ALP's most famous campaign slogan 'It's Time'

The ALP won the federal election on 2 December 1972 and in 1973 legislated the following changes to immigration policy, including an end to the White Australia Policy.

- Non-Europeans were eligible for assisted passages
- The Australian Citizenship Act 1973 removed the privileged position of British immigrants regarding visas, voting and citizenship
- All immigrants could qualify for citizenship after three not five years
- The Structured Selection Assessment System [SSAS] was introduced to regulate entry by a points and interview system
- The annual immigration intake was reduced from 140,000 to 110,000 and slashed to 50,000 in 1975 due to a recession [economic downturn, but less potent than a depression]
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people no longer needed special permission to leave Australia

Gwenda Tavan, *The Long, Slow Death of White Australia*, Scribe, Melbourne, 2005, p. 200.

FCAATSI originally formed in 1958 as FCAA it later became more inclusive adding Torres Strait Islanders to its title to form FCAATSI. It was opened to all Australians and fought and lobbied governments for equality for First Nations peoples.
referendum under the Australian Constitution this is a vote by the people on the electoral roll by way of a yes/no response to a question devised by parliament. To pass it requires both a majority of voters across the nation and a majority of voters in a majority of states.

Referendum of 1967

The move to a non-discriminatory immigration policy was paralleled by changes to the rights of First Nations peoples. Under the Australian Constitution, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples lacked equal rights in two matters.

- Section 51 paragraph xxvi stated the Commonwealth could legislate for 'the people of any race other than the people of the aboriginal race in any state'.
- Section 127 stated that in any government census 'aboriginal natives shall not be reckoned' [counted] with other Australians.

In 1962 the Federal Council for the Advancement of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders (**FCAATSI**) pushed to end these two clauses. Ninety petitions with over 103 000 signatures were presented to federal parliament, but Prime Minister Menzies refused to allow a **referendum** for people to vote on whether Section 51 should be dropped or not. However, after Menzies retired in 1966, his successor Harold Holt agreed. Aboriginal groups led the campaigns, supported by churches, community organisations and individuals.

FCAATSI issued material that argued:

Australians are held collectively responsible for the treatment and conditions of the Aboriginal people by world opinion. Proper race relations is a national and international issue which therefore ought be dealt with by Australia and at a national level as well as at the state and local levels … At present there are six different Aboriginal administrations with six

Continued…

different policies, and only one (South Australia) is endeavouring to satisfy Convention 107 [of the International Labor Organisation, which deals with the rights of Indigenous minorities]. Aborigines are a national responsibility.

Quoted in Bain Attwood and Andrew Markus, *The Struggle for Aboriginal Rights. A Documentary History*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1999, p. 214.

Bill Onus, the Indigenous President of the Victorian Aborigines Advancement League, declared:

Source 6.21

This is not a question of politics. It is a fundamental question of human rights, the case of one man being equal to the other … It is essential that the public be told clearly of the moral and social consequences of the referendum where it affects the Aborigines. The referendum must be passed. The image of Australia throughout the world is at stake if it is not passed, Australia will be held up to ridicule.

Quoted in Bain Attwood and Andrew Markus, *The Struggle for Aboriginal Rights. A Documentary History*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1999, p. 215.
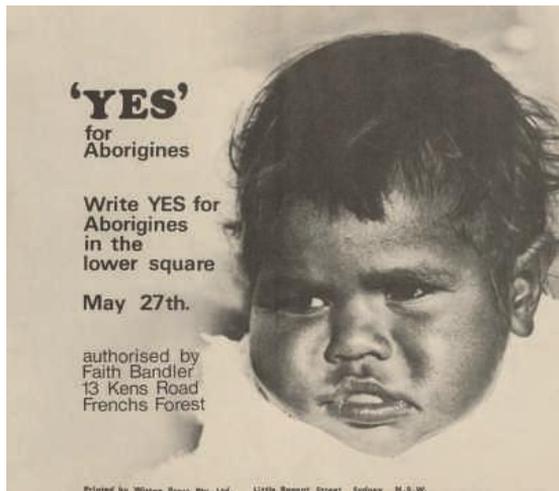
←**Source 6.22** Image of referendum voting poster

The referendum was passed on 27 May 1967 by a resounding 90.77% of the vote. First Nations people were elated, Evelyn Scott remembering: 'there was screaming when I heard it on the radio'.[6]

DID YOU KNOW?

By 2019 only 8/44 referendums have gained a 'yes' outcome.

It is important to note that the Referendum victory did not grant citizen's civil rights or the vote. It allowed two things: the ability to be counted in the census with other Australians and allowing the federal government to pass legislation for all Indigenous people. Here are two assessments of this victory.

Joe McGinness, a Territorian and Kungarakany man who became President of FCAATSI, declared:

Source 6.23

> Winning the referendum is an important step forwards – but it is only a first step … The [federal] government is showing no hurry to legislate for us on education, housing, wages, trade training, land grants and many other things we need.

Quoted in Sue Taffe, *Black and White Together. FCAATSI: The Federal Council for the Advancement of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders 1958–1973*, University of Queensland Press, Brisbane, 2005, p. 124.

The historian Sue Taffe assessed the referendum victory in this way:

Source 6.24

> The confidence gained by Aboriginal and Islander activists in this campaign would soon be expressed in demands not only for the same rights as other Australians but for rights based on their unique position as the descendants of a dispossessed people. The referendum brought the position of Aboriginal and Islander people to the attention of the Australian public … [and] Aboriginal and Islander activists learned much about political process in this campaign. And in that process, they gained the confidence to articulate ideas that were outside the civil rights tradition that the vote 'yes' campaign had exploited so successfully.

Sue Taffe, *Black and White Together. FCAATSI: The Federal Council for the Advancement of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders 1958–1973*, University of Queensland Press, Brisbane, 2005, p. 124.

We must now understand the ideas and perspectives that underpinned these changes in the 1960s to immigration policy and the rights of First Nations peoples in Australia.

USING HISTORICAL SOURCES AS EVIDENCE 6.5

Discuss the impacts of the 1967 referendum. Use the sources provided, and other relevant material, to help construct your response.

6.3 Influential ideas, 1958–1972

INQUIRY QUESTION

What were the influential ideas from 1958 to 1972?

Assimilation

An assimilation policy had already prevailed for Aboriginal people since 1937, and the same aspiration was urged on newcomers by Arthur Calwell in his Ministerial Statement in 1945, Source 5.21.

Paul Hasluck, the federal Minister of Home Affairs, embraced assimilation for Aboriginal people as part of the drive to bring them into the nation as willing Australian citizens. In 1951 he said assimilation meant 'in the course of time, it is expected that all persons of aboriginal blood or mixed blood in Australia will live like white Australians do'. He emphasised it was 'a policy of opportunity. It gives to the aboriginal and to the person of mixed blood a chance to shape their own life'.[7]

In 1961 a state and federal government conference again defined assimilation.

Source 6.25

> The policy of assimilation means in the view of all Australian governments that all aborigines and part-aborigines are expected eventually to attain the same manner of living as other Australians and to live as members of a single Australian community enjoying the same rights and privileges, accepting the same responsibilities, observing the same customs and influenced by the same beliefs, hopes and loyalties as other Australians.
>
> Assimilation does not mean that aborigines should necessarily lose their identity as aborigines or forego their proper pride in this identity. It does not mean that aboriginal language, myths and legends, and art forms should be lost – there is a proper and proud place in the wider Australian culture for all of these. Assimilation is an achievable ideal. The Governments, with the help of Christian Missions, various welfare organisations, and many individuals of goodwill, are directing their efforts towards the development of one Australian people; that is, a community with no isolated, unbelonging minorities based on race or colour.

One People, Ministry for Territories, Dominion Press, Melbourne, 1961, pp. 10, 12.

The definition of assimilation was modified in 1965 to replace the word 'same' with 'similar' and 'are expected' to 'will choose'.

←**Source 6.26** A teacher with Indigenous students. From *One People*, Ministry for Territories, Dominion Press, Melbourne, 1961.

Integration

Another term for how groups interact is 'integration'. The sociologist Ellis Cashmore defined it this way.

Source 6.27

This [integration] describes a condition in which different ethnic groups are able to maintain group boundaries and uniqueness while participating equally in the essential processes of production, distribution and government. Cultural diversity is sustained without the implication that some groups will have greater access to scarce resources than others. For a society to be fully integrated, it must remove ethnic hierarchies, which permit differential access and it must encourage all groups' contributions to the social whole … The contrast with assimilation is important: far from facilitating an absorption of one culture by another, integration entails the retention or even strengthening of differences of ethnic groups. The popular metaphor for assimilation has been the melting pot; for integration, it is the salad bowl, with each ingredient, separable and distinguishable, but no less valuable than the others.

Ellis Cashmore, ed., *Encyclopedia of Race and Ethnic Studies*, Routledge, London, 2004, p. 206.

FOCUS QUESTIONS 6.2

1. In your own words explain Ellis Cashmore's definition of integration in Source 6.27.

2. How is integration different from assimilation?

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Decolonisation and post-colonialism

Decolonisation refers to the dismantling of empires that began in the twentieth century, particularly after World War I (Ottoman and Hapsburg empires) and World War II (British and French empires).

When the United Nations was formed in 1945, about 750 million people lived under the rule of others. Article 73 of the UN Charter called for the granting of self-government to these peoples by assisting them to develop free institutions. In 1961 the UN created a Special Committee on Decolonization, which was to assist the shift to self-determination of dependent peoples. The modern world clearly came to emphasise the self-determination of individuals, as outlined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in Source 5.27.

Colonialism persists. In 1990 the General Assembly of the United Nations declared an International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, which was extended twice to 2020.

Where decolonisation has occurred, the word 'post-colonial' is often applied. John Hawley, a professor of English, defines post-colonialism this way:

Source 6.28

> As the word implies postcolonialism is the study of the cultural effects of colonization evident after independence … [and] After the European powers have technically relinquished control. Neocolonialism, as a corollary [result], calls the concept into question by recognising the ongoing power the coloniser maintains in relations with the former colony through financial, linguistic, educational, and various other social ties.

John C. Hawley, 'Postcolonialism', *The Routledge Companion to Race and Ethnicity*, Stephen M. Caliendo & Charlton D. McIlwain, Routledge, London, 2nd edn, 2021, p. 222.

FOCUS QUESTION 6.3

In pairs or small groups, brainstorm a list of examples that demonstrate the impacts of colonisation on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Post-colonialism and even neo-colonialism can be applied to the condition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders today, who still live with the legacy of colonisation.

United Nations and other declarations of rights

The 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (see Source 5.27) was the foundation document to other international declarations and conventions also ratified by Australia, including the International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination 1965, some extracts from which are shown in Source 6.29:

Source 6.29

> **Article 1**
> In this Convention, the term "racial discrimination" shall mean any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life. [...]
> **Article 2**
> States Parties condemn racial discrimination and undertake to pursue by all appropriate means and without delay a policy of eliminating racial
>
> *Continued…*

discrimination in all its forms and promoting understanding among all races, and, to this end [...]

Article 5 [Asserted] equality before the law, notably in the enjoyment of the following [civil] rights: equality before the law; security of person; the right to vote and stand for election; freedom of movement including the right to leave and return to one's country; the right to nationality; freedom of marriage; own property; inherit; to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; to freedom of thought and expression; peaceful assembly and association; to economic social and cultural freedom; to free, just and equal pay for equal work; to join trade unions; to housing; education and training; to public health, medical care, social security and social services; to equal participation in cultural activities; of access to any place or service intended for use by the general public, such as transport, hotels, restaurants, cafes, theatres and parks.

Extracts from the International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination 1965, summarised in *Australian Treaty Series*, Attorney General's Department, Commonwealth of Australia.

Other covenants followed, namely:
- the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights 1966
- the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights 1966.

The International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention 107 – Indigenous and Tribal Populations Convention, 1957, not ratified (confirmed) by Australia for many years, stated of land rights:

Source 6.30

Article 11

The right of ownership, collective or individual, of the members of the populations concerned over the lands which these populations traditionally occupy shall be recognised.

Article 12

The populations concerned shall not be removed without their free consent from their habitual territories except in accordance with national laws and regulations for reasons relating to national security, or in the interest of national economic development or of the health of the said populations … they shall be provided with lands of quality at least equal to that of the lands previously occupied by them, suitable to provide for their present needs and future development. In cases where chances of alternative employment exist and where the populations concerned prefer to have compensation in money or in kind, they shall be so compensated under appropriate guarantees … Procedures for the transmission of rights of ownership and use of land which are established by the customs of the populations concerned shall be respected, within the framework of national laws and regulations, in so far as they satisfy the needs of these populations and do not hinder their economic and social development.

International Labour Organization (ILO), 'Labour Standards', C107, 1957, ILO website.[8]

Civil rights

Civil rights defined in Sources 6.29 and 6.31 relate to individual rights but were experienced unevenly by members of different groups in this period as we will see.

Civil rights: the rights that each person has in a society, whatever their race, sex, or religion

Cambridge Online Dictionary, accessed March 2021.

←**Source 6.32** Naturalisation ceremony, Victorian Ethnic Affairs Commission

Civil rights, immigrants and naturalisation

From 1901 immigrants had varying civil rights. British immigrants enjoyed the civil rights of Australian-born people, and after 1945 benefited from Australia–United Kingdom reciprocal social service rights.

So-called 'white aliens' (non-British Europeans) lacked citizens' rights until they were eligible for permanent residence and after five years, became naturalised. Before then they could be deported for being disloyal to the monarch, assisting an enemy in war, gaining citizenship by fraud or being sentenced to a year's imprisonment. Until then aliens could not vote (except in local government elections), join the Commonwealth Public Service or receive social service benefits.

Under the *Nationality and Citizenship Act, 1948* all those who became naturalised had to swear 'by Almighty God that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to His Majesty King George the Sixth, his heirs and successors according to law, and that I will faithfully observe the laws of Australia and fulfil my duties as an Australian citizen'. New citizens had also to renounce 'all my allegiance to any sovereign or State of whom or of which I may be a subject or citizen'. This Act was revised four times from 1973 to 2002 and then replaced by the *Australian Citizenship Act, 2007*.

Aliens had a lower rate of assistance in getting to Australia, and once here, and despite paying taxes, did not receive the old age, invalid or widow's pension until they were naturalised. They then had to wait for 10 years to qualify for the invalid or widow's pension (reduced to five years after 1974).[9]

Before 1956 non-Europeans were rarely granted naturalisation, and sparingly after that until discrimination ended in 1973.

Civil rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

First Nations peoples lacked some or many rights after 1901 depending on which state they lived in, including the two rights finally given after the 'yes' vote in the 1967 referendum: to be tallied in the census with other Australian residents and be the beneficiary of specific federal legislation.

In the 1940s some Aboriginal people in certain states could seek exemption from discriminatory legislation. In 1959 Indigenous people became eligible for social security benefits, although those deemed to be 'nomadic' were not eligible until 1966. Even then access was inequitable. In 1961 the federal government granted voting rights to all Aboriginal people under its jurisdiction, that is in the Northern Territory. This right followed for Indigenous people voting in federal elections in the states.

However, in the early 1960s many Indigenous people, despite being born within Australia, lacked rights shared by other Australians because of discrimination against them. The Federal Council for Aboriginal Advancement (later FCAATSI) produced this table showing the lack of citizens' rights of Indigenous people across different jurisdictions.

Rights held/not held by Indigenous people in Australian states in 1962   ←**Source 6.33**

Right	NSW	VIC	SA	WA	NT	QLD
State voting right	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	no
Marry freely	yes	yes	yes	no	no	no
Control own children	yes	yes	no	no	no	no
Move freely	yes	no	no	no	no	no
Own property freely	yes	no	yes	no	no	no
Receive award wages	yes	no	no	no	no	no
Alcohol allowed	no	no	no	no	no	no

Bain Attwood and Andrew Markus, *The Struggle for Aboriginal Rights. A Documentary History*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1999, p. 184.

USING HISTORICAL SOURCES AS EVIDENCE 6.6

1. What does Source 6.33 tell us about the experiences of Indigenous Australians across Australia?
2. How does this data aid the push for a referendum?
3. To what extent do you believe the changes in Australia's ideas towards non-Europeans were motivated by concerns for the nation's international reputation?

6.4 Perspectives, 1958–1972

INQUIRY QUESTION

What do perspectives from 1958 to 1972 reveal about debates over policies about rights and difference?

Assimilation and integration

As sources of immigration became more diverse in the 1950s and immigrant communities developed, the policy of assimilation, that all must become the same as the dominant culture, was questioned. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples also reacted against assimilation.

While Hasluck had seemingly allowed for some retention of culture (see Source 6.25 above), in practice the policy was more restrictive and demanded homogeneity, whereas migrant communities were already pushing for integration (see Source 6.27 for definition).

→**Source 6.34** Assimilation meant reaching the 'same' standards as other Australians. From *One People, Ministry for Territories*, Dominion Press, Melbourne, 1961.

USING HISTORICAL SOURCES AS EVIDENCE 6.7

Explain how the photograph in Source 6.34 reinforces assimilation.

The historian Russell McGregor explains how and why assimilation was applied differently to migrants and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Source 6.35

Postwar policy for immigrants had the same label as Aboriginal policy, and shared the same broad objective of national incorporation. Yet the practices of assimilation for the two groups differed greatly, to the extent that Tim Rowse [another historian] characterises them as 'two parallel projects of nation-building'. No one suggested that new arrivals from Greece should be declared wards of the state until they qualified for citizenship; no one suggested that Italian children might better assimilate by being removed from their families. Yet these practices were pursued in the name of Aboriginal assimilation. In part, the difference derived from the perceived magnitude of the cultural gulf between Aboriginal and white Australians, as against a much smaller cultural gap between the latter and European immigrants; in part, it was pragmatic – Australia could never advertise

Continued…

its desirability as a migrant destination if it treated migrants on arrival as it did its Indigenous people. Beyond those, the differences between Aboriginal and immigrant assimilation programs were symptomatic of the long-entrenched assumption of Aboriginal incompetence. Immigrants, it was assumed, needed encouragement to assimilate; Aboriginal people had to be coerced.

Russell McGregor, *Indifferent Inclusion. Aboriginal People and the Australian Nation*, Aboriginal Studies Press, Canberra, 2011, p. 63.

Indeed, neither immigrants nor Indigenous people accepted assimilation, as Sources 6.36 and 6.38 reveal.

At the annual Citizenship Convention in 1956, Charles A. Price, a demographer, spoke about 'chain' or 'gravitational' migration, by which immigrants gathered together. He argued this was important for people's transition from one country to another, but it could slow or even stop assimilation. The Convention's discussion groups reported that the 'formation of groups was considered a natural consequence of the isolation of migrants in unfamiliar surroundings and should neither be encouraged nor discouraged'.

The Chairman, Sir Richard Boyer (also Australian Broadcasting Commission Chairman) closed the Convention by welcoming a 'two-way Traffic and that we are going to gain as much as we can because it will bring colour and variety into our lives that we would never otherwise have had'. Boyer added:

Source 6.36

We Australians are not just Englishmen, Scotsmen and Irishmen living in Australia. We are a people with a history. Some of it is a grim history, but it is a history that has done something to us.

There is in the Australian character something which I hope will never be lost. Believe me, when you get a mingling of cultures, as Dr Price has said, you must remember that, in the long run, the most dynamic and deep of those cultures will finally win. Unless we know what we stand for, and unless what we stand for is good enough, it is we who in the long term, will be assimilated … We have been thinking that the newcomers are on trial. It is we who are now on trial.

Quoted in John Lack and Jacqueline Templeton (eds), *Bold Experiment. A Documentary History of Australian Immigration since 1945*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1995, pp. 70–2.

In 1962 the Indigenous Noonuccal woman and poet from Stradbroke Island, Queensland, Oodgeroo Noonuccal (Kath Walker) toured Indigenous communities across Australia to advertise the petition calling for a referendum. She reported back to the Council for Aboriginal Rights rejecting assimilation for integration instead.

→ **Source 6.37** Oodgeroo Noonuccal (formerly Kate Walker), poet and activist

Source 6.38

The policy of the government up till now has been that of assimilation for my people. Now, boiled down, assimilation means the swallowing up by a majority group of a minority group. My people, the Aboriginal people are the minority group and they can only be assimilated by the final wiping out of this minority group. Now it is not our desire to have this happen, they had tried hard to do this, but it has not been successful and we feel that this is the most inhuman way of bringing my people forward, we feel that something must be done about it. … Integration means the bringing forward of a race of people with their own identity and their own pride intact … Assimilation can only bring us forward as replicas of the white race; this is not what we desire, we desire to be Aboriginals, proud of this fact …

Quoted in Bain Attwood and Andrew Markus, *The Struggle for Aboriginal Rights. A Documentary History*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1999, pp. 188–9.

Bert (Herbert) Groves, President of the NSW-based Aborigines Progressive Association, told a parliamentary committee on Aboriginal welfare in 1966:

Source 6.39

I do not think it was the Creator's plan that a race of people should disappear. In my mind I feel that assimilation is a modern term for extermination …

I favour integration because integration means to become part of the community and not to be absorbed by the community, as in assimilation.

[Asked if by not fully joining the community, wouldn't he be condemning Aboriginal people to be an underprivileged, low-income group, Groves replied]

Continued…

I do not agree with that because if Aborigines want to remain in groups, and build up co-operatives and remain in their respective groups they should be able to do so. We have such groups in Australia today in Italian colonies in Queensland and also Maltese colonies. These people have no intention or idea of assimilating, but they mix very freely and they do preserve their national dances and culture and their own way of life. There does not seem to be any objection to what they are doing, so why should the aborigines be regarded in a different light if they want to do it?

Quoted in Bain Attwood and Andrew Markus, *The Struggle for Aboriginal Rights. A Documentary History*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1999, pp. 201–11.

USING HISTORICAL SOURCES AS EVIDENCE 6.8

1. Using Source 6.35, outline how assimilation policies were different for migrants and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
2. Explain why both groups rejected assimilation. Use material from the sources to support your response.

Civil rights

Civil rights are individual-based rights in law. They are vital achievements, but it should be remembered that laws do not end **customary discrimination** as expressed in people's attitudes or prejudices – see 'Discrimination and racism' below.

Discriminatory treatment of migrants was ended by naturalisation, which came with the passage of time, for which a person was eligible to apply after five years of arrival. It was an act of choice to take up civil rights in this way.

For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, civil rights were only gained by an Act, or Acts, of parliament and had to occur in seven different state and territory jurisdictions for all people to be freed of controls.

A submission in 1961 over the vote for Aboriginal people in the Northern Territory made to a Commonwealth Select Committee from the Western Australian Native Welfare Council argued:

customary discrimination an act of discrimination based on people's social attitudes rather than making an official distinction to favour someone over another on racial or other grounds

The denial of votes to Aborigines in the present circumstances is an arbitrary discrimination on the ground of colour or race. This is contrary to the **Atlantic Charter** and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Many people are becoming perturbed as it is realised that this discrimination is bad for Australia's good name and standing among neighbouring nations. A friend travelling in Indonesia reports that people there were far more concerned with Australia's treatment of our Aborigines … than with the White Australia Policy.

Source 6.40

Atlantic Charter a charter signed by Great Britain and the United States in 1941 setting out a vision for the postwar world and was a step towards the creation of the United Nations in 1945

Quoted in John Chesterman, *Civil Rights. How Indigenous Australians Won Formal Equality*, University of Queensland Press, Brisbane, 2005, p. 65.

Joe McGinness, President of the Federal Council for the Advancement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, wrote to the Queensland Premier Frank Nicklin on 21 February 1963 about the need to repeal the oppressive Queensland Acts.

Source 6.41

[The FCAATSI] Conference indicated strong opposition to the Government's proposal to any revising of the present Acts, as this implies that discriminatory legislation against Aborigines and Islanders would still remain. Discriminatory law is not in keeping with the United Nations Charter of Human Rights, and certainly is an embarrassment to Australia.

Quoted in Bain Attwood and Andrew Markus, *The Struggle for Aboriginal Rights. A Documentary History*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1999, p. 195.

The historian Richard Broome revealed some provisions of the Queensland Aboriginal Acts, which for those living on reserves, differed little from 1897 to 1971. In 1960 a half of Queensland Indigenous peoples lived on reserves under these Acts and their regulations.

Source 6.42

Reserve dwellers suffered not only the usual loss of rights, but were subject to the petty tyranny of superintendents, only found elsewhere in gaols or mental asylums … the Superintendent could prohibit card games, dancing and 'native' practices that might give offence; order medical inspections; and confiscate possessions that are 'likely to be the subject or cause of a disturbance of the harmony, good order, or discipline of the reserve'. Alcohol and threatening or abusive language were prohibited, as was 'any act subversive of good order and discipline'. Reserve inmates could be ordered to do 32 hours of work without payment. The superintendent, with the approval of the Director of Aboriginal Affairs, could also open mail and inflict corporal [physical] punishment. Such places of 'protection' required a permit to enter and one to leave. … The reserves had their own laws, courts, police and gaols.

In 1965 a new Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders Affairs Act was passed in Queensland, but in most respects it differed little from the one it replaced. Titles changed from 'settlement' to 'community' and from 'superintendent' to 'manager', and the harshest regulations were expunged [dropped], but special courts, reserve police, lock-ups, power over Aboriginal movements, decision-making, wages and property remained.

Richard Broome, *Aboriginal Australians. A History Since 1788*, 5th edition, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 2019, pp. 223–4.

←**Source 6.43** Harold Holt and two government MPs meeting with representatives of the Federal Council for the Advancement of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders (FCAATSI) – from left to right: Gordon Bryant, Faith Bandler, Harold Holt, Doug Nicholls, Burnum Burnum, Winnie Branson, and Bill Wentworth, February 1967.

One man, Lionel Lacy, who lived under the Queensland Act declared angrily, in 1976:

Source 6.44

Well, in the Reserve or community there has to be a white manager. We have one in Cherbourg. The people have got to see the Manager if they want a job, because he says and tells you where you will work … The people would wait for something like 2 weeks and then he would give them jobs like hygiene or some other shit job that pays $24 to $42 per fortnight … At Cherbourg there was, and still is, hardly anything to do. There is no pub, no pool tables, no swimming pools. In the law of Queensland Acts, no grog is allowed on the Reserve anyway. When I got a job the pay was $24 a fortnight … There are still bad housing conditions, and medical and education are not given to us in the way that they should be given … When we go away from the Reserve into the city when we want to come back home the whites put the laws in the way, like you have to have a permit to go back on the Reserve. If you learn something from the city or are involved in the Black Power movement, you will not be allowed back home. Why? Because the white man is scared about blacks learning about how to fight these laws. The white man wants to keep control because there is profit in it for him, and also he thinks that blacks are like kids and cannot control their own affairs.

Lionel G. Lacey, 'Life Under the Queensland Act', *The Queensland Aborigines Act and Regulations 1971*, Black Resource Centre Collective, Brisbane, 1976, pp. 6–7.

Civil rights discriminations for Indigenous people ended haphazardly in the 1960s on a state-by-state basis. The last discriminatory Act was ended in Queensland in 1975. Were civil rights given or won? Some historians argue the assimilation policy, which promised citizenship, led to civil rights. John Chesterman argued the opposite.

Source 6.45

> The period when the most significant changes to the civil rights status of Indigenous Australians were occurring was a time of enormous change in international law and politics, evidenced most clearly by the growing status of the United Nations and its declarations and conventions, the rise in popularity of the belief that universal 'human rights' which are not culturally specific exist, and the increasing international muscle exercised by former colonies in South-East Asia and Africa. This was a time, more than ever before, when rights talk by domestic activists was likely to receive significant international consideration … Indigenous activists and their non-Indigenous supporters were able to shame Australian governments into acceding to many of their demands. Rights talk and national shame were the essential elements that explain changes to the civil rights status of Indigenous Australians.

John Chesterman, *Civil Rights. How Indigenous Australians Won Formal Equality*, University of Queensland Press, Brisbane, 2005, pp. 18–19.

DID YOU KNOW?

Much of the movement for civil rights was driven by Aboriginal activism. However, it was also inspired by the civil rights struggle in the United States during the 1960s and the speeches of leaders such as Martin Luther King and Malcolm X. Young Aboriginal activists also read key works such as *Black Power. The Politics of Liberation in America* (1967).

Land and other Indigenous rights

In 1963 the first land rights movement developed from a protest by the Yirrkala people over mining surveys of their land without permission. A case was mounted but lost in the courts in 1971.

During the 1960s Aboriginal groups across Australia, both traditional and urban, began to agitate for [demand] land rights and against control by government Aboriginal boards. In March 1966 the Aboriginal–Australian Fellowship based in Sydney petitioned the NSW joint parliamentary Committee on Aboriginal Welfare.

The Australian Aborigines Welfare Board have no title to Australia whatsoever. All Aboriginal reserves and missions are Crown land. State boards have alienated much reserve land … vast acres of the old Brewarrina and Cummeragunga reserves were released for land or leased to Europeans. Efforts by people at Cummeragunga reserve to own it and farm wheat by means of a company to be backed by the Aborigines' Advancement League have received no support from the welfare board.

Quoted in Bain Attwood and Andrew Markus, *The Struggle for Aboriginal Rights. A Documentary History*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1999, p. 209.

In 1968 FCAATSI issued a pamphlet on the facts about land rights, calling for:
- Aboriginal ownership of existing reserves
- Aboriginal ownership of traditional lands leased by the Crown
- Mining only by Aboriginal consent.

FCAATSI's pamphlet put forward these arguments for land rights:

- Common justice demanded no group should be deprived of its inheritance
- International opinion demanded it, based on ILO convention 107 and other rights
- Land rights were vital to Aboriginal well being and future race relations in Australia
- Land was important to the psychological well-being of Aboriginal people
- Aboriginal people had asked for the return of land for 100 years
- The cost of compensation for pastoral leases must be set against the cost of Aboriginal welfare necessary while they are a deprived minority
- Land rights will not impoverish the North [by slowing economic development]
- Land rights will not lead to segregation but mean Aborigines can inherit, own, and control some capital resources, as do most Australians. It would reduce economic barriers between the races and speed integration
- International precedents show it is right and realistic
- Land rights would improve Australia's external relations
- Land rights would place internal race relations on a proper footing before racial strife spreads to Australian shores
- Morality and national interest should determine land rights, not the vested interests of a minority.

Quoted in Bain Attwood and Andrew Markus, *The Struggle for Aboriginal Rights. A Documentary History*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1999, pp. 225–33.

←**Source 6.48** An Aboriginal land rights protest in Spring Street, Melbourne, 1971 (*The Age* archive)

On 24 September 1970, Bruce McGuinness, the Wiradjuri man who was Director of the Victorian Aborigines Advancement League, sent a land rights petition to the United Nations. It appealed explicitly to the United Nations Charter and quoted directly from the ILO Convention 107 (see Source 6.30 above) and articles 11 and 12 of that Convention, on the right to hold traditional lands and to be compensated if removed from them. It added (the first paragraph being in Capital letters):

Source 6.49

FROM THE TIME OF THE FIRST SETTLEMENT IN 1788 TO DATE, THE CROWN HAS NEVER USED EVEN ITS CLAIMED POWER TO TAKE OUR LAND, EITHER BY TREATY OR PURCHASE. THE CROWN HAS BLATANTLY TAKEN OUR LAND WITHOUT TREATY, WITHOUT PURCHASE, AND WITHOUT COMPENSATION OF ANY KIND.

We, the Aborigines of Australia whom the invaders have not yet succeeded in wiping off the face of the earth, are the owners of the land of Australia in equity, in the eyes of any system of civilised law and in justice and yet we have no share in the great mineral, agricultural and pastoral wealth of our country.

Quoted in G. Fay Gayle and Alison Brookman, *Race Relations in Australia – the Aborigines*, McGraw Hill Book Company Sydney 1975, pp. 86–7.

The conservative Prime Minister William McMahon addressed the nation on 26 January 1972. A white activist Jack Horner recalled that McMahon said government policy:

Source 6.50

would encourage Aboriginal Australians to have equal access to the rights and opportunities of other Australians and to develop their own culture, languages, traditions and arts. Land rights were clearly not on the ruling coalition government's agenda.

Jack Horner, *Seeking Racial Justice. An Insider's Memoir of the Movement for Aboriginal Advancement*, 1938–1978, Aboriginal Studies Press, Canberra, 2004, p. 167.

Land claims began a wider push for Indigenous rights: protection of sacred sites, Indigenous languages, cultural rights and respect for Indigenous knowledge. One manifestation was the erection of an Aboriginal Tent Embassy on the lawn of Parliament House on 26 January 1972. The Aboriginal flag, newly created by Harold Thomas, was flown.

←**Source 6.51**
Aboriginal Tent Embassy officials arrive at the Embassy after it had to be re-erected on the lawns of Parliament House in Canberra, where over 1000 Aboriginal people and their supporters demonstrated for Aboriginal land rights, 30 July 1972.

Richard Broome noted one outcome:

Source 6.52

Land claims, the Embassy and Indigenous rights galvanised many Aboriginal people across the country into a pan-Aboriginal identity [across all Indigenous groups in Australia]. Chicka Dixon declared in 1972: 'As long as I breathe I'm black … of course we down south haven't got our culture, we haven't got our language, but we have the feeling that we belong … we are black Australians'. Wesley Wagner Lanhupuy from Galiwinku (Elcho Island) in the Northern Territory, stated at a National Land Rights conference in Sydney in 1977: 'Aborigines – whether urban or tribal – who have a spiritual awareness of themselves as Aborigines and identify themselves as Aborigines are Aborigines'.

Richard Broome, *Aboriginal Australians. A History Since 1788*, 5th edition, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 2019, pp. 229–30.

FOCUS QUESTIONS 6.5

1. What rights to land did Indigenous people want?
2. What arguments did they present to support their claims?
3. What did land rights claims do for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identity?

RESEARCH TASK 6.1

In pairs or small groups investigate the strike led by Vincent Lingiari known as the Wave Hill Walk Off. Prepare a report outlining what happened and how it is an example of a fight for both civil and Indigenous rights.

Challenges to White Australia

From the 1950s, individuals, groups and states argued the merits of the White Australia Policy. De-colonised nations pressured Australia through diplomatic channels and via the United Nations, while diverse groups inside Australia such as the Australian Council of Churches and the Communist Party of Australia lobbied for an end to the policy.

The Immigration Reform Group, established in Melbourne in 1959, wanted these reforms:

- An end to White Australia
- Immigration levels should reflect the capacity to absorb newcomers without social or economic strain
- Europeans and non-Europeans to have the same entry requirements
- Close relative reunions should have priority
- Initial intake of non-Europeans should be small – only 1500 per year.

In 1962 the Immigration Reform Group used these arguments for change.

Source 6.53

First, it is immoral to maintain a colour bar [a discriminatory barrier to people of colour]; for a colour bar is something that a person cannot cross, whatever his merits or qualifications …

Secondly, the effects of the policy within Australia are also unfortunate. We need more contact with non-Europeans for Australia's sake. Especially do we need more contact with Asians. We need to increase our understanding of Asian problems and the ways in which Australian assistance may be made meaningful and effective … We cannot learn about the world around us if contact only occurs in the course of short visits in either directions.

Thirdly, we are needlessly denying opportunity to individuals who want to settle here and whose presence would harm no one, provided the intake were not too large and were suitably chosen. Immigration from outside Europe must necessarily be limited in the light of its impact on Australian society and the Australian economy; for similar reasons we limit immigrants from parts of Europe … our immigration policy should not be framed solely for the benefit of people already in Australia. Other things being equal, we should let in those migrants whose own need is greatest and who therefore gain most from coming here.

Fourthly, the policy should be changed because of its disastrous impact on non-European opinion. Non-whites throughout the world regard the whole notion of a 'White Australia' as deeply insulting.

Immigration Reform Group, *Immigration: Control or Colour Bar?* Melbourne, 1962, pp. 87–8.

Others, such as the Returned and Services League, the Australian Natives' Association and some trade unions, opposed any change.

Sir John Latham, a former Attorney General, Deputy Prime Minister and High Court judge, wrote in 1961, three years before his death, in defence of White Australia. Unlike earlier arguments based on race, Latham argued for a White Australia based on respect for cultural difference. However, some have called this simply a new form of racism.

The Australian policy is not based on race or colour, but on difference. Ours is a European civilization. Are we not entitled to keep it so if we wish – just as other countries are entitled to preserve their traditional and preferred civilization?

Asian countries differ from Australia not only in colour and race and language, but also in tradition and history and loyalties, in social and political outlook and organization, in religion (except for minorities) in manner of living, and in standards of living …

Immigration of aliens is also controlled, and restricted by law in Pakistan, Burma, Ceylon [now Sri Lanka], Malaya, Singapore, Cambodia, Vietnam and Japan. The laws of these Asian countries are not distinguishable in substance from the Australian law …

It is fair to say that there is no significant racial tension in Australia at the present time. Why? Because in fact the number of persons of non-European race here who are permanent residents is small, and no difficulties arise. If the number became substantial, there is every reason to fear that racial tension, now so happily absent, would develop …

A man can have many friends without inviting them all to come into his home.

Quadrant, vol. v, Autumn 1961, pp. 3–8.

C. Palfreeman wrote in the conservative *Current Affairs Bulletin* 1964:

Were the Australian people justified, morally and legally, in establishing the policy in 1901? On acceptable criteria, the answer would have to be yes. Whatever the undertones and overtones of racial prejudice, the protection of the community against the importation of cheap labour and of an unassimilable minority was morally justified … If the only objectives relevant to immigration policy are to safeguard economic standards, to preserve established political institutions, traditions and social *mores* … Then there is little doubt that the policy is as morally and legally justified in 1964 as in 1901.

C. Palfreeman, *Current Affairs Bulletin*, vol. 34, July 1964, pp. 56–61.

FOCUS QUESTIONS 6.6

1. List the arguments for and against the White Australia Policy at the time.
2. List the groups that supported each side of the debate at the time.
3. Do both sides argue a moral case? Explain how.
4. Which side do you think people at the time would have found the most convincing, and why?

The White Australia Policy ended in 1973 as we have seen in Source 6.19 above.

INQUIRY QUESTION

How did people experience immigration to Australia between 1958 and 1972?

Economic effects

Postwar Australia experienced an economic boom until the mid-1970s, with a small slowdown in 1961. Jobs were plentiful in the 1950s and 1960s and manufacturing and national construction projects soaked up much immigrant labour, which industry depended upon. From 1947 to 1966 the Australian workforce increased by almost one million workers. Sixty per cent of this increase were migrant workers, the majority living in cities.[10] However, many experienced poor working conditions as they were initially ignored by trade unions.

↑**Source 6.56** Immigrant women workers in a Melbourne cheese factory. Courtesy Centre for Urban Research and Action.

One Italian migrant woman recalled her factory experience:

Source 6.57

The work is good but the conditions are bad, especially in winter. When it rains water comes inside. Sometimes it drips on the machines, sometimes near the machines, you have to put buckets out to catch the drips. The boss doesn't replace the whole roof like he should, he patches it up, bit by bit, … There's no proper dressing room, you have to get changed into your uniform in the toilet. There's six toilets and about one hundred and fifty women to get changed in turn so you can imagine what it's like, especially at knock off time. You couldn't get a toilet seat then even if you wanted one! …

For forty hours a week … the pay's low and we've got a house to pay off and to make more comfortable. You need a fridge and a good hot water

Continued…

…Continued

service … But here, in every factory, there are people who have never worked before or who've come from villages and they are ignorant. The Australians who've been in factory, they know their rights, but the women from the countryside, who've never worked before, say, 'The aims of the union are good but what can we do? How can we get what we want? … I feel conditions aren't good but it's hard to talk to other workers because of the language differences and differences in mentality and it's almost impossible to talk to the union. I feel I can't do anything to change things.

Quoted in Morag Loh (ed.), *With Courage in their Cases. The Experiences of Thirty-five Immigrant Workers and their Families in Australia*, 1980, pp. 62–5.

In 1966 Professor Ronald Henderson of the University of Melbourne published a detailed inquiry into poverty titled *People in Poverty. A Melbourne Survey* (1970). Richard Broome summed up his report's findings:

Source 6.58

Ronald Henderson found that eleven per cent of the population was poor or marginally poor after incomes had been adjusted for housing costs and the type and size of family being supported. All immigrants who came after 1960 had above average poverty rates. However among those who arrived between 1955 and 1960, the British had a rate equal to the average, whereas the poverty of Greeks and Italians were still twice the average. The survey observed of non-English speakers that 'those who began unskilled jobs tend to remain in them. Even if we go back further to settlers who arrived between 1949 and 1954, over 80 per cent of the Italians and over 70 per cent of the Greeks are still in the lower skilled occupations'.

Richard Broome, *Arriving*, Fairfax, Syme and Weldon, Sydney, 1984, p. 206.

The historian John Hirst said this of Greek and Italian immigrants:

Source 6.59

The Italians and Greeks who arrived in the 1950s were not directed where to work. They had peasant skills for which there was little demand but they had no trouble finding work in factories, for manufacturing was expanding. So the day after he landed, an illiterate peasant with no English was at work on a production line at award wages and, though he probably did not know it, he joined the union.

With full employment and wages rising rapidly, an Italian or Greek family could do well. Husband and wife were both at work, and after sharing houses for a time families had enough to pay a deposit on their own, so becoming proper suburban Australians. Not altogether so, for to them soil was not to be wasted on flowerbeds or lawn; the land at the front as well as the back of their houses was given over to vegetables and fruit.

John Hirst, *Australian History in 7 Questions*, Black Inc., Melbourne, 2014, p. 159.

1. Describe the working conditions outlined in Source 6.57.

2. Do you think Ronald Henderson or John Hirst gave a more accurate view of economic conditions? Justify your response using Sources 6.58 and 6.59.
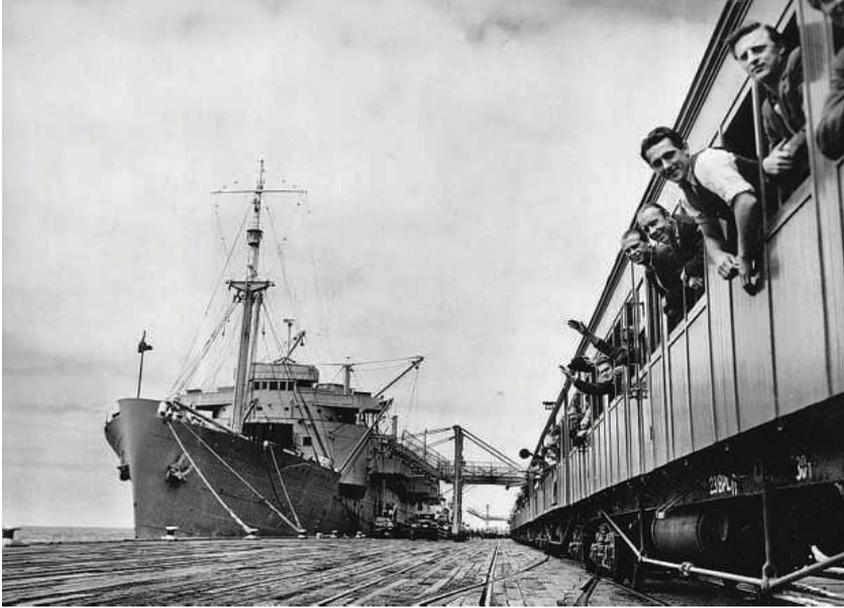
↑**Source 6.60** New arrivals from the Baltic were transported from Melbourne to the Bonegilla reception centre by train. HMAS *Kanimbla* is tied up at Station Pier in the background, c.1975.

Communities, exchanges, contributions to society

Unlike in other migrant-receiving countries, many immigrants to Australia began life in hostels, dotted across the country; Bonegilla in Victoria being the most iconic. Many were housed in Nissen huts—semi-cylindrical corrugated iron huts, formerly used as Army barracks. The historians James Hammerton and Alistair Thomson discussed hostels and the idea that British migrants had better treatment.

Source 6.61

Often adapted from old army barracks or wood sheds, or hastily constructed in visually alarming Nissen huts, they were administered by officials keen to encourage rapid turnover, who deliberately erred on the side of providing minimal comfort. The austere [basic] structures could become cauldrons of seething discontent and do much to define migrants' attitudes to the new country …

The general, and not unreasonable, presumption in historical accounts is that the British enjoyed a much more comfortable hostel experience than the rest … The differences were no doubt important, but still relative and

Continued…

…Continued

there was an outpouring of anguished complaints from British migrants, especially in the early years of makeshift buildings. The shock of substandard accommodation, poor food, lack of privacy, high rents which interfered with the ability to obtain independent housing, and tensions with fellow inmates, are seared into migrant memories … But hostels housed large and shifting communities. Here important and often lasting alliances and friendships – as well as enmities – could be made, an active and vibrant social life might develop and protest activities could be initiated.

A. James Hammerton and Alistair Thomson, *Ten Pound Poms. Australia's Invisible Migrants. A Life History of Postwar British Emigration to Australia*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, 2005, pp. 167–8.

↑**Source 6.62** A migrant family enters their new home in Maribyrnong, Victoria, c.1965. Nissen huts were a common feature of life for new arrivals to Australia at the time.

Hostel life was just the beginning of immigrant anxiety. Richard Broome commented in his study *Arriving* (1984) about how immigrants, especially non-English speaking ones, managed:

Source 6.63

The journey across cultures can sap life and vigour. In the mid-1960s the overseas-born population in Australia had suicide rates fifty per cent higher than those of the native born … The strain of cultural interaction left many tired and anxious, or just homesick and lonely. Only private letters and reminiscences collected in future years will reveal the full extent of the nostalgia, the separations and the loneliness …

Continued…

…Continued

Most newcomers survive the rigours of immigration sufficiently to make their way in society and many even enjoyed their new life here. Many factors affect their adjustment, including their age at arrival, their motivation, their existing job skills, the ease with which they find employment and housing, and the response of the Australian population to them. The personality of the individual immigrant is also crucial. Given the demands of cultural change, those who are more intelligent, emotionally stable and flexible will probably succeed best. This view has been supported by research, which also suggested that the ability to trust others and the possession of a strong sense of oneself are important for successful adjustments.

The family unit is often a shield against adversity behind which its members can hide at intervals from the world and find refreshment from loved ones … Among many southern Europeans in particular, the extended family and the networks of villagers, established by chain migration strengthened the sense of continuity with the past. Language, the heart of ethnic identity, was maintained by the presence of these groups …

The wider ethnic communities, the 'Little Italy's, or 'Croatias' of Melbourne that blossomed in the 1960s did something to ease the difficulties of many immigrants. The Italian expressos [sic], or the Greek and Turkish coffee houses, the barbers, grocers, tailors and the professional services owned and staffed by compatriots provided a sense of security for many newcomers, especially males. Purchases could be made there in one's own language without trouble and amid the little jokes that only insiders know and appreciate. All this gave feeling that the present was somehow in touch with a long tradition. Most sizeable ethnic groups developed their own press, cinemas, ethnic language schools, societies and sporting groups, especially soccer clubs, which all provided a range of support and a sense of identity.

Richard Broome, *Arriving*, Fairfax, Syme and Weldon, Sydney, 1984, pp. 215–16.

←**Source 6.64** Turkish men play Tuala in a Coburg coffee bar, 1970. Courtesy of *The Age*.

Discrimination and racism

Source 6.6 shows the ethnic composition of immigrants in Australia between 1947 and 1970. Just over 40% were British or of British descent. They were perceived as different and often called 'Poms' (even 'Pommy whingers'), but they were generally accepted. The 12% from northern Europe were also accepted without significant resentment. In Chapter 5 we also saw that the 15% of immigrants who were Displaced Persons from Eastern Europe and the Baltic States were called 'Balts' and 'reffos', but resentments faded to be replaced by an indifference and a lack of mixing. The 25% from Southern Europe experienced more antipathy, being called 'wogs' at times and labelled with other stereotypes.

In 1959 Franca Arena arrived in Melbourne, a single Italian young woman, and after being sent to Bonegilla went to Sydney. She spoke some English, which helped her find a job. In 1987 she recalled:

> I felt alienated, lonely and insecure. People would ask me: 'And where are you from'? 'Italy', I would reply with pride and love. And often I would get the superior look and a comment such as 'Ah an Eyetie'! [slang for Italian] It made me angry and I wanted to tell people about the place I came from – the pride I had in Italian literature, music, painters and sculptors. But in Australia all this counted for nothing … I started making friends in both the Italian and Australian communities, but none of the Australian friends ever invited me home. It was not the done thing in Australia to invite foreigners, and it took years for that to change.

Source 6.65

Franca Arena, *Australians from 1939*, Ann Curthoys, AW Martin and Tim Rowse, Fairfax, Syme and Weldon, Sydney 1987, pp. 366–7.

An immigrant boy, for whom English was his second language, wrote in his not quite perfect English of his first experiences in school.

> I had no one to speak to or to sit to everybody was like strangers to me every period I was lonely even at playtime or lunch time I was lonely I had two just lean on the fence for a few months then everybody started pushing me I tried to mix with them but they wouldn't even stand next to me one day I desided not to let them pushing me around I fought them back and I use to stand in fron of the ofice all the time than one day sudenly some boys started mixing with me talking to me and I couldn't ander stand until the kid was talking to me with hands after a month I ander stand everything then yous to say and we used to help each other for a long time and even now they still with me at this school [sic]

Source 6.66

A. Golding, 'The Problems of Migrant Schoolchildren', in *The Migrant Child and the School*, Melbourne, 1973, p. 4.

Generally, the antipathy all migrants experienced remained within manageable limits. Richard Broome wrote in his study of immigration in the first generation after World War II:

Given the massive inflow of different peoples since 1945, it is remarkable that the response of Australians of Anglo-Celtic descent towards newcomers so rarely erupted into violence. There were numerous brawls in some inner suburbs, especially in the 1950s. One Calabrian recalled of those times in Pascoe Vale: 'I was drinking a beer with some of my friends when an Australian came up and started yelling "Bastards, go back to your own bloody country". We tried to ignore him, then I got angry and the punch-up began. Blood and broken glass was everywhere'. Rival ethnic groups sought each other out on Saturday nights, even with knives, chains and [fence] palings. Ugly scenes occurred between Australians and newcomers who each believed themselves superior. But in those years neighbourhood '**bodgies**' and '**widgies**' and later gangs of 'rockers' and 'surfies' did much the same. The significant thing is that none of these nasty incidents emerged into any major eruption of violence such as those overseas in Little Rock, Brixton or Kuala Lumpur.

bodgies/widgies
referred to young men and women who dressed in distinctive clothing: men in tight pants, leather jackets and wore slicked down hair; women wearing tight coloured slacks and teased hairdos

Richard Broome, *Arriving*, Fairfax, Syme and Weldon, Sydney, 1984, pp. 210–11.

Aboriginal people generally experienced far more traumatic discrimination and racism than migrants. Paul Coe, a Wiradjuri man, law student and head of the NSW Aboriginal Legal Service, wrote this:

It is the white world that decides what a black man is in this present day and age. The white man has the desire, it seems to me, to put the black man in his place, to make him cater for some inbuilt white superiority complex. They feel they must subject black people to humiliation; they must subject black people to a poverty culture … This is the result of government policy and of institutionalised attitudes of white racism. To me, the only way of overcoming this effectively is by cultural programmes examining the forces of history in the true light of what has gone on in this country: of the massacres and the resistance that went on, and of the poisonings, of why mission stations were set up, why people were dragged onto the mission stations in chains, examine the fifty or seventy years of slow death living in a prison camp, prison camps without walls.

Paul Coe, in Colin Tatz, *Black Viewpoints. The Aboriginal Experience*, Australian and New Zealand Book Company, Sydney, 1975, p. 108.

↑**Source 6.69** Pat O'Shane, a teacher, barrister and magistrate, spoke out against the *Queensland Act 1965*.

Pat Miller (nee O'Shane), a Kunjandji woman born at Mossman in north Queensland and a teacher in Cairns (later the first Indigenous barrister and then magistrate in Australia), spoke of discrimination under the *Queensland Act 1965*. She also slammed the refusal by white Queenslanders to provide access to services for Indigenous people and the racist names they used against Indigenous people. Pat Miller added:

Source 6.70

These attitudes are very strong in North Queensland. I believe that by the terms of the Act, and from the clauses I read you, that these attitudes are deliberately engendered and perpetuated by the government, by government policy. As a result of this active racism, Aborigines are being denied any decent standard of education and consequently lack the abilities which would give them access to gainful employment. These aspects are all part of a vicious circle: lack of education means lack of jobs; lack of jobs means lack of education and other opportunities.

Pat Miller in Colin Tatz, *Black Viewpoints. The Aboriginal Experience*, Australian and New Zealand Book Company, Sydney, 1975, p. 84.

While Indigenous people had a fraught relationship with Australia and Australians due to a long colonial relationship involving loss of land, livelihood and cultural disruption, immigrants often developed a more comfortable relationship with their adopted land. Franca Arena (see Source 6.65), who became a journalist in Australia, experienced this after a trip home:

Source 6.71

Italy had changed during those nine years, so had I. It was difficult to get used to many things again. I was longing for the carefree, less class conscious, more egalitarian Australian society …

For years I had felt I was an Italian in Australia; now I was feeling more and more committed to my beloved country Australia, the country where my sons were born. I wanted them to grow up in a society that is just, which aspired to good and fine things, where there was a place for music, the arts, diversity, where men and women were allowed to make their contributions, no matter where they came from or what colour their skin was … Now and again I still feel some alienation in this society; I still feel an outsider … people still … write to me anonymously: 'Bloody wog, why don't you go back to where you came from'. I know that some people will never accept me as an Australian but that the great majority do …

I am convinced that Australia today is a better, happier and more enlightened country than the one in which I landed in 1959 … As a country we are learning to live together; we are learning to accept that Australia's ethnic and cultural diversity is a national asset.

Franca Arena, *Australians from 1939*, Ann Curthoys, AW Martin and Tim Rowse, Fairfax, Syme and Weldon, Sydney, 1987, p. 369.

↑**Source 6.72** Italian friends play bocce in the Edinburgh Gardens, Fitzroy, in 1982.
Courtesy of *The Age*.

6.6 Chapter summary

Here are some dot-points for you to consider and add to:

Continuities
- The Australian economy experienced a long economic boom and low unemployment.
- Annual immigration intakes remained high in pursuit of Calwell's two per cent target.
- British immigrants remained the largest immigrant group.
- Australian governments tried to maintain homogeneity and the assimilation policy.

Changes
- More diverse groups entered Australia including large numbers of southern Europeans.
- The United Nations made declarations about human rights and the rights of minorities.
- The Australian government faced increasing international criticism about its treatment of Indigenous and Asian peoples.
- Groups in Australia called for change to immigration policy towards non-Europeans.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people gained civil rights.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people publicly began to demand land rights.

6.7 End-of-chapter activities

The following tasks are designed to help strengthen your understanding of the material explored in this chapter and to encourage you to further analyse and evaluate the events, ideas, perspectives and experiences that impacted the end of White Australia between 1958 and 1972.

Consolidating your understanding

Events

Complete the table below to help summarise the key events that happened in this chapter. Remember to have one or two pieces of evidence for each event from the sources.

Event	Summary of what happened	Example/s of evidence from sources
Immigration by numbers		
White Australia in operation		
Other administrative changes		
1958 and 1966 Migration Acts		
Referendum 1967		

Ideas

1. Source 6.25 asserts 'Assimilation does not mean that aborigines should necessarily lose their identity'. Do you agree with this statement?
2. Fill in the missing information.
   a. Article _____ of the UN Charter called for the granting of self-government to the _____ million people who lived under the rule of others after World War II.
   b. '_____ entails the retention or even strengthening of differences of ethnic groups'
3. Explain how the idea of civil rights shaped migrant and Indigenous experiences in Australia during 1958–1972.

Perspectives

Complete the following questions to help consolidate your understanding of this section of the chapter.

1. a. Research the definition of paternalism and explain it in your own words.
   b. How does it apply to Indigenous experiences during this time period?
2. Explain the difference between civil rights and Indigenous rights.
3. Outline the reasons why individuals and groups were challenging the ideas of a White Australia and assimilation.

Experiences

1. Complete a Venn Diagram outlining the similarities and differences in the discrimination experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-European migrants.
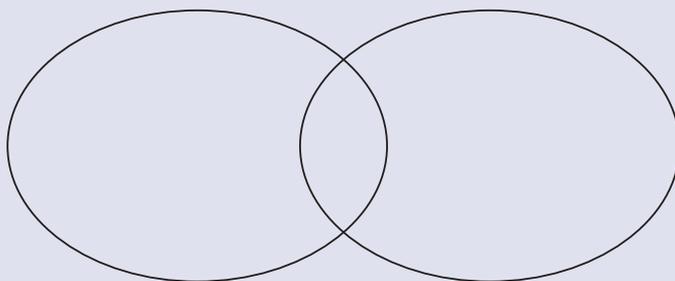
2. Describe the economic and working conditions non-British migrants experienced during 1958–1972.

Evaluating historical significance

1. a. Evaluate the impact of internal and external forces in bringing an end to the White Australia Policy (WAP). Complete the table below:

Internal forces (pressures within Australia to end WAP)	Explanation/Evidence	External forces (pressures outside Australia to end WAP)	Explanation/Evidence

    b. Rank the factors you have identified in your table in order of significance from being most responsible for the end of White Australia to the least.

    c. Compare and contrast your table and rankings with the person sitting next to you. What are the similarities and differences in your responses?

2. Analyse the significance of the 1967 referendum for Indigenous Australians.

Constructing an argument: essay writing

1. To what extent was post-colonialism in the Asia–Pacific responsible for the gradual dismantling of the White Australia Policy? Refer to the sources and your own knowledge within your response.

2. Evaluate the extent to which attitudes towards Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples changed after World War II. Use evidence to justify your response.

3. Read the following introduction for the first topic in pairs or small groups. Discuss the following:

- Identify what has been done well
- Identify what could be improved
- Is the contention clearly articulated and does it address all aspects of the topic?
- Are the main points to support the contention previewed in this introduction?
- Is it to the point or is it too wordy?

There were various internal and external factors that contributed to the end of the White Australia Policy. Post-colonialism and the need for Australia to build strong diplomatic and economic relationships with the new nations of the Asia–Pacific region certainly contributed to a gradual change in policy. Moreover, Australia's international reputation was being harmed by the White Australia Policy, as it contradicted the principles of the international rights declarations that the nation had signed in the years after World War II. These international pressures did contribute legislative changes to the Migration Act in 1958 and 1966, which saw the dictation test abolished and citizenship rights improved. But these developments can also be credited to the internal lobbying from local organisations, such as the Immigration Reform Group, who argued that it was 'immoral to maintain a colour bar'. Individual cases such as the deportation of the 'Alabama kid' and five-year-old Nancy Prasad also reinforced the inequality, inhumanity and prejudice of the policy for a growing number of Australians.

CHAPTER 7
Multiculturalism, 1973–1995

Chapter timeline

World events	Date	Australian events
	1975	
1975: Fall of Saigon – this event marked the end of the Vietnam War		**1975:** *Racial Discrimination Act 1975 –* landmark legislation against discrimination
		1977: In September boats from Vietnam arrive
	1980	
		1984: Historian Geoffrey Blainey queries the level of Asian intake, causing controversy
1986: Fire at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant		
1989: Tiananmen Square Massacre, Beijing – 4 June attack on student protesters		
1989: The fall of the Berlin Wall		
	1990	
1990–91: Gulf War between coalition forces led by the US and Iraq		
1991: The end of the Cold War		
		1992: Redfern Speech – Paul Keating's address of reconciliation

7.1   Introduction

INQUIRY QUESTIONS

- How was multiculturalism received by Australians?
- How did Australians react to Indo-Chinese refugees?

The Whitlam government, elected in December 1972 under the slogan of 'It's Time', created changes in Australian society, including the end of the White Australia Policy. In 1973 the new Minister of Immigration Al Grassby visited Asia to publicise the policy's end. In the Philippines he famously said: 'give me a shovel' and he would bury the policy.[1] Immigration rates were also drastically cut.

To replace immigration policies based on 'whiteness' and British homogeneity, new policies were developed and implemented by the Whitlam government (1972–1975); the Fraser conservative government (1975–1983) and the Hawke Labor and Keating Labor governments (1983–1996). These quite consistent policies from different governments, aimed at ending discrimination and introducing multiculturalism, had important implications for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

While the Australian public digested such changes, war and upheaval in south-east Asia created refugee flows, some southward to Australia. The differences to the earlier refugee intake of

1947–1954 were stark. Not only did these refugees come from ethnic groups that were very divergent culturally to Australia's majority British and European population, but initially a few thousand arrived in a less controlled manner, creating renewed anxiety within many Australians. Yet controversy, like earlier expressions of concern, was kept to acceptable limits.

7.2 Significant events, 1973–1995

INQUIRY QUESTION

How did immigration change Australia between 1973 and 1995?

Multiculturalism from 1973 onwards

Al Grassby made a key speech in 1973 that created the policy of multiculturalism.

Source 7.1

It is a fact that Australia is now one of the most cosmopolitan societies on earth … It is time that all Australians were encouraged to develop a better understanding of what this implies …

To the average Australian, whether 'old' or 'new', terms like 'assimilation', 'integration', 'homogeneous' or 'pluralistic' society are probably meaningless. The concept I prefer, the 'family of the nation', is one that ought to convey an immediate and concrete image to all. In a family the overall attachment to the common good need not impose a sameness on the outlook or activity of each member, nor need these members deny their individuality and distinctiveness in order to seek superficial and unnatural conformity …

It is all too easy to overlook the pre-existence in this land of the original Australians, millenia before the advent of us 'white ethnics' … any theory that fails to accord these people an equal place in the family of our nation is out of the question today and in the future. Likewise other ethnic groups introduced to this land by our migration programs may not be denied an equal place in our future society …

Our prime task at this time in our history must be to encourage practical forms of social interaction in our community. This implies the creation of a truly just society in which all components can enjoy freedom to make their own distinctive contribution to the family of the nation … This involves the most fundamental issues of human rights such as those enshrined in the United Nations International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which the Government has expressed its intention of ratifying. The Covenant guarantees freedom of social and cultural expression for all residents of countries ratifying it.

Continued…

The social and cultural rights of migrant Australians are just as compelling as the rights of other Australians. The full realisation of these would lead to reduced conflicts in tensions between the groups which are weaving an ever more complex fabric for Australian society. … My personal ambition is that Australians of all backgrounds will always be proud before the world to say in whatever accents, I am an Australian …

Immigration Reference Paper, Department of Immigration, AGPS, Canberra, 1973, p. 3–6, 15.

USING HISTORICAL SOURCES AS EVIDENCE 7.1

Choose three short quotes from Grassby's speech in Source 7.1 and explain how they represent a shift towards a policy of multiculturalism.

↑**Source 7.2** Three Polish girls at a gathering in Oakleigh, June 1969

Racial Discrimination Act, 1975

The United Nations International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1965) was signed by Australia in 1969, but not enacted until 1975 by the Whitlam government. It did so under the external powers section of the Australian Constitution (section 51 xxix).

The Whitlam government's intentions for the *Racial Discrimination Act, 1975* were explained by Lionel Murphy:

> The basic scheme of the bill is to condemn racial discrimination as being unlawful and to provide machinery for investigation and conciliation as well as legal sanctions. Prescribing of acts of racial discrimination will have an important persuasive and educative effect. The fact that racial discrimination is unlawful will make it easier for people to resist social pressures that result in discrimination.

Quoted in John Chesterman, *Civil Rights. How Indigenous Australians Won Formal Equality*, University of Queensland Press, Brisbane, 2005, p. 186.

The Act covered matters of access: to the law; places and facilities; land, housing and accommodation; goods and services (section 9.1); and trade unions and employment (sections 10–18). It established a Race Discrimination Commissioner (sections 19–47) and reprinted the 1965 UN Convention at the end of the Act to indicate its authority and obligations.

The Act had no criminal sanctions and worked through mediation by the Race Discrimination Commissioner until 1986, when the Human Rights Commission took over: this body from 2008 was called the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission. The *Racial Discrimination Act, 1975* inspired similar state Acts.

Some of its relevant sections were:

Source 7.4

> **Section 9.1** It is unlawful for a person to do any act involving a distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, descent or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of any human right or fundamental freedom in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life.
>
> **Section 20** set out the functions of the Commission: to promote an understanding and acceptance of, and compliance with, this act; develop, conduct and foster research and educational programs and of the programs for the purpose of combating racial discrimination and prejudices that lead to racial discrimination; promoting understanding, tolerance and friendship among racial and ethnic groups, policy and implementation.

Extract from the *Racial Discrimination Act, 1975*[2]

FOCUS QUESTION 7.1

Why was the establishment of the *Racial Discrimination Act, 1975* an important event? What did the Act do?

In 1974 John Koowarta, a Wik man and stock worker, sought to purchase a pastoral lease near his people's traditional lands using money from the Aboriginal Land Fund. He was blocked by the Queensland

government and appealed to the Human Rights Commission. It ruled in his favour citing the Act, which was challenged by the Queensland government through the then Premier, Johannes (Jo) Bjelke-Petersen (later Sir Jo).

Historian Richard Broome explained:

By 1980, the Queensland and Western Australian governments still refused to recognise any Aboriginal claims to land, traditional or otherwise. They even blocked legitimate purchases of pastoral properties by the Aboriginal Land Fund, on the irrelevant and discriminatory argument that Aboriginal people would not use the land 'productively'. The Queensland government's view on land fund purchases was overruled in 1982 following a three-year court battle. The High Court ruled, in Koowarta and Bjelke-Petersen, that such a view was discriminatory under the Racial Discrimination Act of 1975.

Richard Broome, *Aboriginal Australians: A History since 1788*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 2019, p. 238.

During the case, the Queensland government argued that the external affairs power was not a valid basis for the *Racial Discrimination Act, 1975*. The High Court disagreed and found for John Koowarta, arguing that implementing an external treaty under section 51 xxix of the Australian Constitution was lawful.

The *Racial Discrimination Act, 1975* did have limitations as the historian John Chesterman explained:

The legislation works on an individualistic model – it constantly refers to discrimination against a person not a group and so the legislation does little to prohibit discrimination that an entire community, rather than just an individual, may suffer. Moreover, for the legislation to apply, that denial of an entitlement must be shown to be based on racial reasons, something that can be difficult to prove …

But with that significant qualification, it is fair to argue that the non-discrimination principle has become an integral incident of the rule of law in Australia (the rule of law being the jurisprudential [legal] concept that the law applies equally to all people). It is now unthinkable that a law could be passed by an Australian legislature [parliament] that, for example, prevented members of a minority racial group from having access to public housing.

John Chesterman, *Civil Rights: How Indigenous Australians Won Formal Equality*, University of Queensland Press, Brisbane, 2005, p. 188, 218.

Margaret Thornton in her book *The Liberal Promise, Anti-Discrimination Legislation in Australia* (1990) believed the Act had an impact:

Source 7.7

> In spite of its inability to fulfil the unrealistic expectations that it transform our society so that the scales of justice are not perpetually tipped in favour of the powerful, anti-discrimination legislation does serve an important symbolic and educative function.

Quoted in John Chesterman, *Civil Rights: How Indigenous Australians Won Formal Equality*, University of Queensland Press, Brisbane, 2005, p. 188.

In 1995 the Keating Labor government added section 18C to the Act, which prohibited offensive behaviour based on racial hatred. In 2014 section 18C became infamous when conservatives led by Prime Minister Tony Abbott tried to change or delete section 18C from the Act, arguing it contravened free speech. The opposing view was that people should not be free to vilify others. The attempt to change section 18C failed.

USING HISTORICAL SOURCES AS EVIDENCE 7.2

1. Outline the limitations of the *Racial Discrimination Act, 1975* as highlighted by Chesterman in Source 7.6.
2. Using the sources and your own research, explain how the *Racial Discrimination Act, 1975* improved the lives of migrants and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Vietnam War 1954–1975

In the 1970s Australia and south-east Asia were faced with a refugee crisis that changed Australia. This is how it began and unfolded.

In the 1850s France invaded Vietnam, creating a French colony. By the 1930s Vietnamese nationals challenged French rule. In 1940 Japanese military forces controlled the country, and during the Japanese occupation, Ho Chi Minh as head of the Viet Minh (Vietnamese Independence League) launched an independence movement. He declared independence in 1945.

French rule was restored in South Vietnam based in Saigon, while Ho Chi Minh controlled the North from Hanoi. French forces were defeated in 1954 at the Battle of Dien Bien Phu and abandoned Vietnam. In the context of the Cold War and the Korean War, the United States moved to reinforce the non-Communist government in the South under Ngo Dinh Diem. US military aid increased in 1962 and Australia sent military advisers. In 1965 the United States committed large numbers of troops and began bombing the North of the country. Largescale warfare erupted until 1969 when the United States and Australia began troop withdrawals. Control was handed to the South Vietnamese government, protected from Hanoi by a **demilitarised zone**, which created an area free of opposing armies and their equipment.

demilitarised zone a military no-go zone or territory negotiated by both sides to create a buffer between the opposing military forces and create a truce

←**Source 7.8**
Australian soldiers, 7th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment in Vietnam in 1967. Helicopters collecting Australian troops of the 7th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment, 1967. Courtesy Australian War Memorial neg no. Col/67/0781/VN.

The fall of Saigon 1975

In 1972 North Vietnam launched an offensive despite an intense American bombing counteroffensive. A ceasefire preceded the exit of remaining US troops in March 1973, but war recommenced in 1974 and the North soon prevailed. The southern capital Saigon fell on 30 April 1975.

The American historian, Stanley Karnow, described what happened next:

Source 7.9

Over a span of eighteen hours, shuttling back and forth between the city and aircraft carriers riding offshore, a fleet of seventy marine choppers lifted more than a thousand Americans and nearly six thousand Vietnamese out of the beleaguered capital – two thousand of them from the U.S. embassy compound. The operation, conducted in an atmosphere of desperation, was close to miraculous. The original plan had been for buses to pick up the Americans and Vietnamese designated for departure at appointed places around the city and to deliver them to various helicopter pads. But the procedure quickly broke down. Mobs of hysterical Vietnamese, clamouring to be evacuated, blocked the buses. Thousands surged towards the takeoff points, screaming to be saved. Rumours of impending communist shelling swept through the crowds and exacerbated the panic; in fact, the North Vietnamese were deliberately holding their fire, no longer seeing any gain in gratuitous slaughter.

Stanley Karnow, *Vietnam: a History, The First Complete Account of the Vietnam War*, Penguin, Melbourne, 1984, p. 668.

The fall of Saigon united the country under Viet Minh control leading to a massive exodus by those unwilling to live under the new regime.

Richard Broome explained:

The Whitlam Government which opposed American involvement in Vietnam and was keen to maintain good relations with Hanoi initially refused to take many refugees, especially those evacuated by the Americans. Considerable humanitarian indignation arose in Australia and eventually a thousand people were accepted, three hundred of them orphans. The Opposition criticized the Government's meagre response, but the Fraser Government in power after November 1975 proved similarly unsympathetic. In the meantime hundreds of thousands of Vietnamese, knowing they would soon lose their businesses or suffer communist re-education [a forced government program to alter people's thinking] or worse, escaped overland or by sea in overcrowded and often unseaworthy small craft. By December 1983 a million successfully left Vietnam, half by sea. Tens of thousands of others perished at sea. Many almost starved to death or were robbed, raped and humiliated by pirates. Those who finally landed in Thailand, Malaysia or elsewhere in Asia spent months in poorly serviced transit camps awaiting resettlement.

Richard Broome, *Arriving,* Fairfax, Syme and Weldon, Sydney, 1984, p. 237.

↑**Source 7.11** Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser pictured in the 1970s

Almost two million refugees left Vietnam and neighbouring Kampuchea (Cambodia) after war between Vietnam and China erupted in 1979, about 800 000 seeking settlement elsewhere. Facing hostility and expulsion in the countries of first resettlement, thousands again took to boats or were forced onto them by hostile locals, 2000 making the perilous journey to Australia in late 1977. Further unannounced arrivals occurred.

The Australian government of Malcolm Fraser spearheaded two refugee conferences in Geneva in 1978–1979, which created an international agreement for resettlement under the United Nations High Commission for Refugees. Australia successfully made refugees an international responsibility, stemming the flow of unannounced arrivals on its shores, and creating orderly arrivals by plane.[3]

USING HISTORICAL SOURCES AS EVIDENCE 7.3

1. Using Source 7.9 describe the fall of Saigon.
2. Using 1-2 quotes from Source 7.10, outline how Whitlam and Fraser responded to the Indo-Chinese refugee crisis.

Tiananmen Square 1989 and Hawke's offer

In 1989 a student movement in China called for more open government in their country. Large protests occurred in Tiananmen Square, Beijing, in April. Following weeks of protest the Chinese Communist Party declared martial (military) law and on 4 June mobilised the Red Army to remove the students. Violence erupted and unarmed students were killed. Estimates vary from several hundred to several thousand deaths. One man carrying shopping bags, dubbed 'tank man', blocked the path of tanks before being arrested and later allegedly executed by firing squad.

←**Source 7.12** The famous 'Tank man' image. A Beijing demonstrator blocks the path of a tank convoy along the Avenue of Eternal Peace near Tiananmen Square, June 5th, 1989, China.

Prime Minister Bob Hawke on 9 June was moved to tears when explaining the events.

Source 7.13

For more than a month now, the eyes of the world have been on China. We witnessed a massive rallying of people in Beijing and Shanghai and heard the powerful expression of their will in the cause of democratic reform. We were inspired by the idealism and courage of youth, the peaceful determination of students to create a better future, and the support that rallied around their cause from throughout Chinese society …

Then last weekend, our optimism was shattered as we watched in horror the unyielding forces of repression brutally killing the vision of youth. Unarmed young men and women were sprayed with bullets and crushed by tanks. Innocent people were shot and beaten in the streets and in their homes … Thousands have been killed and injured, victims of a

Continued…

leadership that seems determined to hang on to the reins of power at any cost – at awful human cost …

I call on the Chinese Government to withdraw its troops from deployment against unarmed civilians, and to respect the will of its people. To crush the spirit and body of youth is to crush the very future of China itself.

Speech by Prime Minister Bob Hawke on the memorial ceremony for those killed in China, Canberra, 9 June 1989.[4]

The Guardian newspaper reported in 2015 that former Prime Minister Bob Hawke acted alone in making a promise to Chinese students then studying in Australia.

Source 7.14

On 16 June 1989, 12 days after Chinese police fired on civilian protesters, Hawke surprised his colleagues by making an emotional announcement which extended all temporary entry permits for Chinese nationals legally in Australia for 12 months, with work rights and financial assistance. It took almost a month for a submission to go to cabinet examining the political, social and financial ramifications of Hawke's decision, which initially affected 16,200 students from the People's Republic of China. Despite the ramifications, Hawke stood his ground and eventually 42,000 were granted permanent visas.

Hawke said 'I have a deep love for the Chinese people. I had no consultation with anyone'. When I walked off the dais [after the announcement] I was told 'You cannot do that, prime minister'. I said to them, 'I just did. It is done'. Asked why he did it, Hawke replied 'it is called leadership'.

Gabrielle Chan, 'Cabinet Papers 1988–89: Bob Hawke Acted Alone in Offering Asylum to Chinese Students', *The Guardian*, 1 January 2015.
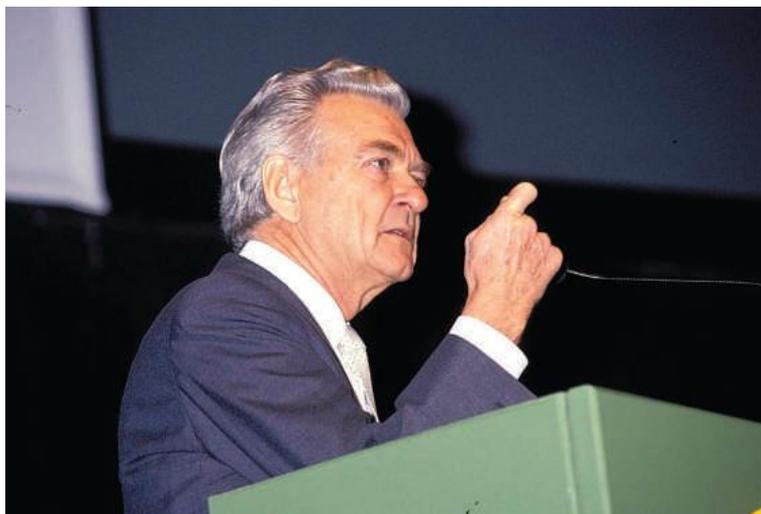
↑**Source 7.15** Bob Hawke, Prime Minister of Australia (1983–1991), in January 1989

In 2008 the United Nations Committee on Torture asked China to explain the June Fourth Incident to families of lost loved ones. The Chinese government in 2009 declared the matter closed; denied it was a democracy movement and justified the measures taken as 'necessary and correct'.[5]

FOCUS QUESTIONS 7.2

1. What happened on 4 June 1989?
2. How did Prime Minister Bob Hawke respond?
3. 'It is called leadership.' What did Hawke mean when he made this comment?
4. Which leader do you think people at the time thought was stronger on the issue of immigration, Fraser or Hawke? Justify your response.

7.3 Influential ideas, 1973–1995

INQUIRY QUESTION

What were the influential ideas on a diversifying society between 1973 and 1995?

Many Australians into the 1970s still dreamed of a homogeneous society based on an assimilation policy in which differences were overlaid, even absorbed. But Al Grassby's idea of the 'family of the nation', suggesting cultural integration and a celebration of difference, was more suited to the reality of a diverse society emerging in Australia.

Multiculturalism remains controversial

Multiculturalism was an idea with growing influence, which encapsulated Grassby's analogy of the nation as a family. However, it was not universally supported.

Ray Todd of the University of Leeds in the United Kingdom defined 'multiculturalism' in the following way:

> There is cultural diversity in most, if not all, societies. As a result of conquests, colonisation, or migration, almost all societies contain groups whose culture, language, religion, or identity does not conform to that of the majority. In these circumstances of diversity, multiculturalism has been a focus of critical analysis and political debate, as well as a source of legislation and cultural and social policies.
>
> The concept of multiculturalism is broad and contested although the ideal of a harmonious coexistence of differing cultural, ethnic, national, or indigenous groups within a complex society remains at its core … Images used to clarify the diverse nature of multicultural societies, and to contrast them with the 'melting-pot' notion of a society based upon assimilation, include 'mosaic' and 'kaleidoscope'.

Source 7.16

Ray Todd, 'Multiculturalism', Ellis Cashmore (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Race and Ethnic Studies*, Routledge, London, 2004, pp. 289–90.

As we have seen above, another image or metaphor has been that of a bowl of salad, each ingredient different, distinct and also necessary for a salad to be created.

Against racial and other discriminations

Human rights were in the ascendant as an idea. By the 1970s First Nations Australians officially enjoyed civil rights and began to push for Indigenous rights assisted by the *Racial Discrimination Act, 1975*. This Act, in turn, rested on a range of United Nations and International Labour Organization conventions, especially the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1965). In Chapter 6 we examined this International Convention. Here is Article 1 reproduced again. Notice that 'racial discrimination', as defined, referred to other discriminations, besides that based on race. That meant it was pertinent to all Australians, not just First Nations Australians.

Source 7.17

Article 1 In this Convention, the term 'racial discrimination' shall mean any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life.

Australian Treaty Series, Attorney General's Department, Commonwealth of Australia.[6]

USING HISTORICAL SOURCES AS EVIDENCE 7.4

1. Using Source 7.16 and your own knowledge define the term 'multiculturalism'.
2. To what extent did overseas events impact Australia's policy of multiculturalism? Refer to at least two sources in your response.

←**Source 7.18** Vietnamese children from the Wiltona Migrant Hostel on an excursion, 1981. Courtesy *The Age*.

CREATING A NATION 1834–2008

INQUIRY QUESTION

What do perspectives from 1973 to 1995 reveal about debates over immigration and multiculturalism?

Tensions arose over immigration policy after 1945 as the source of immigrants shifted from a British-only policy to include Europeans, then those from the Middle East, and finally in 1973, to a non-discriminatory policy. The end of the Vietnam War and the fall of Saigon in 1975 added to the tensions, as the policy adviser and historian Nancy Viviani explains:

Source 7.19

By coincidence, Indochinese refugees began arriving in Australia at a time when a great debate about migration was in progress. The argument was not only about the numbers of migrants and how many of these should be Asians. The concerns went more deeply into the impact of migration on Australian society, the future of this culturally diverse nation, and how far government should be involved in the settlement of migrants. The arrival of the new Asian ethnic groups helped to intensify this debate amongst Australians. The way these questions were resolved and the policies which followed changed the context of migrant and refugee settlement in Australia.

Nancy Viviani, *The Long Journey: Vietnamese Migration and Settlement in Australia*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1984, p. 157.

The downfall of Al Grassby

↑**Source 7.20** Gough Whitlam (left) meets one of his former ministers, Al Grassby (right), who turned up at the national press club to hear Whitlam speak on 12 March 1984.

Al Grassby was born in Brisbane in 1926 of Spanish and Irish descent. He became a journalist, then publicity officer for the CSIRO in Griffith, where he married into the Calabrian Italian community. In 1965 he won the NSW parliamentary seat of Murrumbidgee for the Labor Party on a platform of advocacy for farmers. In 1969 he became the federal member for Riverina by opposing an unpopular wheat pricing scheme.

When Whitlam won office in 1972, Grassby wanted to be Minister for Agriculture but was given the immigration portfolio instead. He wore flamboyant suits and ties, remarking: 'The ties came with the Whitlam government because I decided that we were liberated from a dull and colourless past to a new and colourful Australia'.[7]

Following his landmark speech (see Source 7.1), Grassby reformed immigration policy in many ways by:

Source 7.21
- Introducing non-discriminatory migrant selection procedures
- Ending the ban on Indigenous Australians leaving Australia without permission
- Inquiring into exploitation and discrimination against migrants
- Ending rules that aliens provide yearly their address, occupation and marital status
- Boosting the numbers of aliens seeking citizenship
- Introducing Australia's first amnesty for illegal immigrants
- Allowing overseas students to remain if an employer needed their skills
- Allowing overseas-born parents of an Australian-born child to remain
- Providing assisted passages for Vietnamese and other orphans
- Ending limits on non-English programs on radio and television
- Establishing migrant education programs in each state
- Creating a home tutoring scheme for migrant women
- Excluding entry of racially selected sporting teams into Australia

Racism no way website, Al Grassby page, accessed March 2021.[8]

In May 1974 Grassby faced a tough re-election fight against a Country Party candidate, and a vicious campaign by the Immigration Control Association operating out of Sydney. The Association's advertisements backed White Australia and alleged Grassby was turning Australia into a 'trouble-racked coffee coloured mess'. The small print in the advertisement (see Source 7.22) claimed the 'Whitlam/Grassby government' was 'deliberately and needlessly creating a coloured community in Australia'. It claimed for every 100 European arrivals in the third quarter of 1973, 61 came from Asia and Africa.

←**Source 7.22** 'Grassby Said', Immigration Control Group advertisement in the *Area News*, 18 May 1974

Grassby lost his seat due to a 7.7% swing against him. One commentator, J. Warburton, called the campaign by the Immigration Control Group 'the most intensive and virulent racist campaign yet recorded in Australia'.[9] William Bostock, a sociologist, commented on Grassby's electoral loss:

> The reforms he brought about and the corresponding gains to migrants and Aborigines had, of course, to be paid for at the expense of the power and status of the dominant group, that of Anglo-Saxon and Protestant origin, and the intensity of the backlash was clearly a function of the threat he posed.

Source 7.23

William Bostock, *Alternatives of Ethnicity: Immigrants and Aborigines in Anglo-Saxon Australia*, Corvus Publishers, Melbourne, 1981, p. 45.

Gough Whitlam appointed Grassby as the first federal Commissioner for Community Relations. In that role Grassby helped put the *Racial Discrimination Act, 1975* into place.

USING HISTORICAL SOURCES AS EVIDENCE 7.5

1. Describe how Grassby reformed Australia's immigration policy. Refer to Source 7.21 and your own knowledge.
2. Using Sources 7.19 and 7.22, explain why some Australians were concerned with migration and multiculturalism in the 1970s.

Debates over multiculturalism and boat people

By 1982, Australia's multicultural policy was a decade old. Despite tensions between the ideas of cultural pluralism and national cohesion no major trouble was evident and both political parties supported multiculturalism. But how far was Australia prepared to become multiracial, especially

when several thousand Vietnamese refugees arrived by small boats in 1977 – unannounced? The question was discussed at dinner tables and BBQs across the country.

By 1982, five years after these first refugee arrivals, Australia had accepted 60 000 refugees from Indo-China, eight per cent of the total resettled across the world. This was proportionally more than the other big receiving countries (United States, France and Canada) accepted, but Australia was a close neighbour of Indo-China. By mid-1983 the number of Indo-Chinese refugees was 70 000 and eventually almost 80 000 came; most of them were Vietnamese.* Only 2000 of the so-called Indo-Chinese 'boat people' arrived by boat unannounced, the remainder flew in under recognised international agreements. Two-thirds of them settled in Victoria and NSW, and mostly in urban areas.

*You should recall that displaced person refugees to Australia reached 183,000 from 1947 to 1954, when the Australian population was much smaller.

gross domestic product (GDP) an annual measure of a country's total of goods and services produced that indicates a country's economic performance

In the seven years of their arrival, Indo-Chinese refugees averaged about 12 000 per annum, less than 10% of Australia's annual migrant intake at this time. But despite this, trouble was brewing.

During 1980–82, Australia experienced its worst economic downturn or recession since the Great Depression and its first since 1945. Indeed, in the early 1980s Australia's economic performance measure, the **gross domestic product (GDP)**, grew by a modest two per cent per annum and unemployment was high at nine per cent, perhaps not a favourable time for the arrival of immigrants, thought by many to be controversial at the best of times.[10]

In 1982 Professor Jerzy Zubrzycki, a sociologist from the Australian National University, headed an Ethnic Affairs Taskforce for the Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, and produced a report in June 1982, *Multiculturalism for all Australians*. A series of national consultations followed about the report and how the Citizenship Act might be reformed to reflect modern Australia.

A report on the consultations found varied opinions. It stated:

Source 7.24

Multiculturalism for all Australians is based squarely on a perception of a future Australia where cultural differences are considered no longer an exceptional but an accepted feature of society. To achieve this, multiculturalism needs to be much more than a marginal series of cultural and welfare programmes for minority groups but an attitude towards society as a whole …

A vocal, and apparently well-organised, minority are opposed to the social changes that have already taken place in Australia and wish to see Australia adopt racially discriminatory migrant entry policies. The rationale given for their opposition was meagre and wholly negative. Their motivation was not always easy to discover, but included religious belief, economic/employment factors, overt racism and a fear of change and of the unknown. This group contains substantial numbers who are themselves migrants from a wide range of countries, as well as Australian-born people. It was disturbing that an appreciable number were young.

Continued…

…*Continued*

Provided that newcomers accept certain obligations, including a primary loyalty to Australia and its institutions and a willingness to contribute to the general good, there is no reason to fear that the deliberate preservation of minority cultures will lead to disharmony and disintegration …

Multiculturalism has given us the chance to build a remarkable nation, with a distinctive and meaningful blend of cultures, assured in its relations with its neighbours and confident in the sense of its own history and identity.

National Consultations on Multiculturalism and Citizenship, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, 1982.

When in Perth, in July 1982, Zubrzycki met some of the vocal minority of opponents to multiculturalism. One person shouted to Zubrzycki, referring to his accent, 'You're not an Australian. You don't even speak English'. Another said, 'I am proud to be a racist. These people [the immigration officials] are out to destroy the white race'.[11]

Journalists Michael Gawenda and Stephen Mills met with eight school leavers in December 1982 and asked why they were having trouble finding a job.

Source 7.25

[The Students] One of them put his hand up and said 'because all the Vietnamese are coming and taking jobs away from Australians'. Several heads nodded in agreement. One voice suggested that more than a million Vietnamese 'had been allowed in' to Australia recently; no one challenged his figures. It seemed the sentiment he expressed had struck a chord with the whole group.

[The journalists also spoke with ACTU President Mick Dolan who said:]

The feedback we're getting from shop stewards and trade union officials is that there is a strong and growing feeling among workers that immigration has to be cut drastically and that jobs for people already here has to be the paramount concern. Some of the reactions are even stronger than that. There have been suggestions put that migrants ought to be sent home because they are taking jobs Australians could fill. The tensions are growing all the time and of course the ACTU does not support attitudes like that. Many trade union members are from migrant backgrounds and talk of sending people home is ridiculous. However, if the government does not cut the immigration programme and cut it drastically, the tensions will inevitably increase. People will start looking for scapegoats.

Continued…

[The journalists added] Australians, it seems, must now decide whether the old arguments in favour of immigration, which delivered so many economic and social benefits in the past, are good enough for a time of high unemployment and an apparently intractable recession. Do we want to build walls to keep the foreigners out?

Michael Gawenda and Stephen Mills, 'Should We Close the Door on Migrants?', *The Age*, 16 December 1982.

↑**Source 7.26** Vietnamese children and adults learning English at the Metta Foundation, 1979. Courtesy Australian Information Service.

One of the current groups of school leavers was Minh Hai Ky who was dux (top of his class) of Richmond Technical School. He arrived from Vietnam three years earlier. This is his story.

Source 7.27

He escaped from South Vietnam in a small boat in May 1979. During the trip to Indonesia his boat was attacked by 10 pirates who stabbed a man through the palm, wrecked the engine and broke the lights. They stole some of the gold the refugees were carrying. When the boat reached Ku Ku Island, in Indonesia, Mr Minh had to build his own shelter out of palm leaves, sticks and a sheet of plastic. The island refugee camp then held 24,000 people. His parents paid seven ounces of gold to have him taken out of Vietnam but were too old to leave themselves. Mr Minh's four

Continued...

sisters, and one of his brothers, still lived in Ho Chi Minh city (Saigon). He now lives in Melbourne with another brother who fled to Australia in 1978 after spending three years in a re-education camp. Before this he [his brother] was an officer in the South Vietnamese army and a lawyer. But Mr Minh's difficulties did not end when he landed in Melbourne. Language was a problem and he had to apply to several schools before he was accepted at Richmond Tech. Mr Minh said that when he came to Australia, 'some of the people were good and some were nasty and swore at me'. With his dux's award he also received a $3000 scholarship. He hopes to be an electrical engineer. He will not be going back to Vietnam. 'I will never go back to Vietnam. It is too dangerous'.

Michael Carrick, 'Student Takes Top Honor After a Fight to Survive', *The Age*, 17 December 1982.

A journalist Bruce Grant gave some insight into the trials of being a refugee:

Source 7.28

A refugee is an unwanted person. He or she makes a claim upon the humanity of others without always having much, or even anything sometimes, to give in return. If, after resettlement, a refugee works hard or is lucky and successful, he may be accused of taking the work or the luck of success from someone else. If he fails or becomes resentful or unhappy, he is thought to be ungrateful and a burden on the community …

The boat people phenomenon reflects, in its most drastic form, the pathos [sadness] of people fleeing for one reason or another from the country … They are leaving without knowing where they are going, without prospect of return, and at the risk of drowning or dying of illness or deprivation at sea. They had little idea what their destiny might be.

Bruce Grant, *The Boat People: An Age Investigation*, 1979, pp. 2, 5.

USING HISTORICAL SOURCES AS EVIDENCE 7.6

1. What did Jerzy Zubrzycki's report in Source 7.24 suggest was the essence of multiculturalism?
2. After reading Sources 7.24 and 7.25, indicate what attitudes and events underpinned opposition to multiculturalism.
3. In Source 7.25 (December 1982) the student suggests that more than a million Vietnamese had come to Australia. Is this figure accurate?
4. How did opposition to multiculturalism impact migrants who arrived in Australia? Refer to Sources 7.27 and 7.28 in your response.

The Blainey controversy 1984

In March 1984 the historian Professor Geoffrey Blainey addressed members of the Warrnambool Rotary Club at a conference on multiculturalism. Blainey commented:

Source 7.29

Rarely in the history of the modern world has a nation given such preference to a tiny ethnic minority of its population as the Australian government has done in the past few years, making that minority the favoured majority in its immigration policy … Asians were being given powerful precedence in the nation's immigration policy. It is almost as if we have turned the White Australia policy inside out … an increasing proportion of Australians, people who in the past 30 years have shown great tolerance, seemed to be resentful of the large number of South-East Asians who are being brought in, have little chance of gaining work and who are living, through no fault of their own, at the taxpayers' expense. Mr Hawke's Government has deservedly won praise for its attempt to heal old wounds, for what is called consensus [seeking a general agreement]. The present immigration program, if it is not looked at carefully, could do more than anything in the last 30 years to weaken or explode that consensus.

[Blainey claimed Australia was not obliged to take refugees because of] the idea that Australia is, loosely speaking, in the same region. After all, if we gave $1000 to each of these refugees to go to a place further away it may be more beneficial …

The result doesn't necessarily have to take the form of riots but it is more likely to show up in cruelty to children in the school ground, that sort of thing.

Ken Haley, 'Asian Entry Threatens Tolerance: Blainey', *The Age*, 19 March 1984.
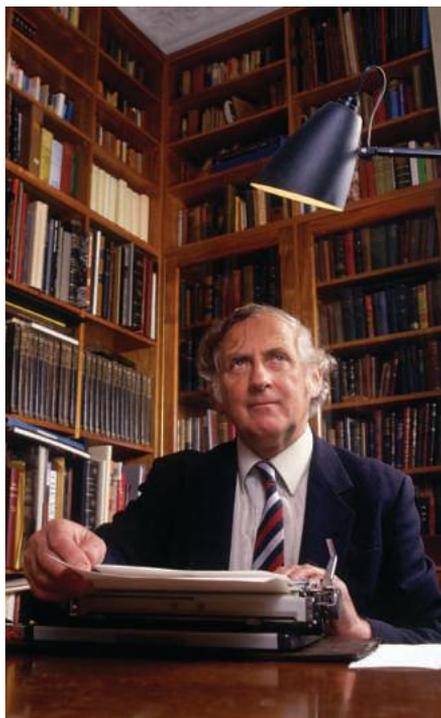
A storm erupted from Blainey's comments, but he doubled down on his views.[8] Here are a range of views published the day after Blainey's comments.

←**Source 7.30** Historian Geoffrey Blainey in 1990

Wellington Lee, a former Melbourne City Councillor of Chinese descent and a fourth generation Australian, said:

> I couldn't believe that these things were being said by the Chairman of the Australia–China Council (Professor Blainey has held the post since 1979) which is allegedly supposed to foster relations between Australia and China. Professor Blainey entirely forgets the humanitarian grounds. It's fanning the flames of racism and turning the clock back for this multicultural society of ours.

Source 7.31

The Age, 20 March 1984.

Many Vietnamese people settled in the Melbourne suburb of Springvale. Merle Mitchell, Director of the Springvale Community Aid and Advice Bureau, stated:

> Every group that has come to Australia has faced a lot of intolerance and the Indo-Chinese are the last group to come in so they're copping the intolerance now. Articles like that of Blainey's only served to lend credence to the racist type arguments made by people like the RSL [Returned Soldier's League, who backed Blainey's argument]. The tolerance Blainey is so concerned about is put in jeopardy by the sorts of statements he's making.

Source 7.32

The Age, 20 March 1984.

Dr Frank Knopfelmacher, a psychologist from the University of Melbourne, said he strongly favoured Vietnamese migration to Australia:

> … because, as former military allies, we are honor bound to help them in adversity and also because they are splendid migrants in every respect. But while I'm in favour of immigrants from all parts of the world, I'm also very strongly in favour of assimilation of migrants to the Anglo-character of Australia in two or three generations. The alternatives are separatism, **apartheid** and turbulent ghettos. [The blame] for the wave of anti-Asian agitation in this country belongs with the promoters of multicultural rackets.

Source 7.33

apartheid the official policy formed in 1948 by the South African white-controlled government to separate the races in all aspects of life – education, residence, social relations, sport and recreation

The Age, 20 March 1984.

FOCUS QUESTIONS 7.3

1. Were Blainey's comments unexpected in the context of the early 1980s?
2. From what you have discovered, was Blainey correct to say the Vietnamese were being given 'preference' and made 'the favoured majority'?
3. Explain whether you agree with the view of Lee and Mitchell that Blainey was fanning the flames of racism.
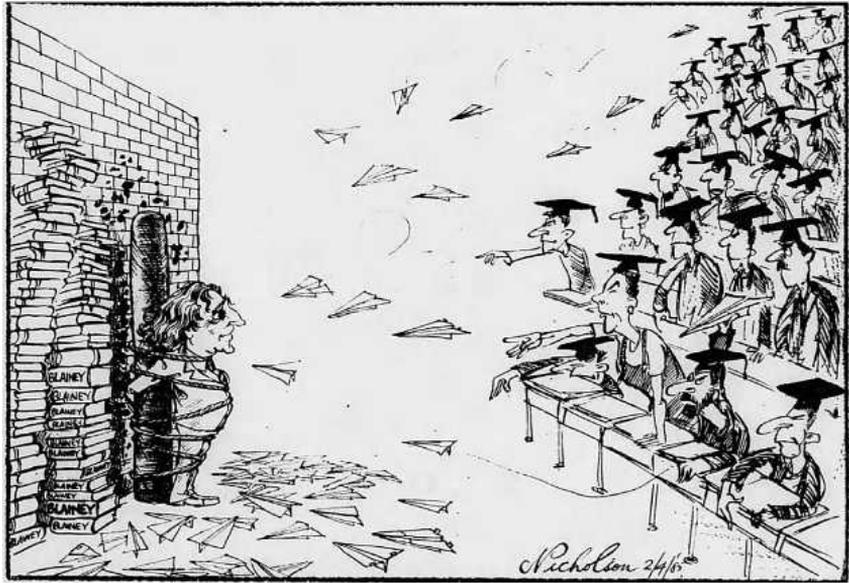
↑**Source 7.34** The cartoonist Nicholson draws Professor Blainey facing his university critics, published on the 2nd of April, 1985.

USING HISTORICAL SOURCES AS EVIDENCE 7.7

1. Using Source 7.29, describe Blainey's concerns about multiculturalism.
2. Explain the response to Blainey's remarks. Refer to Source 7.32 within your response.
3. Evaluate the extent to which multiculturalism changed the Australian people's ideas on migration and race.
4. Analyse Source 7.34 by Nicholson and explain whether he is favourable or not to Blainey's views.

Blainey elaborated on his views in a feature article in *The Age* entitled 'The Asianisation of Australia'.

Source 7.35

As a people and as a Government, Australia is too fearful of international criticism. Every nation in eastern Asia has stronger immigration restrictions and expresses its racial and cultural preferences even more positively than we express ours. There was a time when Australia to its discredit, had extreme immigration policies and expressed them in intolerant language. I believe that time has passed …

The unemployment in many Australian cities, more than any other factor, causes the present unease about the increasing rate of Asian immigration. These are the suburbs where the Asians are most likely to

Continued…

…Continued

settle. These are the suburbs where they are most likely to work. But these are the suburbs where the rates of unemployment tend to be the highest.

It is easy for me in my secure job to say that I welcome Asian immigrants. I do welcome them, but they don't compete with me for work, and they don't alter the way of life where I live. I'm not sure, however, that I would be so welcoming if I was out of work.

Nor would I cheer if I was in work but paying more taxes than I could not afford to pay, and seeing these taxes paying the dole to Asians flocking into my neighbourhood.

I support the idea, disseminated [spread] from Canberra, of a multicultural Australia. But many of the Ministers, backbenchers and civil servants who preach the merits of that society still, in their private life and much of their public life, prefer a one-culture Australia. Multi-culturalism is often what is good for other people.

The poorer people in the cities are the real sufferers, and see themselves as such, in the face of increasing Asian immigration. They are generally the least educated section of society, and rightly or wrongly are more wary of large-scale Asian immigration. They are probably the least equipped to cope with it. Moreover they have the least access to the Press and radio and television. They are the silent ones upon whom Canberra, perhaps unthinkingly, is now trampling …

It is in the interests of those Asian immigrants already here, and especially those who have contributed so much to this country, that the pace of Asian immigration should be slower. Many Asian immigrants, now naturalised and proud to be Australians, sense that the welcome to them is not as friendly as it was a few years ago.

G. Blainey, 'The Asianisation of Australia', *The Age*, 20 March 1984.

Michael Liffman, a representative of the Ecumenical Migration Centre in Richmond, wrote this in a letter to *The Age*:

In part, his [Blainey's] analysis is simply wrong – both in its facts and the implications it draws from them.

Source 7.36

Australia is not being Asianised. Asians constitute 2 per cent of the Australian population. According to the Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, Mr West, the anticipated intake of Indo-Chinese refugees this year is 10,000, of the total immigration intake of 84,000. Around 2000 more Indo-Chinese will come to Australia to be reunited with their husbands, wives and children from whom they have been separated for some years.

One wonders, too, at the empirical [observed] evidence for Professor Blainey's assertion that the present rate of Asian immigration risks pushing

Continued…

…Continued

Australian tolerance for newcomers beyond its limits. Is anti-Asian racism in fact more widespread or more virulent [lethal] than that directed at other newly-arrived groups in the past 30 years?

If this assertion is based on evidence, where is that evidence? If, as is more likely, it is based on an impression that Asians are more alien to the Australian way of life and therefore more likely to create resentment from the rest of the community, Professor Blainey should examine his own preconceptions.

Many Asian immigrants come from urban, educated and western backgrounds, and are familiar with societies like Australia. Those whose backgrounds are different will, given community acceptance, make the adjustment soon enough – as did those countless immigrants from all over the world who preceded them.

But it is not simply that Professor Blainey's comments are wrong or unsubstantiated; they are dangerous. By lending authority to the fears and misconceptions of a minority, such remarks create a **self-fulfilling prophecy** about Australian attitudes to Asians, and provide fuel to the racists in our community – at the same time as directing the blame at racism's victims.

The protection of community relations in Australia, and the preservation of Australia's admirable response to the humanitarian [human] needs of refugees and immigrants, are ill-served by such remarks.

The Age, 23 March 1984.

self-fulfilling prophecy
a prediction that occurs because people believe it will happen and they alter their behaviours accordingly, so it does happen

←**Source 7.37** Cabramatta, Sydney, had a high population of people from East Asian countries. Pictured in 1982.

Mariah Evans, a sociologist, argued that people should pay attention to the evidence, and not gossip, when thinking about immigrants. Here is a report on the work of Mariah Evans by journalist Margot O'Neil:

Her work proves that Asian migrants generally have better English, education and occupational skills and more money than their Mediterranean counterparts. Second generation children of Asian immigrants would be high achievers and among the future elite in Australia. Only a small, selected group of Asian immigrants could contribute to a perceived threat to the livelihood and way of life of the average Australian. Most Asian immigrants are middle class and don't compete in the same labour markets or seek to live in the same neighbourhoods as the bulk of Australians. Her study of the 1981 census showed that Asian immigrants were mainly highly educated, held very high status jobs and often earned bigger incomes than native-born Australians. Asians who come here have correctly figured out the way to get ahead for their children is to send them to school and make them stay there. Asian migrants also had very similar family patterns to Australians whereas the family patterns of Mediterranean people were quite distinct. But she admitted that her work relied on figures from 1981 which preceded the increase of Vietnamese migrants. She said she had not been able to analyse the later figures.

Margot O'Neil, 'Asians Integrate Better: Study', *The Age*, 8 June 1984.

The controversy raged for weeks during which Blainey was called a racist. The debate later spilled over into academia after Blainey wrote a book called *All for Australia* (1984). A group of younger historians who opposed his views wrote *Surrender Australia? Essays in the Study and Use of History* (1985) to investigate Blainey's view of the past.

This is part of the introduction:

It was not difficult to see a link between Blainey's view of Chinese as outsiders in the history of White Australia and his opposition to the numbers of Asian immigrants arriving in Australia in the 1980s …

For some readers, Blainey's historical works and his *All for Australia* no doubt evoked a golden age, a lost Australia where the 'old Australian families', families like Blainey's with eight great-grandparents on the Victorian goldfields, occupied a simpler world. This was perceived as a land of little class or racial difference or conflict, the leaders of that society – those giants who bent the wild landscape to the will or who led in other ways, men like Blainey – could be confident speaking for all Australians …

Blainey's understanding of Australia's past is now being challenged by other professional historians, several of them among the authors of this volume, who find Blainey's 'old Australia' somewhat sanitised and

Continued…

idealised. Meanwhile the social values of cultural, class, linguistic, religious and ethnic homogeneity which he ascribed to that past seemed to be challenged by post war immigration and more particularly by the arrival of new residents from Asian countries.

Andrew Markus, et al., *Surrender Australia? Essays in the Study and Use of History*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1985, pp. 7–8.

In 1989 the Hawke government created the National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia 1989. This shifted the emphasis from immigrant needs and entitlements to the 'rights' of all Australians to express their cultural identity and access multiculturalism. The National Agenda has been the basis for all subsequent multicultural policies in Australia and in this respect was one of the most enduring statements of all time.

USING HISTORICAL SOURCES AS EVIDENCE 7.8

1. List any new arguments Blainey makes in his second statement in Source 7.35.
2. What do you think of his use of words like 'flocking in' and 'trampling'?
3. List and assess Michael Liffman's main arguments (see Source 7.36) about Blainey's views.
4. What does Mariah Evans (see Source 7.38) and the young historians in Source 7.39 add to the debate?

Paul Keating's Redfern Speech 1992

reconciliation the act of individuals or groups mutually coming together in a new relationship based on acknowledging the truth of what happened in the past between them

→**Source 7.40**
Prime Minister Paul Keating delivering his Redfern speech in Sydney on 1 December 1992 as an Indigenous performer looks on
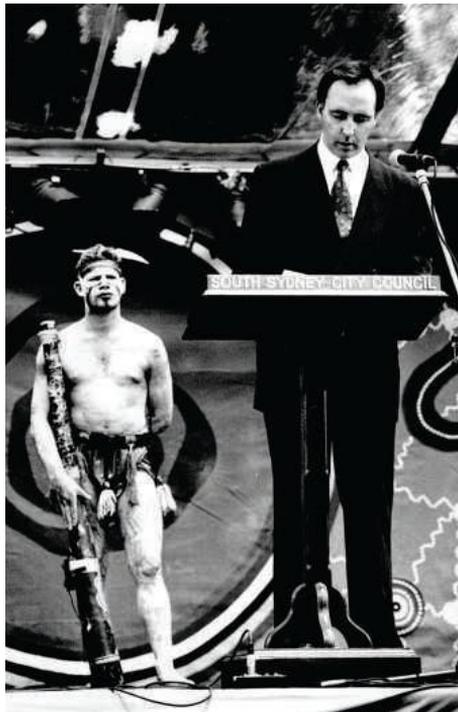
On 10 December 1992, Prime Minister Paul Keating marked the opening of the International Year for the World's Indigenous People with a momentous speech in Redfern, the heart of Aboriginal Sydney. It was six months after the landmark Mabo decision in the High Court of Australia, which recognised native title as part of the common law of Australia. Keating, who had already created the Council for Aboriginal **Reconciliation**, set a pathway for Australia's future. This is part of Keating's speech, widely accepted as one of the most remarkable in Australia's history.[13]

Isn't it reasonable to say that if we can build a prosperous and remarkably harmonious multicultural society in Australia, surely we can find just solutions to the problems which beset the first Australians – the people to whom the most injustice has been done.

And, as I say, the starting point might be to recognise that the problem starts with us non-Aboriginal Australians. It begins, I think, with that act of recognition. Recognition that it was we who did the dispossessing. We took the traditional lands and smashed the traditional way of life. We brought the diseases. The alcohol.

We committed the murders.

We took the children from their mothers.

We practised discrimination and exclusion.

It was our ignorance and our prejudice.

And our failure to imagine these things being done to us.

With some noble exceptions, we failed to make the most basic human response and enter into their hearts and minds.

We failed to ask – how would I feel if this were done to me?

As a consequence, we failed to see that what we were doing degraded all of us …

As I said, it might help us if we non-Aboriginal Australians imagined ourselves dispossessed of land we had lived on for fifty thousand years – and then imagined ourselves told that it had never been ours.

Imagine if ours was the oldest culture in the world and we were told that it was worthless.

Imagine if we had resisted this settlement, suffered and died in the defence of our land, and then were told in history books that we had given up without a fight.

Imagine if non-Aboriginal Australians had served their country in peace and war and were then ignored in history books.

Imagine if our feats on sporting fields had inspired admiration and patriotism and yet did nothing to diminish prejudice.

Imagine if our spiritual life was denied and ridiculed.

Imagine if we had suffered the injustice and then were blamed for it.

It seems to me that if we can imagine the injustice we can imagine its opposite. And we can have justice …

Paul Keating's Redfern speech, 10 December 1992, from the *Creative Spirits*, website.[14]

The video of Keating's Redfern Speech can be viewed on the National Film and Sound Archive of Australia website: https://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/9691

FOCUS QUESTIONS 7.4

1. Why do you think Prime Minister Paul Keating's speech was so well received?

2. Which were the most powerful lines of the speech, and why?

INQUIRY QUESTION

What were the experiences of new Australians from 1973 to 1995?

Economic effects

Unskilled migrants were generally low-paid workers as this graph from 1979 reveals.
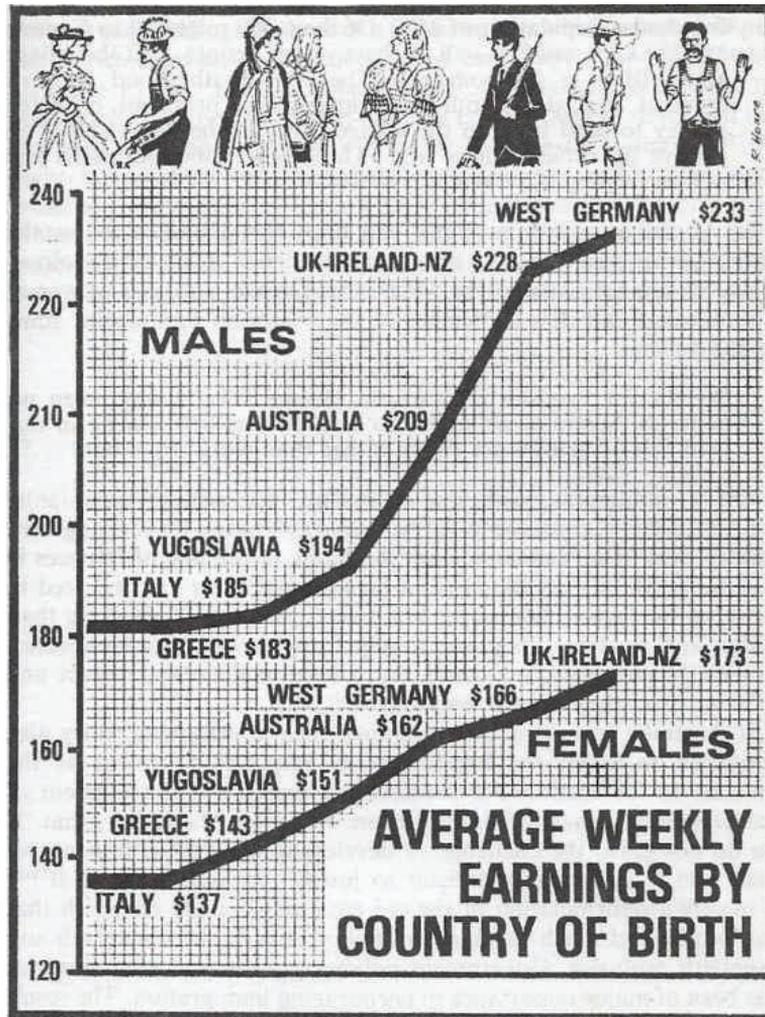
↑ **Source 7.42** 'The Wages of Australian-born and Overseas-born Australians', 1979. Courtesy of *The Sun-Herald*, 24 June 1979.

However, female migrant workers were the lowest paid, and the poorest were 'piece' workers in the garment industry. A journalist, Margaret Simons, reported:

Every day Annie (not her real name) spends hours sitting at her sewing machine making the pre-cut cloth into pairs of women's briefs [this is 'piece' work]. If she is not interrupted and the machine thread does not break, she can make 120 pairs in an hour. For each dozen she is paid 20 cents. The briefs are sold in supermarkets for $2.99 a pair.

Annie starts sewing at eight o'clock in the morning and stops at five o'clock to prepare the evening meal for her husband and three children. If she has been interrupted during the day, she works into the night to complete her quota.

She is part of a hidden workforce of about 30,000 people, most of them migrant women. Known as 'outworkers', they work in their own homes for employers in the clothing and textile industries.

More than one third of the people employed in the industry are outworkers. Large sections of the clothing trade depend on their cheap, readily available labor, but the workers themselves are usually ignored, isolated and exploited …

Outworkers often have to pick up and deliver work in their own cars. They provide their own machines and pay for the electricity they use. Most of them do not get holiday pay, and to keep their jobs they have to accept huge amounts of work which keep them at their machines for up to 11 hours a day.

In spite of wages and conditions that many would regard as unacceptable, workers are terrified of losing their jobs … Poor migrant women often are unable to get work because of prejudice, language and problems or the high cost of childcare. Sometimes their culture makes it impossible for them to work outside the home, even though they need the money desperately as a result.

As a result, outworkers are concentrated in the poorer suburbs, in the Housing Commission flats and increasingly in depressed cities like Newcastle and Wollongong. Melbourne has about 5000 outworkers.

Margaret Simons, 'Poor Relations of the Rag Trade', *The Age*, 6 April 1983.

←**Source 7.44**
A depiction of a female outworker, by Bill Farr

FOCUS QUESTIONS 7.5

1. What is an outworker?
2. Describe the working conditions of an outworker.

Communities, exchanges, contributions to society

Despite the significant degree of resentment towards Vietnamese people, over time they settled in, supported by their own communities, and worked hard. Here are some case studies below.

Vi Tuong Le Pham of Flemington High School met with success in the Higher School Certificate (the forerunner to the VCE) as Geoff Maslen reported.[15]

'I felt like screaming for joy, but there was no one home to hear me', said Vi Tuong Le Pham, when she learned yesterday that she was the first student from Flemington High School and the first of the Vietnamese 'boat' children to win a place to study medicine at Melbourne University.

Vi Tuong Le Pham completed her HSC last year at Flemington after only two and a half years in the school, and four years after she, her brother and mother and father, had fled Vietnam. With her younger brother in school and both her parents at work in Melbourne factories, Vi 18, had no one to share the good news with when university placement arrived at their Flemington high-rise flat.

Vi earned 329 points out of a possible 410 to win her place in the most prestigious University faculty in Victoria. She was awarded an A in biology and Bs in her four other subjects, including English which she began speaking for the first time in 1979. The principal of Flemington High, Mr Neville Drohane, said Vi's win of a place in the medical faculty in Melbourne was fantastic. 'It's a good object lesson for all the other kids who despair of succeeding'.

Geoff Maslen, *The Age*, 11 February 1983.

Ni Tran, a 41-year-old machine operator at Cadbury Schweppes in Ringwood, was married with four children. His wife was a clerk. He told his story to *The Age* journalist Richard Guilliatt.

Source 7.46 I feel a bit sorry for our people, refugees forced to get out of the danger. The Vietnamese people did not leave their country for centuries and centuries, only when the communists took over. We were in danger. We have organisations here saying 'stop the Asian invasion' but we did not intend to come here, to invade or to immigrate …

Since arriving in Australia penniless six years ago, I have bought a home in Heathmont, become naturalised and put several of the children into private schools. Teachers at the state schools are too interested in money. In Vietnam, it would be unthinkable for a teacher to go on strike.

[Mr Tran readily conceded that this is far different from their life in Saigon. There, his wife worked in the Australian Embassy and he worked as a policeman, one very good reason to flee the country when the communists took over].

Continued…

The main thing is that I look after the children's education. I want to lift them up. If we have enough money to give the children good education, we are happy … I look at my friends in re-education camps – if I was still there, I would be in the same position. That's why even though we are homesick, we are quite happy. It is a hard life in Vietnam: the economy, the wars and wars and wars.

The Age, 24 May 1984.

Richard Guilliatt of *The Age* also interviewed Thanh Kha about his family of a wife, two grown children and two grandchildren. Guilliatt wrote 'Thanh Kha and his wife, for instance, are like many Vietnamese over 50 who simply find it impossible to master English. Because of that, they find it almost impossible to get work or get out of the house on their own. They rely on the children for both entertainment and the family income'.

Source 7.47

On the surface, they are a model of the integrated refugee family: a Ford Falcon sits in the drive, the kitchen is equipped with microwave oven and blender, there is a well-stocked cupboard of video cassettes and the kids are playing video games … When first interviewed by *The Age* three years ago, the Khas were all working long hours to save money which eventually got them out of their Housing Commission flat and into the house in Preston. Since then, things have not run as smoothly. Mr Kha's restaurant in Brunswick closed after a year because of poor trade. He later got a job cooking Chinese meals at a hotel but was laid off when the main menu was changed to Australian food.

Sung Hung [his son] has been through a succession of restaurant jobs where the Chinese bosses underpaid him. In one restaurant he was being paid only $2 an hour for weekend work. Eventually, he found a good boss, but the work is only part time.

Similarly, Le Khanh [his daughter] gave away a job in a jeans factory because of poor pay. She worked for two years at Peters Ice-Cream until the factory moved to Clayton. Like her father she is now unemployed …

But whatever troubles the Khas face in Melbourne, they clearly do not compare to the trauma of having the family separated after the fall of Saigon, or the uncertainty of a Malaysian refugee camp. They are just grateful that the family is together again, and the main aim is to make sure it remains that way.

The Age, 24 May 1984.

The journalist Peter Wilmoth interviewed Thi Tran of Heidelberg who arrived in Australia in 1979 with his wife My Tien and their son Tan. They now also have a daughter Victoria.

Mr Tran, his wife and son came to Australia because it was dangerous for those who had worked for the previous government to remain under the communists. Mr Tran had been a line officer with the South Vietnamese Navy, but his qualifications were not recognised here. He got a job as a tram conductor. Money was scarce. Much of the $130 a week he made as a conductor was sent to Mr Tran's sister and his wife's sister who were in refugee camps in Malaysia. In an interview in 1979, Mr Tran told *The Age* that he sometimes found it hard to afford a cup, or chopsticks. 'We had nothing; it was pretty hard'.

Mr Tran remained positive. His wife initially found work at an automotive parts factory in Fairfield and has since moved to a shoe factory nearby. Mr Tran is now a migrant advisory officer in a bank and is doing a correspondence course in banking with Preston TAFE, with some financial assistance from his employer … Their house in Heidelberg is modest: a little veranda, a small front garden …

He said emotionally we suffered from leaving our home country but I don't mean that we need the Australian government to look after us, but at least here we have the basic human rights. I can look after myself if I try. It's the basic thing.

[Their children] Tan and Victoria, Mr Tran says are growing up as Australians which is how he and his wife want it to be … The children are doing exactly what Australian children are doing, they are with them six or seven hours a day, we try to keep the principle, the idea of what our culture is.

Mr Tran says his parents had asked him to call his children certain names, as is the Vietnamese custom, but when their daughter was born a year after arriving in Australia, the requests were ignored … it is better for Victoria if she has a western name. Mr Tran says Victoria has a Chinese nickname at home. Tan, he says, will be free to choose a Western name if he wants one.

The Age, 24 May 1984.

←**Source 7.49** Vietnamese refugees arrive in Sydney, 1977.

Discrimination and racism

Thi Tran had this to say about attitudes towards Vietnamese who fled oppression.

Of course there are people hurt by Professor Blainey's comments in the media because of his reputation in society. Maybe he is the one who created the movement (of anti-Asian feeling). They may be small groups of individual people who have some sort of narrow mind against us, but they don't have the reputation (of Blainey), the stronger voice to raise to the community.

After Professor Blainey's comment it may mean more people will follow. The thing is we are the people with the pigment, different skin, different hair. We are easier to pick in the community than anyone else. If you see a group of black-haired people walking in a group you might think 'oh, so many Indo-Chinese people in this country'. But actually we are a very small number in this country.

We came here with nothing and started a new life, like many Italians and Greeks did. The second and third generation Italians and Greeks now have lives just like the normal Australian. Maybe my children and grandchildren will be like that.

The Age, 24 May 1984.

Thanh Kha's family have endured racism. His granddaughter Vi Anh Kha came home from school, and pulling her eyes with her fingers, declared she was a 'ching-chong'.

The Kha's daughter, 26-year-old Le Khanh endured similar jokes from classmates at high school. Her brother, Sung Hung, says that even some of those people who eat at the Chinese restaurant where he works make anti-Asian remarks after finishing several courses of very Asian food.

Rather than being angry or upset at these occasional incidences, Le Khanh and her brother seemed perplexed. They cannot respond to such jibes, because their English is not good enough. Like many refugees, they prefer to talk about the neighbors and workmates who have helped them since arriving from Vietnam, rather than the minority who have made life difficult.

The Age, 24 May 1984.

Pat Hayes of *The Age* overviewed some the letters to the editor on Blainey's views.

Source 7.52

His remarks prompted the flurry of letters to The Age. The majority were critical of the professor and in favour of continued Asian migration but there were enough supporting his stand to show that the issue is one that concerns and divides the community. Mr RR Brown, of Ferny Creek, wrote to say that, at 75, he was finally convinced that he must be a racist. He had seen turned on their heads what in his youth were considered noble ideals. 'I am white, of Anglo-Saxon descent, loyal to our Queen, proud of our existing flag and a return service man' he wrote. And that, in some people's eyes, seemed to be the prerequisites for racism. Mr Brown said he could understand the feelings that lay behind the statements on migration made by the state president of the RSL, Mr Bruce Ruxton, and admired his intestinal fortitude in making them.

The Age, 23 March 1984.

Polls showed that between a half and two-thirds of Australians opposed high immigration intakes, and especially of Asian refugees. This is what two Morgan Gallup polls, each of 2000 adults, in May and June 1984 found on the two issues:

Source 7.53

In May, 58 percent said that the number of people who migrated here in 1982–83 – 93,000 was too many. In June after debate had flared on the level of Asian immigration, 62 percent said that the planned intake of migrants from 1984–85 – 72,000 was too big.

In the first survey 57 percent thought the 1982–83 intake of 24,500 Asian migrants was too big. In the second, 59 percent said that the planned 1984–85 intake of 24,000 Asians was too big.

On the evidence of the two polls, the debate on Asian migration sparked by criticism by Melbourne University historian Professor Geoffrey Blainey has hardened anti-immigrant feeling – especially anti-Asian feeling.

The Bulletin, 17 July 1984.

A history postgraduate student Kathy Laster, now a distinguished professor, said this of Blainey's comments on immigration:

Source 7.54

In criticising our current immigration policy, Geoffrey Blainey excited a rough free-for-all lasting well over three months. A scoreboard of the Asianisation debate at three-quarter time, however, would probably show Blainey 1, Visitors 0 … it is hard to resist the conclusion that although Blainey was wrong, his game strategy was better and his opposition weak. In putting forward his case Blainey relied on two time-honoured techniques of persuasion used by the advertising industry. Crudely, he argued not just that '9 out of 10 people agree that Brand A immigration policy is better

Continued…

…Continued

than Brand X', but that '9 out of 10 people believe Brand X is positively harmful'. Secondly, speaking as a distinguished historian he implied that 'historical tests prove that Brand X immigration policy is harmful'. Blainey's perspective therefore had two impressive bedfellows, public opinion and pseudo-science on its side: neither were convincingly exposed nor attacked.

The second significant strand of Blainey's case relied not just on the community accepting his personal good-will but gained power from his position as a distinguished Australian historian … What was missing from the debate was the force of a big name historian contradicting the seeming objectivity of Blainey's 'science'. It was only quite late in the debate that 23 of Blainey's colleagues in the History Department wrote an open letter dissociating themselves from his views. This petition, however, was confined to a political disclaimer leaving unchallenged the shaky historical assumptions which give rise to Blainey's views and the idiosyncratic [personal/distinctive] interpretation of our migration history.

Kathy Laster, 'Geoffrey Blainey and the Asianisation of Australia. A Debate Half Won', *Migration Action*, vol. 7, no. 2, 1984, p. 4.

Blainey's university colleagues wrote this:

Source 7.55

As historians at the University of Melbourne we wish to dissociate ourselves entirely from the widely-publicised attacks which Professor Geoffrey Blainey, an eminent member of our profession, and a professor in our department, has recently made on the Government's immigration policy with regard to Asians. Professor Blainey speaks and writes on this issue as an individual and not as a representative of historians at this university. We are particularly aware of the dangers of trying to channel debate on immigration policy into consideration of the suitability of certain ethnic and national groups as immigrants. We are also aware, from many historical precedents, that raising such an issue in racial terms (however much it is couched in the language of reason) becomes an invitation to less responsible groups to incite feelings of racial hatred. Framing debate in such racial terms can become a potent weapon to rouse public fears and prejudices and to direct hostility at certain groups in our society. …

Signed by Ian Robertson [Renaissance historian, chairman of the department] and 23 others.

A letter which appeared in *The Age*, 19 May 1984.

1. Using Source 7.54, describe Kathy Laster's analysis of Blainey's comments.
2. Was Blainey correct (Source 7.29) to say 'an íncreasing proportion of Australians ... seemed to be resentful of the large number of South-East Asians who are being brought in'? Answer using two other sources from this chapter.
3. Analyse the impact of racism and discrimination on Asian migrants in Australia. Use evidence from the sources in this and other chapters to support your discussion.
4. Copy and complete the following table for Source 7.55.

Question	Answer
AUTHOR Who made the source and what do you know about them?	
CONTEXT When was the source made? What was happening during that time?	
AUDIENCE Who was the source made for? Who was going to read it?	
PURPOSE Why was the source created? What goal or purpose did it have?	
SIGNIFICANCE Why does the source matter? What changed because of it?	

7.6 Chapter summary

Here are some dot-points for you to consider and add to:

Continuities

- A minority of the Australian population clung to the ideas of old Australia and homogeneity as the best policy for national population.
- Governments lowered immigration levels but not low enough for many Australians.

Changes

- Immigration policy became non-discriminatory from 1973.
- The entry Structured Selection Assessment System test emphasised family reunion and skills.
- Multiculturalism became the official policy from 1973.
- A majority of Australians wanted immigration to slow, especially from Asia.
- Immigration dropped below 100 000 per annum in economic downturns in the mid-1970s, mid-1980s and mid-1990s.

7.7 End-of-chapter activities

The following tasks are designed to help strengthen your understanding of the material explored in this chapter and to encourage you to further analyse and evaluate the events, ideas, perspectives and experiences that shaped the acceptance and experience of multiculturalism in Australia between 1973 and 1995.

Consolidating your understanding

Creating revision cards is a great way to summarise content when studying for an assessment or exam. Students and teachers have many different approaches to this technique; however, your aim should be to ensure all cards are well-organised and to the point. You may also wish to colour code your cards, as many students find this useful in helping commit information to memory.

Create one card per heading listed below. Some cards will have more information than others. For those topics with more sources, use both sides of the card. You may find the templates below helpful.

Events
- Multiculturalism
- *Racial Discrimination Act, 1975*
- Vietnam War and the fall of Saigon
- Tiananmen Square Massacre and Hawke's offer

Perspectives
- Downfall of Grassby
- Debates over multiculturalism and boat people
- Geoffrey Blainey
- Paul Keating's Redfern speech

Experiences
- Economic effects
- Communities, exchanges, contributions to society
- Racism and discrimination

Template examples

Events – Vietnam War and fall of Saigon	Perspectives – Geoffrey Blainey
Key date/s:	**Key date/s:**
Summary information:	**Summary information – Blainey:**
Key quotes:	**Key quotes:**
	Responses to Blainey
	Key quotes:

Research task

The following two events took place in 1988:

- Fitzgerald report
- Opposition leader John Howard's launch of his 'One Australia' policy.
  Research the above events and complete the following:
1. Write a summary outlining the key dates and information of each event. (This could be organised as a table).
2. Do the Fitzgerald report and One Australia policy share and/or challenge the views of Geoffrey Blainey? Justify your point of view.

Evaluating historical interpretation

1. In Source 7.23 William Bostock claims that 'the intensity of the backlash' against Al Grassby 'was clearly a function of the threat he posed'. Discuss.
2. Liffman (Source 7.36) contends that Blainey lends authority' to the fears and misconceptions of a minority'. Do you agree with this statement? Justify your response.

Constructing an argument: essay writing

1. To what extent was opposition to multiculturalism driven by what Liffman and Markus describe as yearnings for 'old Australia'?
2. Analyse the ways in which multiculturalism impacted the economic life of the nation.
3. Discuss the experiences of citizenship for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples between 1945 and 1995.

CHAPTER 8
Contested policies, 1996–2008
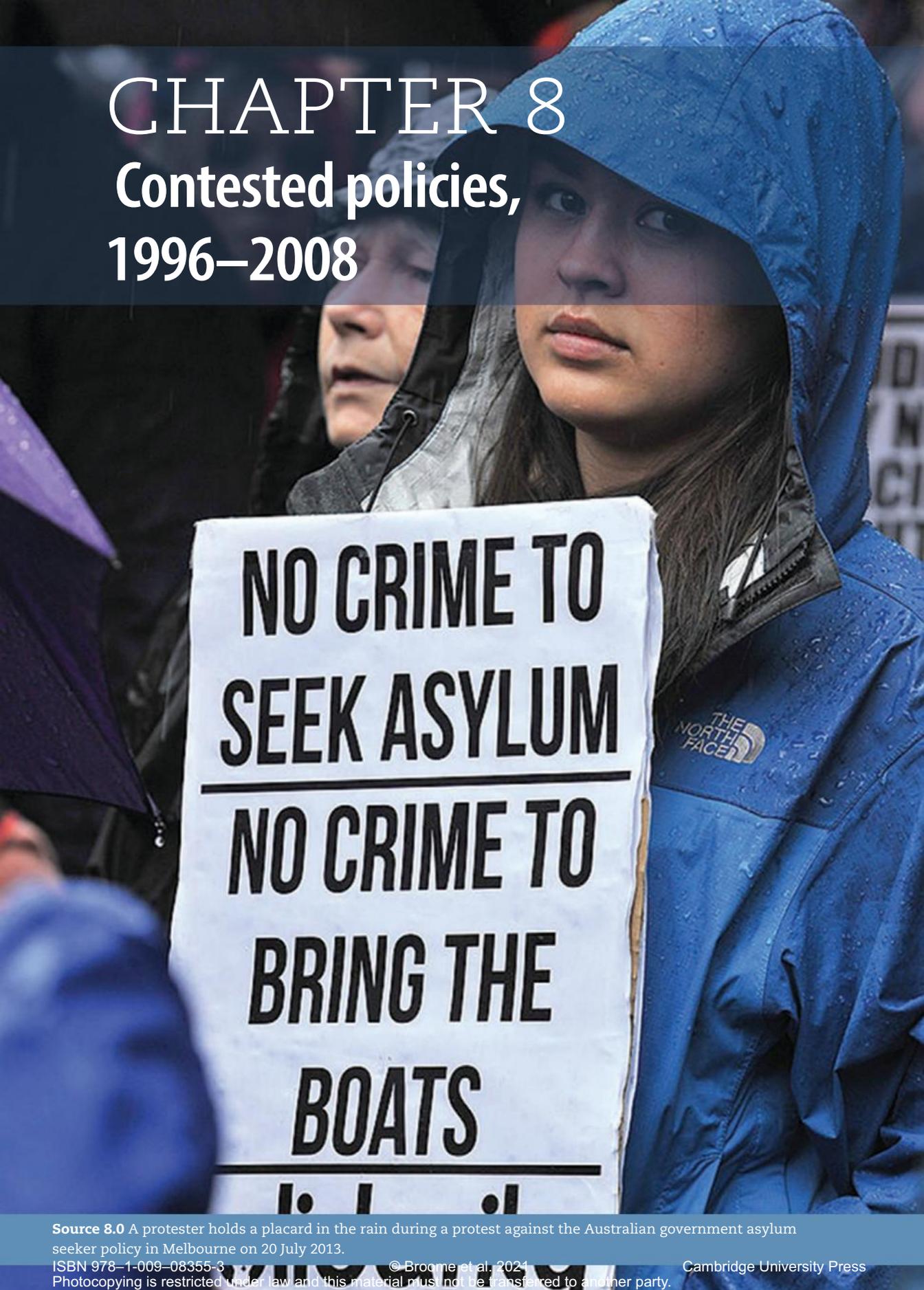
Source 8.0 A protester holds a placard in the rain during a protest against the Australian government asylum seeker policy in Melbourne on 20 July 2013.

Chapter timeline

World events	Date	Australian events
		1996: Pauline Hanson's maiden speech in parliament on the politics of grievance
		1997: Bringing Them Home report released
	2000	
		2000: The Australian Declaration towards Reconciliation issued
2001: September 11 terrorist attacks in the US		**2001:** *Tampa* crisis – refugee boat controversy affects election
		2008: The Apology – PM Rudd apologises for stolen children

8.1 Introduction

INQUIRY QUESTIONS

- What forces led to the rise of Pauline Hanson's One Nation Party?
- In what ways did racism and discrimination intensify during the late 1990s?

In 1990 high inflation and interest rates created an economic recession. Unemployment was 10% and there were some financial collapses and bank amalgamations. The economy was still recovering by the mid-1990s.

Debates over Asian immigration in the 1980s were surpassed by those over Indigenous issues and immigration policy from 1996, in a context of a rising opposition to multiculturalism. There was concern expressed by some Australians over social cohesion in the face of greater cultural diversity, as immigration from the Middle East, Africa and the Pacific Islands increased. The push for land and Indigenous rights concerned others.

Again, Professor Blainey was a spokesman for 'old Australia'. He attacked the High Court in 1993 over its Mabo decision, arguing land rights would divide Australia and stifle mining development. He coined the term 'black armband history' in his Latham Lecture of 1993 (see Source 8.11).

The Keating Labor government alarmed some conservatives. It held a Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (1991); passed a *Native Title Act, 1993* after fierce public debates lasting almost a year; created a Reconciliation Commission; and encouraged the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission to begin an inquiry into the removal of Indigenous children from their families.

In the 1996 election, John Howard led the conservative Liberal–National party to victory ending the Hawke–Keating reform era (1983–1996). The push for homogeneity, symbolised by Pauline Hanson's One Nation Party, threatened multiculturalism.

John Howard and the politics of grievance

In the 1989 federal election, the Liberal leader John Howard's slogan was 'One Australia'. He attacked multiculturalism as divisive. His slogan in the 1996 election was 'For All of Us', stressing cohesion not diversity. Some thought it code, meaning: 'for us but not for them'. Howard appropriated the term 'battlers' to appeal to the forgotten people, those with a sense of grievance.
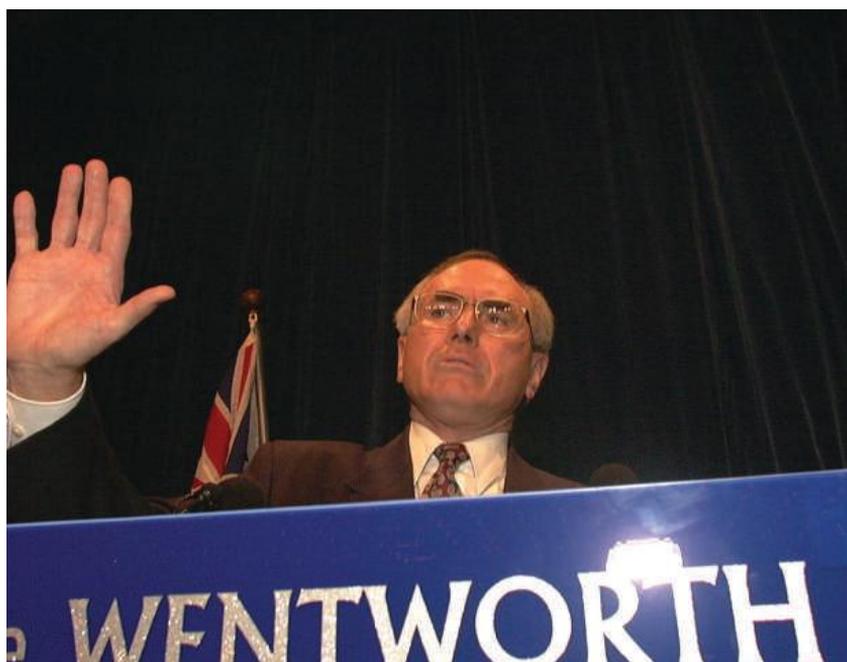
↑**Source 8.1** John Howard claiming victory in the 1996 federal election to become Prime Minister

Political scientist Judith Brett in 1997 explained this phenomenon.

The underlying reasons for this increased sense of grievance are undoubtedly economic. The economic changes of the 1980s and 1990s which are summed up by the term restructuring, the integration of the Australian economy with the international economy, and the reduced role of government in economic regulation and the provision of services, have left many people worse off. The political elites of all persuasions are convinced that this restructuring and integration was inevitable and will be in Australia's long-term interests. Putting aside the question of

Continued…

Source 8.2

whether Australia had any choice, two things at least are clear – not everyone agreed that it was necessary, and not everyone has benefited. In fact some have suffered very much, for example the people once employed in the protected manufacturing industries, along with people in the protected agricultural industries, middle managers in firms that have downsized, and many Commonwealth and state public servants, to name just a few particular groups.

Judith Brett, 'John Howard, Pauline Hanson and the Politics of Grievance', in Geoffrey Gray and Christine Winter (eds.), *The Resurgence of Racism. Howard, Hanson and the Race Debate*, Monash Publications in History, 24, Melbourne, 1997, p. 15.

Some other scholars, such as Lebanese Australian and anthropologist, Ghassan Hage, argued that the politics of grievance expressed not only economic fears due to the pressures that Australia now faced due to the international economy, but was also an expression of white racial grievance. This dual influence is revealed in the career and appeal of Pauline Hanson.[1]

Rise of Pauline Hanson and One Nation

Pauline Hanson, a businesswoman running for the Queensland seat of Oxley, was dis-endorsed [officially dropped as a candidate] by the Liberal Party for allegedly racist remarks. She claimed Aboriginal people were given too much by way of welfare. She won the seat as an Independent, which was previously held by the ALP, and practised the politics of grievance [resentment].

FOCUS QUESTIONS 8.1

1. Describe the politics of grievance.
2. Explain who this approach might appeal to.
3. What does this strategy reveal about certain views in the community towards immigrants at the time?

↑**Source 8.3** Small business owner and politician Pauline Hanson in her fish and chip shop, 23 November 1996

Bringing Them Home Report 1997

The Keating Labor government commissioned Sir Ronald Wilson, head of the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, to investigate the removal of Aboriginal children from their families. In April 1997, the Commission issued its 689-page report entitled 'Bringing Them Home', based on scores of personal testimonies by Indigenous people. It traced the history of removal, state by state, and investigated the consequences for the children and their families (the full report is available at https://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/9692). Some of the Inquiry's findings were:

> It is estimated that between 1 in 10, possibly as many as 1 in 3, Indigenous children were removed from their families and communities between 1910 and the 1970s. These children were taken by the police; from their homes or on their way to school and put into institutions, fostered or adopted out to non-Indigenous families. Many children suffered harsh, degrading treatment (including sexual abuse) and were frequently indoctrinated to believe Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were inferior.
>
> The forcible removal of Indigenous children was a part of assimilation policies adopted by all Australian governments throughout the twentieth century. Despite the widespread nature of the practice, mainstream recognition of the experience has only been relatively recent.

Source 8.4

Healing Foundation website, 'Fact sheet: What was the Bringing Them Home report?', 2017.[2]

The report was guided by three United Nations declarations: The United Nations Charter (1945), the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) and the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (1948). The inquiry made 53 recommendations regarding apologies and monetary compensation, future treatment of government records, ways of reuniting stolen children with their families and the funding of counselling services.[3]

RESEARCH TASK 8.1

Read the UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide and explain why this document was used to guide the 'Bringing Them Home' report.

Here is just one short testimony by 'Paul' who became a ward of the state while his mother had a serious illness. He was placed in an orphanage, and then with an abusive foster family.

> My Mother never gave up trying to locate me. She wrote many letters to the State Welfare Authorities, pleading with them to give her son back. Birthday and Christmas cards were sent care of the Welfare Department. All these letters were shelved. The State Welfare Department treated my Mother like dirt, and with utter contempt, as if she never existed.

Source 8.5

Submission by 'Paul', one of 535 Indigenous Australians who submitted evidence to the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission inquiry from 1995, whose findings were published as the 'Bringing Them Home Report', National Museum of Australia website.[4]

Reconciliation

The Keating government created the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation (since 2001 called Reconciliation Australia) led by the Aboriginal elder Patrick Dodson, which gained grassroots momentum. John Howard replaced him with Evelyn Scott. Former prime minister, Malcolm Fraser became a passionate supporter of reconciliation. So too did the Governor-General Sir William Deane, who on Australia Day 1998 called for 'A true, just and lasting reconciliation by 2001 … if we are not to enter our second century as a diminished nation'.

In November 1998 John Howard called for an inspirational document but without an **apology**. In 1999, Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation member and author Jackie Huggins, together with celebrated author David Malouf, created a draft document containing an indirect apology.

In 2000 debate raged over a possible preamble [preface] in the Constitution about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. A poll revealed that 80% of Australians supported a reconciliation process and 84% an acknowledgement of Indigenous people as the traditional owners of Australia, but 61% believed Aboriginal people received too much special assistance, and only 40% supported an apology.[5]

In early 2000 the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation issued this compromise Declaration.

apology the request from First Nations peoples to say sorry for the policy of state and federal governments that removed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families as part of the attempt to assimilate Indigenous peoples and end Aboriginality and culture
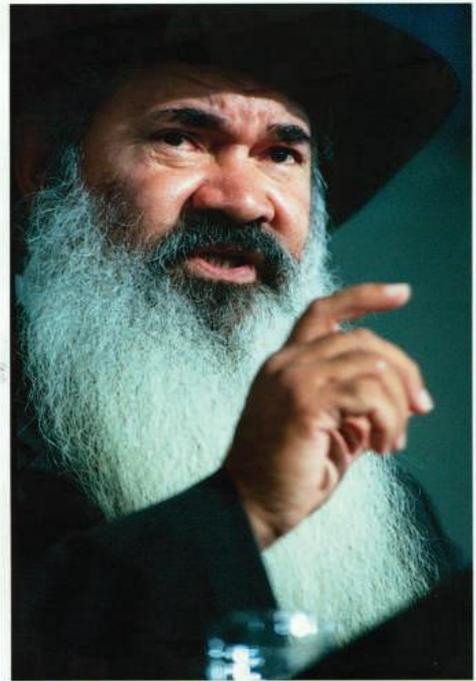
↑**Source 8.6** Patrick Dodson, pictured in 1997, led the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation in the 1990s.

Source 8.7

AUSTRALIAN DECLARATION TOWARDS RECONCILIATION

We, the peoples of Australia, of many origins as we are, make a commitment to go on together in a spirit of reconciliation. We value the unique status of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the original owners and custodians of lands and waters. We recognise this land and its waters were settled as colonies without treaty or consent. Reaffirming the human rights of all Australians, we respect and recognise continuing customary laws, beliefs and traditions. Through understanding the spiritual relationship between the land and its first peoples, we share our future and live in harmony. Our nation must have the courage to own the truth, to heal the wounds of its past so that we can move on together at peace with ourselves. Reconciliation

Continued…

must live in the hearts and minds of all Australians. Many steps have been taken; many steps remain as we learn our shared histories. As we walk the journey of healing, one part of the nation apologises and expresses its sorrow and sincere regret for the injustices of the past, so the other part accepts the apologies and forgives. We desire a future where all Australians enjoy their rights, accept their responsibilities, and have the opportunity to achieve their full potential. And so, we pledge ourselves to stop injustice, overcome disadvantage, and respect that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have the right to self-determination within the life of the nation. Our hope is for a united Australia that respects this land of ours; values the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage; and provides justice and equity for all.

Submission by 'Paul', one of 535 Indigenous Australians who submitted evidence to the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission inquiry from 1995, whose findings were published as the 'Bringing Them Home Report', National Museum of Australia website.[6]

USING HISTORICAL SOURCES AS EVIDENCE 8.1

1. Using Source 8.7, summarise what reconciliation means.
2. Explain how the Australian people felt about reconciliation. Refer to two sources within your response and also aim to include at least one statistic.

↑**Source 8.8** The activities of the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation created greater inclusiveness. Young Indigenous performers in the Botanic Gardens Sydney, Australia Day 2009. Courtesy Yvette & David Broome.

CHAPTER 8 CONTESTED POLICIES, 1996–2008

Australia's Asia–Pacific relations

Australia has had a difficult history with its Asian neighbours since the 1850s. In that decade the inflow of Chinese diggers caused resentment and trouble as outlined in Chapter 2. This continued into the 1880s against Chinese residents in Australia as we saw in Chapter 3. These resentments and fear of invasion led to the *Immigration Restriction Act, 1901*. This Act came to be known as the White Australia Policy, for that in effect is what the Act sought to achieve as we saw in Chapter 4. Asian nations resented these humiliations especially as they decolonised and became stronger after World War II. They formed part of the pressure to dismantle the White Australia Policy that was investigated in Chapter 6. The inflow of Vietnamese and other Asian refugees (Chapters 7 and 8) continued the tensions. Asian nations remembered the continued insults from many Australians over the decades, and their memories were rekindled, once Pauline Hanson (see Source 8.13) again slandered Asian immigrants in the 1990s.

mandate a legal instrument granted by the League of Nations to transfer administration of colonies of defeated nations after World War I to another nation, supposedly to be a mentor and protector as the colony progressed to running its own affairs

Fretilin movement the Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor which demanded independence from Indonesian rule

Australian governments eyed their Pacific neighbours from the 1880s onwards, especially Papua and German-controlled New Guinea immediately to Australia's north. Australia demanded a **mandate** over New Guinea from the League of Nations (1919–1945) after World War I for defence reasons. It maintained control as a trustee (1945–1973) under the United Nations, until Papua New Guinea (PNG) gained its independence. Australia has since mentored PNG's development.

However, Australia's relations with its other nearest neighbour, East Timor to the north of the Kimberley region, was more mixed, being both honourable and dishonourable. In 1975 Indonesia invaded and took control of the former Portuguese colony of East Timor against the wishes of its people. The Whitlam government, and subsequent governments, consented to this, despite international condemnation.

After repeated pressure and lobbying from the **Fretilin movement**, the United Nations held a plebiscite in 1996, which was won by those backing independence. Resistance to the vote, led by elements of the Indonesian military and Indonesian-backed local militia, led to 1500 East Timorese deaths and the displacement of a quarter of a million people to West Timor. Australia stepped in as police under an International Force for East Timor [INTERFET] to create peace until a United Nations force consolidated the birth of a new nation, Timor Leste.

However, Australia acted dishonourably in 2012 by obstructing the rights of this impoverished new nation to undersea gas fields in the Timor Gap, until a more equitable treaty was signed in 2018.[7]

Since 1972 a non-discriminatory migration selection policy has seen small numbers of Pacific Islanders settling in Australia, mostly via New Zealand. By the mid-1990s New Zealand displaced the United Kingdom as the largest single source of immigrants to Australia. Recently Australia has given temporary work permits to Pacific Islanders, but on more equitable and voluntary terms compared with a century earlier.[8]

Migration policy 1996–2008

In most years between 1996 and 2008 net immigration to Australia per year was between 100 000 and 150 000 people, and Australia accepted 12 500 humanitarian refugees as part of this intake. In these years, the percentage of overseas born in the population ranged between 20 and 25%. It was higher of course in urban areas and also in the migrant reception cities of Sydney and Melbourne. By 2008 the top 50 overseas birthplaces had at least 20 000 people from each country of birth living in Australia.

Source 8.9 reveals the top 10 overseas birthplaces. Note that Greece and Hong Kong had dropped out of the list by 2008 and India and South Africa had joined the top 10. Those from New Zealand were second to those from the United Kingdom but those from New Zealand comprised Pacific Islanders as well.

DID YOU KNOW?

The highest ever migrant intake in Australia's history was in 2008, the very last year of our study period, when 315 700 people arrived creating a 236 000 net migration.

↓**Source 8.9** Australian-born population and the top 10 overseas countries of birth 1995–96 and 2008–09

1995–96			2008–09		
Country of birth	**Number**	**Proportion**	**Country of birth**	**Number**	**Proportion**
Australia	14 110 000	77.1%	Australia	16 138 849	73.5%
UK	1 207 600	6.6%	UK	1 188 247	5.4%
New Zealand	297 500	1.6%	New Zealand	529 178	2.4%
Italy	258 800	1.4%	China	350 979	1.5%
Vietnam	149 900	0.8%	India	308 542	1.4%
Greece	144 600	0.8%	Italy	219 336	0.9%
Germany	118 900	0.6%	Vietnam	203 852	0.9%
China	103 400	0.6%	Philippines	168 501	0.7%
Hong Kong	98 000	0.5%	South Africa	149 024	0.6%
Malaysia	96 100	0.5%	Malaysia	129 575	0.6%
Philippines	94 700	0.5%	Germany	128 834	0.6%
Total overseas	4 209 000	23.0%	Total overseas	5 816 407	26.5%
Total population	18 310 000		Total population	21 955 256	

Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Migration Australia*, 1995–96 and 2008–09.

Refugee policy 1996–2008

In 1992 the Keating government passed a new Migration Act, which created mandatory detention, a tribunal to judge refugee claims and ministerial discretion over humanitarian cases. Mandatory detention could be used during the initial assessment of a refugee's claim for **asylum**, during the processing of the claim and during any deportation procedures. It clearly was being used as a deterrent to those seeking asylum and contravened the right to seek asylum in the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)*.

asylum a place of sanctuary or shelter; under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights a person has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution

Between 1999 and 2001, 8000 people arrived in Australia by small and often unseaworthy boats, most fleeing conflict in Afghanistan, Iran and Iraq. **Detention centres** were set up, including Woomera (1999). The Howard government refused these refugees asylum, claiming they were making 'secondary' moves from a place of first refuge and therefore were not genuine asylum seekers.

In August 2001, the *Tampa* crisis changed immigration policy. An Indonesian fishing vessel, the *Palapa,* carrying 433 Hazara asylum seekers from Afghanistan ran into trouble 140 kilometres off Christmas Island. The refugees who were rescued by Captain Arne Rinnan of the MV *Tampa* pleaded with Rinnan not to be returned to Indonesia. When the *Tampa* crossed into Australian waters, it was boarded by Australian SAS troops to prevent it reaching Christmas Island. Most of the asylum seekers were forcibly taken to Nauru for processing, a few were later accepted by New Zealand.

The *Tampa* affair and the arrival of 43 boats carrying 5000 refugees in 2001 led to legislation to create the '**Pacific Solution**'. Many of Australia's islands, including Christmas Island, were excluded from Australia's migration zone. Refugees never touched the Australia mainland and were processed offshore at Nauru and Manus Island. The Labor Party did not oppose this legislation. Aggressive **interdiction** of vessels followed. The terrorist attack on the World Trade Center in New York occurred on 9/11 (9 September 2001). The October 2001 federal election was fought on the issues of border protection and security from terrorism and the Howard government was returned. 'We will decide who comes to this country and the circumstances in which they come', Howard declared in a speech. In the next six years only 23 boats arrived under this new strict 'Pacific Solution' policy on asylum seekers.

The Rudd Labor government, which gained power at the end of 2007, ended the 'Pacific Solution' and mandatory detention. However, it faced renewed boat arrivals as 4000 refugees

↓**Source 8.10** Australia's 'Pacific Solution' has seen offshore processing of asylum seeker claims in camps at Manus Island and Nauru.

came by sea in 2008 and more arrived by boat as people fled war zones in Afghanistan and Iraq. Of course, Australia's refugee arrivals were small in global terms as it received 0.1% of the estimated 50 million refugees worldwide.

In 2007–08 **net annual immigration** soared to 236 000, the highest level in Australia's history, due to those overstaying their visas and a large rise in overseas students. In 1996, 130 000 overseas students were studying in Australia, which rose to 289 000 in 2009, many from India, China and South America.

FOCUS QUESTIONS 8.2

1. What is mandatory detention and when was it introduced?
2. Is it illegal to seek asylum?
3. How did the Howard government justify not granting refugee status to people from Iraq, Iran and Afghanistan?
4. Why did the Howard government implement the Pacific Solution?
5. Did the Pacific Solution have bipartisan (cross-party) support?

8.3 Influential ideas, 1996–2008

INQUIRY QUESTION

What were the influential ideas from 1996 to 2008?

'Black armband' history

The historian Mark McKenna explained this term:

Source 8.11

Black armband history, a phrase coined by Geoffrey Blainey in his Latham Lecture (*Quadrant*, 1993), signified a pessimistic reading of Australian history which, he contended, had gained undue acceptance. Earlier generations had been raised on an optimistic 'three cheers' view of history; the 'black-armband view of history' represented the 'swing of the pendulum … to an opposite extreme that is decidedly jaundiced' [pessimistic]. Blainey placed much of the blame for the spread of the 'gloomy' view of Australia's past on the histories of Manning Clark and the 'guilt industry' encouraged by influential bodies outside the historical profession, such as the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, the Australian Labor Party, educational institutions, and the High Court. Black-armband history purportedly placed too much emphasis on the dispossession of Aboriginal Australians, environmental destruction, racism, and sexism … History became a strong theme in the rhetoric [language] of Prime Minister Paul Keating … [and] Prime Minister John Howard.

Mark McKenna, 'Black armband history' in Graeme Davison, John Hirst and Stuart McIntyre (eds), *The Oxford Companion to Australian History*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 2001, pp. 72–3.

Populism

The historian Andrew Markus defined populism as having four features:

Source 8.12

- It is a movement led by a charismatic leader
- The leader distains existing parties said to be corrupt, establishing direct contact with the people
- The ideas are simple and allegedly 'common sense'
- It promises a return to a stable prosperous past golden age

Andrew Markus, *Race: John Howard and the Remaking of Australia*,
Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 2001, p. 143.

The former US President Donald Trump is a classic populist. Was Pauline Hanson?

8.4 Perspectives, 1996–2008

INQUIRY QUESTION

What do perspectives from 1996 to 2008 reveal about debates over multiculturism?

Pauline Hanson

In her maiden speech in the House of Representatives on 10 September 1996, Hanson spoke on behalf of the aggrieved and the youth in her seat of Oxley whose unemployment and under-employment rate was 25%. Her mentor John Pasquarelli wrote the script:

Source 8.13

I come here not as a polished politician but as a woman who has had her fair share of life's knocks. My view on issues is based on common sense, and my experience as a mother of four children, as a sole parent, and as a businesswoman running a fish and chip shop …

Present governments are encouraging separatism in Australia by providing opportunities, land, moneys and facilities available only to Aboriginals. Along with millions of Australians, I am fed up to the back teeth with the inequalities that are being promoted by the government and paid for by the taxpayer under the assumption that Aboriginals are the most disadvantaged people in Australia. I do not believe that the colour of one's skin determines whether you are disadvantaged … I have done research on benefits available only to Aboriginals and challenge anyone to

Continued…

tell me how Aboriginals are disadvantaged when they can obtain three and five per cent housing loans denied to non-Aboriginals.

This nation is being divided into black and white, and the present system encourages this. I am fed up with being told, 'This is our land.' Well, where the hell do I go? I was born here, and so were my parents and children …

Anyone with business sense knows that you do not sell off your assets [part of Qantas and possibly Telstra] especially when they are making money. I may be only 'a fish and chip shop lady', but some of these economists need to get their heads out of the textbooks and get a job in the real world. I would not even let one of them handle my grocery shopping.

I and most Australians want our immigration policy radically reviewed and that of multiculturalism abolished. I believe we are in danger of being swamped by Asians. Between 1984 and 1995, 40 per cent of all migrants coming into this country were of Asian origin. They have their own culture and religion, form ghettos and do not assimilate. Of course, I will be called racist but, if I can invite whom I want into my home, then I should have the right to have a say in who comes into my country. A truly multicultural country can never be strong or united. The world is full of failed and tragic examples, ranging from Ireland to Bosnia to Africa and, closer to home, Papua New Guinea. America and Great Britain are currently paying the price …

There is light at the end of the tunnel and there are solutions. If this government wants to be fair dinkum, then it must stop kowtowing [bowing] to financial markets, international organisations, world bankers, investment companies and big business people …

I am going to find out how many treaties we have signed with the UN, have them exposed and then call for their repudiation. The government should cease all foreign aid immediately and apply the savings to generate employment here at home.

Abolishing the policy of multiculturalism will save billions of dollars and allow those from ethnic backgrounds to join mainstream Australia, paving the way to a strong, united country. Immigration must be halted in the short term so that our dole queues are not added to by, in many cases, unskilled migrants not fluent in the English language …

Time is running out. We may have only 10 to 15 years left to turn things around. Because of our resources and our position in the world, we will not have a say because neighbouring countries such as Japan, with 125 million people; China, with 1.2 billion people; India, with 846 million people; Indonesia, with 178 million people; and Malaysia, with 20 million people are well aware of our resources and potential. Wake up, Australia, before it is too late …

1. List what or who Pauline Hanson was opposed to or aggrieved about.

2. Do you think all or any of her grievances were justified? Make a list of those grievances that you think are justified and those that seem unjustified.

3. In your opinion, does Hanson fit the definition of a populist in Source 8.12? Explain why or why not.

4. Do you consider that in Source 8.2, Judith Brett should have included race as well as economic reasons in explaining the 'politics of grievance'?

…Continued

I consider myself just an ordinary Australian who wants to keep this great country strong and independent, and my greatest desire is to see all Australians treat each other as equals as we travel together towards the new century.

Pauline Hanson, maiden speech to the Australian Parliament, 10 September 1996.[9]

↓**Source 8.14** Independent MP Pauline Hanson is congratulated after her maiden speech by fellow Independent Graeme Campbell. Fellow Independents, Allan Roacher (front) and Peter Andren (right) look on, 10 September 1996.

The historian Andrew Markus discussed Hanson's appeal.

Source 8.15

Hanson was able to turn lack of polish and education, her ignorance of basic political issues, even her limited vocabulary, to advantage. She exemplified, without the need for artifice [skilful strategy], the anti-politician. Unlike more seasoned performers she was able to gain the devotion of a large number of Australians who identified with her, who saw in her a person like themselves confronting the university-educated elites, out of touch with the real world. This was perhaps most clearly indicated, when, in response to a television interviewer's question of whether she was xenophobic [held a fear of foreigners: defined fully in Source 5.25] Hanson responded with 'please explain', a request for definition of a word she had not previously encountered. 'Please explain' soon became a Hanson trademark, a symbol of the gap between the world of the lettered classes and Hanson's constituency [electoral supporters].

They were, however, other personal attributes. Hanson had a rare ability to relate to those attracted to her meetings. She thrived on personal adulation, glowed in the company of admirers of whom there was no

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>
> shortage. It seemed as if whole townships in rural Australia gathered for a handshake or autograph. Her supporters were cheered by her confrontations with journalists. Possessed of fierce temper and iron determination, Hanson would never take a backward step. When challenged she would bristle with indignation. She could never admit that she was wrong … In some respects she met the classic definition of charismatic leadership, through her personal capacity to inspire devotion, to discard the prepared speech and relate to her listeners on an immediate, personal level.

Andrew Markus, *Race. John Howard and the Remaking of Australia*,
Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 2001, pp. 160–1.

The Prime Minister John Howard initially supported her right to speak her mind, in the name of free speech and a rejection of political correctness. He finally condemned her views as 'simplistic nonsense' in April 1997, when Australia's Asian trading partners became alarmed at her anti-Asian views. Howard became more alarmed himself once Hanson formed her own party, One Nation, in April 1997.

One Nation published a book named *The Truth* (1997), full of outrageous and bizarre claims about Aboriginal culture, immigrants, and the alleged United Nations control of Australia. It was widely condemned for going beyond acceptable comment in the Australian political arena. Hanson's One Nation party won an astonishing 22.7% of the vote in the Queensland state election of 1998. Thereafter, the party went into decline.[10] After a period out of politics, Pauline Hanson returned in 2016, this time to the Senate where she made a controversial maiden speech, attacking people of the Islamic faith.

USING HISTORICAL SOURCES AS EVIDENCE 8.3

1. Using Source 8.15, analyse why people were drawn to Hanson.
2. Discuss the impact you think her views and growing support would have had on Asian and Indigenous Australians.

Immigration controversy 1996

Pauline Hanson attacked many things in her maiden speech in September 1996, especially multiculturalism and immigration policy. She claimed Australia was being 'swamped by Asians'. The *Sunday Age* ran articles on immigration in December 1996.

Professor Trang Thomas, Chair of the Victorian Multicultural Commission, argued:

> Immigration is important because people are our biggest assets and we need a diverse population – diverse in skills, talent and culture … Migrants are here because they want to be here. They appreciate life here and they work hard because they have opportunities that they never had in their own countries. There is strong evidence that the effect of immigration
>
> *Continued…*

Source 8.16

on unemployment is neutral because migrants also create jobs … The unemployment rate for business skills migrants is actually lower than for Australian born people. They bring in skills and they bring in money … [If we stopped immigration] we would have a smaller group of young people working and paying tax to support a large group of old people. We wouldn't be able to maintain the standard of living we have now.

Sunday Age, 1 December 1996.

Ted Drane, Leader of the Australian Reform Party, said this:

Source 8.17

Why do we keep telling people that this is a place of opportunity and a great place to live when we know that a great many of them are never going to be able to get a job here? I don't care whether they come from Asia or where they come from.

One of the arguments I have heard is that every immigrant creates a couple of jobs. If that's true, then with 50,000 immigrants we should have created 200,000 jobs. We haven't, so I don't agree with that argument …

I don't see why Australians should be the only ones in the world who opened their doors to almost everybody without any definite policy. Rather than an immigration policy, we need a population policy. The most frightening part about immigration is the creation of an underclass, people who are going to live at a lesser standard than Australians would expect to live at, to accept conditions that we wouldn't accept. If that's the way we need to live to compete with Asia, then I don't want to compete with Asia.

Sunday Age, 1 December 1996.
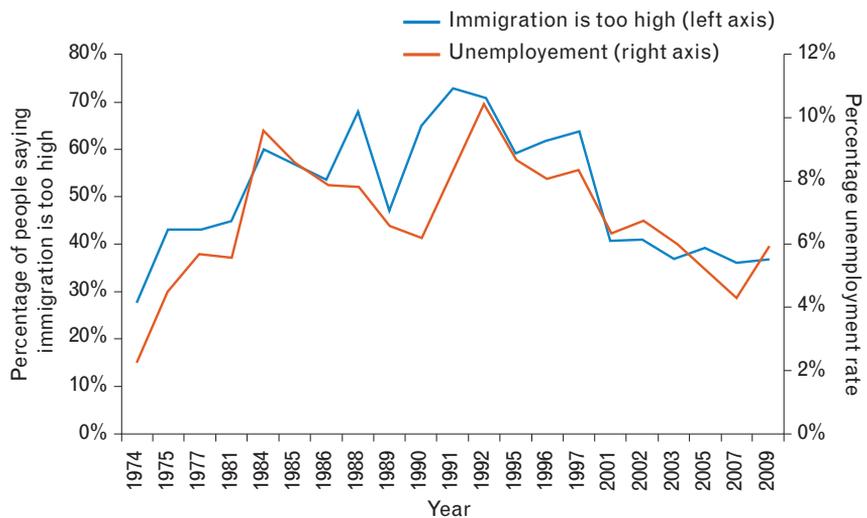
↑**Source 8.18** The correlation in Australia between unemployment and the view the immigration intakes are too high, 1974–2009. Courtesy of Andrew Markus.

The *Sunday Age* produced a fact sheet on arguments against immigration. The claim is in italics followed by the facts.

Immigrants take jobs from Australians: Research shows that at worst immigration has a neutral impact on the unemployment rate and at least is slightly positive in the long term … New migrants create demand for consumables and the housing industry in particular benefits, with migrants accounting for one quarter of the demand. Migrants also bring new or additional skills to the labour force.

Australia is being swamped by Asians: The racial mix of new migrants arriving in Australia varies according to world events … Although in recent years about 40 per cent of migrants to Victoria have come from 18 countries in Asia, Asian people account for less than 5 per cent of the population. And it has been estimated that if Asian immigration increased to 50 per cent for the next three decades, Asian born people would still account for only 7 per cent of the population. Asian migrants are more visible group in the community and Victoria also has a large number of Asian students, tourists and temporary business visitors, who helped to make the Asian presence more visible.

Immigrants have a high level of unemployment and welfare dependence: The unemployment rate for migrants drops the longer they are here. For migrants who arrived 20 years ago, the unemployment rate is lower than for people born in Australia. Several studies have shown that unemployed immigrants are less likely to receive unemployment benefits than unemployed people born in Australia. Immigrants generally have better academic qualifications than people born in Australia and many have tertiary qualifications. After 10 years in Australia, 78 per cent of immigrants owned their own homes compared with 71.5 per cent of people born here.

Business migration is a rort: Business immigrants will bring $850 million into Australia this year. Each successful applicant must have at least $750,000 to invest in a designated government security for a fixed term of three years. The money must be personally owned and unencumbered [under no obligation] and accumulated through the person's own business or investment activities. Business migrants also improved links with international markets; create employment for 5.6 people per new business; increase exports; and, provide goods and services that would otherwise be imported, according to the federal Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs.

Continued…

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Family reunion brings an influx of welfare dependent elderly migrants: Immigrants are divided into eligibility categories: family, skilled and humanitarian. By far the highest numbers of new immigrants in recent years have been in the family category. Immigrants can bring in fiancés, spouses, parents and children. A points system applies to less close relatives, such as siblings. Of all new settlers to Victoria in 1994–95, nearly half came under the family migration scheme. Of these, almost a third were between 25 and 34. Only 3 per cent were over 65. Next year, the quota for family reunion will be cut by more than 10,000 and the skilled intake will increase … As immigrants tend to be young families or young single adults, they add to the pool of people paying taxes to support the dependent population.

Most Australians are against immigration: Although recent opinion polls have shown that Australians are concerned about immigration, at the last federal election, in March, the Australians Against Further Immigration Party contested 13 Victorian seats, averaging just 1.7 per cent of the vote. Australia-wide the party stood in 38 electorates, winning 0.67 per cent of the national vote.

Sunday Age, 1 December 1996.

USING HISTORICAL SOURCES AS EVIDENCE 8.4

1. Outline the arguments for and against immigration in Sources 8.16, 8.17 and 8.19.
2. While the graph in Source 8.18 suggests that when unemployment is high, people oppose high immigration, from Source 8.19 determine if their fears are evidence-based.
3. Analyse the role the economy played in the immigration debate. Refer to Source 8.18 and one other source within your response.

John Howard's refusal to say 'Sorry'

In 1997 the Howard government branded the 'Bringing Them Home' report as 'flawed', claiming, contrary to the report, that governments at the time which removed children were well intentioned and protecting or rescuing the children from poor conditions. In December 1997, the Howard government provided $63 million over four years for counselling and family link-up services, family support, language maintenance programs, and archival and oral history projects. However, there was to be no legislated compensation and no apology.

Debate raged over the numbers removed and the intent of past polices, but the Howard government refused to apologise. At a 30-year anniversary for the Referendum in 1997, Indigenous leaders turned their back on John Howard as he spoke. Debate over native title was also rampant, inflaming the situation. By the late 1990s, culture and history wars raged, centred on Indigenous matters.[11]

The historian Richard Broome outlines the Howard government's stance on reconciliation.

The Declaration managed to retain an indirect apology and reference to customary law and self-determination. Howard opposed parts of it, even though he was to receive it on behalf of the government at '**Corroboree 2000**' in May. Charles Perkins, fiery as ever, demanded that Howard resign as he had 'blown reconciliation out of the water'. Indigenous leaders met with Howard and gained his support at least for the process of reconciliation, but no apology. However, Prime Minister Howard refused to join the Reconciliation March across the Harbour Bridge on the 28 May with over 200,000 Sydneysiders, claiming it was a people's march. He also forbade his cabinet ministers from marching. Similar large marches occurred around the country, revealing grassroots support for a better future with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

In his speech at 'Corroboree 2000', Social Justice Commissioner Mick Dodson (brother of Pat) expressed honest anger. Dodson outlined the discrimination, the removals of children in the forced assimilation that occurred in his own lifetime, which also happened to be in the lifetime of the Prime Minister. His point to Howard sitting uncomfortably

Continued…

Source 8.21

Corroboree 2000 a ceremony of commitment to reconciliation at the Sydney Opera House by Australians held on 27 May 2000, followed by a walk across the Sydney Harbour Bridge the next day

beside him on the dais, was that these things were not in the past but in a present inhabited by Howard and all living Australians, and for which they were responsible. He added very pointedly: 'let us smash the mould of assimilation that afflicts my generation of politicians'. In his following speech, Geoff Clark, head of ATSIC [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission], called for a treaty as the unfinished business of reconciliation … Howard [later] told a press conference, as he did fifteen years earlier, 'a nation, an undivided united nation, does not make a treaty with itself'.

Richard Broome, *Aboriginal Australians: A History since 1788*,
Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 2019, pp. 318–19.

USING HISTORICAL SOURCES AS EVIDENCE 8.5

1. Explain Spooner's view about John Howard and reconciliation in Source 8.20.
2. Discuss the social and political impacts of John Howard's views on issues impacting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians. Refer to Source 8.21 in your response.

The Apology 2008

Since 'Corroboree 2000' the movement for reconciliation permeated communities across Australia. Between 1997 and 2001 all state governments issued apologies to the Stolen Generations. However, John Howard refused to say sorry on behalf of the Australian government. In November 2007, Kevin Rudd assumed power as head of a Labor government. Within three days he declared 'we will say sorry'. On 13 February 2008 Indigenous people and other Australians travelled from all over Australia to attend federal parliament for the Apology. This is what Kevin Rudd said in part:

Source 8.22

Today we honour the Indigenous peoples of this land, the oldest continuing cultures in human history.

We reflect on their past mistreatment.

We reflect in particular on the mistreatment of those who were stolen generations – this blemished chapter of our nation's history.

The time has now come for the nation to turn a new page in Australia's history by righting the wrongs of the past and so moving forward with confidence to the future.

We apologise for the laws and policies of successive parliaments and governments that have inflicted profound grief, suffering and loss on these our fellow Australians.

We apologise especially for the removal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families, their communities and their country.

Continued...

For the pain, suffering and hurt of these stolen generations, their descendants and for their families left behind, we say sorry.

To the mothers and the fathers, the brothers and sisters, for the breaking up of families and communities, we say sorry.

And for the indignity and degradation inflicted on a proud people and a proud culture, we say sorry …

We today take this first step by acknowledging the past and laying claim to a future that embraces all Australians. A future where we harness the determination of all Australians, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, to close the gap that lies between us in life expectancy, educational achievement and economic opportunity …

A future based on mutual respect, mutual resolve and mutual responsibility. A future where all Australians whatever their origins, are truly equal partners, with equal opportunities and an equal stake in shaping the next chapter in the history of this great country, Australia.

Kevin Rudd's formal Apology to Australia's Indigenous Peoples, 13 February 2008.[12]

↑**Source 8.23** Part of the crowd outside Parliament House listening to the Apology. Courtesy of Craig McKenzie and the National Library of Australia.[13]

A poll revealed that 36% of Australians did not agree that an apology was needed. However, most Indigenous people were moved by the Apology and despite being symbolic, thought it was a positive step.[14]

FOCUS QUESTIONS 8.4

1. Why was the Apology an important step for symbolic reconciliation?

2. With reference to sources in this chapter, suggest some reasons why 36% of Australians did not agree with the Apology.

Multiculturalism wanes

Multiculturalism also waned in popularity through this period. Political scientist James Jupp AM of the Australian National University, an expert on immigration for 50 years, in 2011 bemoaned the poor health of multiculturalism.

Source 8.24

Multiculturalism is still the official policy of all Australia's nine governments (Commonwealth, States and Territories) and was officially reasserted in 1999. However the policy has been subject to continuing criticism at least since 1988, and has been allowed to run down in its organisation, effects and structures at least since 1996. This is evidenced by the abolition of the Office of Multicultural Affairs and the Bureau of Immigration Research in 1996 and the transfer of the policy and its implementation from Prime Minister and Cabinet back to Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC/DIMIA) in the same year ... Multiculturalism seriously needs to be detached from immigration and refugee issues and policies, as increasing numbers of second and third generation Australians form part of the 'cultural and linguistically diverse' constituency ...

The 1999 agenda stressed the need for strong and consistent leadership for multiculturalism. This was lost sight of in the enthusiasm for testing newcomers in their knowledge of Australian values and history. This is, of course, very important. But it is also important to educate the public about the diversity of modern Australia and the ways in which this makes it different from the Australia of the recent past. This is not done by isolating any small section of the population as unassimilable or a threat to cohesion. Nor is it done by playing the 'race card' in politics. This has led in Europe to quite serious strains on rich and democratic societies, which Australia does not need. Strong, bipartisan [cross-party] leadership using policy instruments which have prestige, resources and commitment, has been lost sight of in recent years, when multiculturalism policy (under whatever name you choose) has been pushed to the edge of public policy.

James Jupp, Australian Parliament, *Joint Standing Committee on Migration*, submission no 100, March 2011, pp. 2, 4, 7.

USING HISTORICAL SOURCES AS EVIDENCE 8.6

1. Who does Jupp (see Source 8.24) blame for the weakness of multiculturalism by 2011? Note that he sees its decline as becoming significant in 1996.
2. What is the 'race card' and who played it in Australian politics? Use evidence from the sources in this chapter to support your response.

INQUIRY QUESTION

What do experiences from 1996 to 2008 reveal about how Pacific Islanders resettled?

New Zealanders and Pacific Islanders are among Australia's closest neighbours. New Zealand since 1996 has been the second largest country of birth claimed by immigrants living in Australia. About a quarter of New Zealanders living in Australia are of Māori heritage.

In 2011 Pacific communities in Australia comprised immigrants from 23 ancestries across Melanesia, Micronesia, Polynesia and New Zealanders of Māori heritage. They numbered 280 000 of which Māori formed 45%. The next largest groups were from Samoa, Tonga, Fiji and PNG. Most lived in eastern Australia and the largest groups were in Queensland, NSW and then Victoria. The Pacific population is young and growing faster than the Australian population as a whole, through natural increase and further immigration.[15]

Economic effects

Pacific people around 2008 had an unemployment rate twice that of the rest of the population. For those in work, they had half the percentage in professional, education and teaching, scientific and technical jobs, and more in construction, manufacturing and transport.[16] From 2012 temporary work visas were issued to Pacific Islanders to help seasonally in the fruit picking industry. Since then, 40 000 have come annually to help Australian farmers and help to pay for housing and education back home. However, compared to their home countries many believe they are doing better in Australia.

Paul Hamer surveyed the Māori community of Australia in 2007 and found this about their economic outcomes.

Several Māori told me that those coming to Australia were working-class people who were doing the same kind of work they were doing in New Zealand, such as cleaning, picking fruit, driving trucks and operating earth-movers. Often, I was told the work Māori do which is sometimes transient, remote, hot or dirty – is the kind that Australians simply choose not to do and leave for migrants. The key difference is that Māori earn a lot more money at these jobs than in New Zealand.

Upward occupational mobility, therefore, remains out of reach unless they retrain. But, in a number of cases, the children of these workers had gone to university and acquired degrees and 'broken the mould' as they put it …

In any event, when I asked Māori enjoying successful working careers in Australia … whether they felt they could have had the same career in New Zealand, they always replied 'no'. Some felt this was simply because

Continued…

Source 8.25

of the economic opportunities in Australia, but others said it had as much to do with being freed from an environment in which Māori were not encouraged or expected to do well, including by their own people, or allowed to by what they perceived as a racist system. In keeping with this, a number of people told me that they had felt emboldened to start up their own business in Australia, which they had never felt confident to do in New Zealand.

Paul Hamer, *Māori in Australia/Ngā Māori Te Ao Moemoeā,*
Griffith University, 2007, p. 53.

Communities, exchanges, contributions to society

These communities share common values of family, spirituality, food, sport and recreation, and the performing arts. They emphasise the idea of community and have a strong sense of social cohesion.

Source 8.26

These different cultures are linked through the importance attached to the notion that the strength and solidarity of family and community should come before individual need. The extended family is structured in a way that allows members to have access to social and economic supports at all times. Social cohesion is attained through a sense of community, which in turn is based upon the idea of reciprocation [mutual exchange]. Affluence is measured not in monetary terms, but rather through reciprocity and the ability to meet kinship obligations …

For many Pacific Islanders in Australia, the maintenance of kinship obligations (gift giving) remains crucial. In order to satisfy kinship obligations many Pacific Islanders send money back to their homeland. In many cases, a significant proportion of people's income is allocated to this cause. This obligation can place great stress on the migrants, who often live in poor conditions themselves …

For young people of Pacific Islander background, the interface [boundary] of their own culture with Australian cultural expectations and freedoms often leads to further complications and conflicts in the home. These young people are frequently placed in the position of attempting to incorporate some of the cultural norms and expectations of Australian society, while simultaneously trying to conform to parental and family expectations.

Rob White, Santina Perrone, Carmel Guerra and Rosario Lampugnani, 'Pacific Islander Young People', Australian Multicultural Foundation, 1999, p. 19.

↑**Source 8.27** (left) Rongo Tokomauri Te Peeti, Matua Gerome, (Ngāti Raukawa, Te Arawa) moved to Australia 22 years ago after receiving an opportunity from an aunty. He left his hometown of Shannon, New Zealand, and moved to the north shore of Sydney. He is teaching matauranga Māori and Kapa Haka to many Māori in Australia. (Right) Georgia Horne (Ngāti Kahungunu) was born in Australia and learns kapa haka at South Sydney High school every weekend. For both people, keeping their Māori cultural practices is important for their sense of identity. Photographs courtesy of Chev Hassett.

FOCUS QUESTION 8.5

Do Australia's latest immigrants still suffer from the same feelings of conflict between new and old cultures as earlier immigrants? If so, why? Refer to sources in this chapter in your response.

Discrimination and racism

As a new and different immigrant group, Pacific communities suffered racism. Here are some Islander young people's views recorded in 1999.

Source 8.28

1. Maoris stick together no matter what, because they've all been through a lot of racism in schools and elsewhere. They get called **** and ****. I've had rocks thrown at me at school and everything because of racism. Most Aussies reckon that Maoris, Samoans and Tongans are all the same; when you try to explain it, they just go 'what?'

2. Coming to a country like Australia is – I find it a very racist place. Australians are very racist from what I've seen. They've got names for everyone. I didn't know what a 'wog' was before I came here. They put everyone into different categories – you've got your 'wogs' and you've got your 'nips' and you've got your 'skips'. They don't know respect; a lot of kids seem to not know the word respect.

3. They (different gangs) like to fight each other. Australians always fight people from other races.

Continued…

…Continued

4. With some nationalities, racism can be a reason. But sometimes I feel that certain Maoris and Samoans or Polynesians, they like to use the word 'racism' as an excuse and they give somebody a thump and like the police say 'why did you do that?' and say 'well, he called me a black such and such'. I think sometimes people just use that as an excuse and they don't really know what racism is.

5. I don't like the Maoris down here to be honest, even though I'm a Polynesian myself. But they just really, really think that they can boss around the Australians and all that; you know, the white people. And to me, oh, I just get really, really offended, 'cos I know I'm black, but I'm an Australian but, and I hate it when people do that; it really puts you off. But they wanna be, you know, the number one people here in Frankston.

Rob White, Santina Perrone, Carmel Guerra and Rosario Lampugnani, 'Pacific Islander Young People', Australian Multicultural Foundation, 1999, pp. 20–31.

dog whistle a public message sent to a particular group in society by a politician to arouse their attention and prejudices

race card making a statement to appeal to the racial prejudices of an audience or segment of society

Racism was on the rise in the 1990s, driven by economic conditions, growing diversity and signals sent from politicians such as Pauline Hanson. John Howard was not immune to this. He led the Liberal Opposition from 1985–89 and 1993–96 and was prime minister for the second longest time to Menzies (1996–2007). Howard's time was based on his belief in a unified nation and stressing old world values. On Aboriginal issues he supported Geoffrey Blainey's opposition to black armband history. Howard cut Aboriginal programs by $400 million in his first budget in 1996, diminished Indigenous rights to native title in the Wik legislation and refused to say 'sorry' (although he did express personal 'regret').

Howard also devalued multiculturalism and ended the bi-partisan political commitment to this policy from 1985. He tried to change history teaching in the national curriculum and argued that new immigrants should know some basic Australian history including facts about Don Bradman's cricket career. He sent signals, some say '**dog whistles**' or playing the '**race card**', to Australians who opposed multiculturalism and/or Indigenous rights, although Howard did not create these attitudes.

The historian Andrew Markus has this to say about opinion polls on immigration and Aboriginal policy in the 1980s and 1990s:

Source 8.29

Opposition to the total immigration intake has for most years since 1984 been in the range 60–70 per cent and was almost at the same level in April 1997 as it had been in June 1984. Katherine Betts, a long-term critic of Australian immigration policies, cites four 'comparable opinion polls' for 1988, 1990, 1991, 1996 – in these years the numbers of the view that 'too many' immigrants were entering were 68 per cent, 65 per cent, 73 per cent and 65 per cent respectively …

Continued…

Polls show consistently strong support for the view that Aborigines should receive the same benefits available to all Australians … On four occasions between 1979 and 1988, the question 'because of their special problems Aborigines should receive more social benefits than whites' elicited large majorities opposed to special benefits for Aborigines (from 66 per cent to 93 per cent). In 2000, in response to the Newspoll question 'Do you personally think that Aboriginal people should, or should not have special rights such as … native title [and] special seats in parliament', 58 per cent responded that they should not, 35 per cent that they should. On the general principle of Aborigines being accorded special rights to land there was again a strong majority against special rights, although difference in the wording of questions might explain the shift between 1993 and 1994.

Andrew Markus, *Race. John Howard and the Remaking of Australia*,
Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 2001, pp. 207–8, 209–10.

However, attitudes to Asian immigration appeared to soften over time, as Markus reveals:

Source 8.30

Attitudes to the number of Asian immigrants also seemed to be relatively stable with some indication of a lessening of numbers concerned with current levels. Of five polls in the period 1982–89, those expressing dissatisfaction were in the range 57–62 per cent, with one finding at a significantly higher level; this is in contrast with two poll finding of around 50 per cent in 1996 … When asked about the contribution of Asian immigrants to the 'Australian way of life', 60 per cent in 1993 and 61 per cent in 1998 agreed they had 'a great deal to offer'; a minority of about 20 per cent disagreed.

Andrew Markus, *Race. John Howard and the Remaking of Australia*,
Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 2001, pp. 207–8.

Markus also found that in the decade after 1997, attitudes to immigration continued this more positive trend. In the late 1990s F. Jones published this comparative survey of attitudes to multiculturalism. For information on recent attitudes to immigration and immigrants see reports by the Scanlan Foundation Research Institute, https://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/9645

↓**Source 8.31** Percentage of people responding 'yes'

Poll question	Australia	Canada	UK	USA
Immigrants threaten jobs	36%	25%	50%	48%
Immigrants cannot fully assimilate	42%	34%	53%	35%
Believe immigrants should blend in	83%	64%	81%	58%

Jones, F. 'The Sources and Limits of Popular Support for Multicultural Australia' in G. Hage and R. Couch (eds), *The Future of Australian Multiculturalism*, Research Institute for Humanities & Social Sciences, Sydney, 1999, pp. 21–9.

'Would you say your feelings are positive, negative or neutral towards immigrants from ...?' (2010)
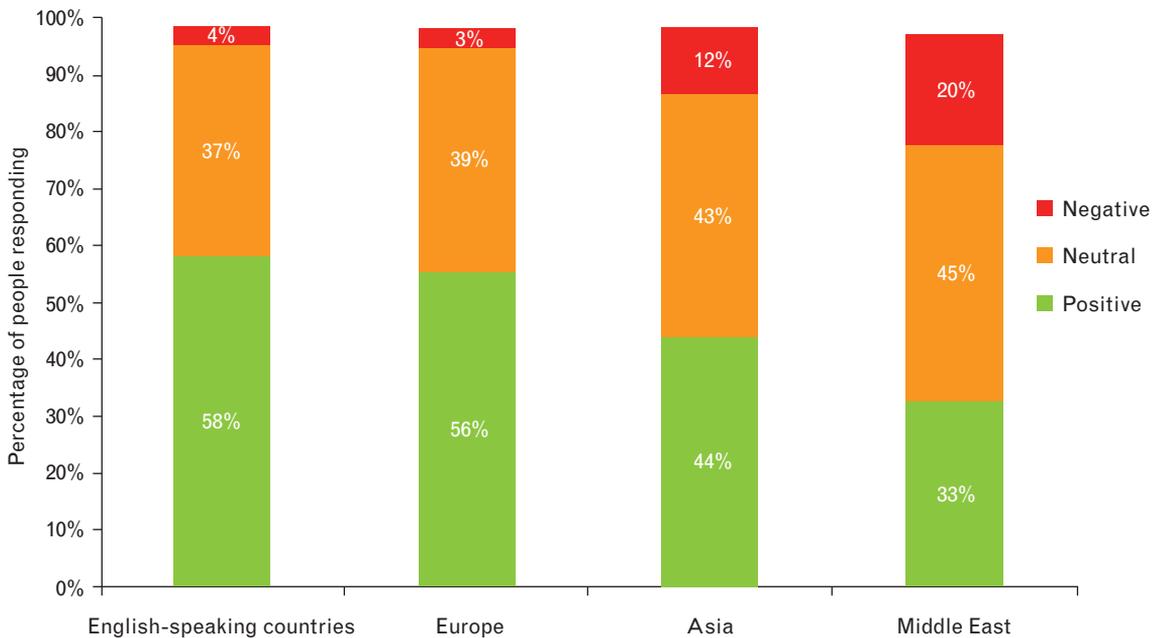
↑ **Source 8.32** In 2010 some Australians were asked 'Would you say your feelings are positive, negative or neutral towards immigrants from the following regions?' This graph is courtesy of Andrew Markus, Monash University.

USING HISTORICAL SOURCES AS EVIDENCE 8.7

1. Using Sources 8.29–8.32, describe the results of the data from opinion polls on issues of immigration.
2. Explain Australian attitudes to Aboriginal people having access to 'special rights.' Refer to Source 8.29 within your response.
3. Examine the degree of support Australians had for multiculturalism by 2008. Do you agree with James Jupp in Source 8.24 that its support had been weakened since the late 1980s?

8.6 Chapter summary

The following are some dot-points for you to consider and add to:

Continuity and change

James Jupp wrote to a federal parliamentary inquiry on migration in 2011 and listed the important changes to immigration policy and its international context in the previous 35 years. It is a useful way to sum up Chapters 7 and 8.

[Changes to immigration policy and its international context]

- Continuing high levels of immigration, with a shift from Europe to Asia
- A growing proportion of the overseas-born, reaching 25% in 2006
- More emphasis on skills than family reunion
- A decline of manufacturing and resulting youth unemployment
- An emphasis on temporary migrants and large numbers of Asian students
- Hot spots of civil war shifting from Indochina to the Balkans, the Middle East and South Asia
- The decline of self-described Christians in the census from 86% in 1971 to 64% in 2006
- The population increase of Muslims and adherents of other non-Christian religions to one million, many locally born
- Increased resistance to mass immigration and multiculturalism in Europe and Britain
- An end to bipartisan agreement on immigration and multiculturalism
- The ethnic transformation of segments of Australia's major cities
- The rise of environmental movements critical of continuing immigration
- The shift away from 'race' to 'values' in international debates

Source 8.33

James Jupp, Australian Parliament, Joint Standing Committee on Migration, submission no 100, pp. 1–2.

The historian John Hirst commented of multiculturalism and migration policy:

Multiculturalism speaks of different ethnic groups living together and maintaining their cultures. Those who worry that this will create too much diversity and threaten social cohesion don't have to worry too much, since the ethnic groups are disappearing. Australia is much more melting pot than multicultural. Diversity is declining rather than increasing … Migrants have been drawn from many sources … The disadvantage of drawing migrants from many countries was that old-world enmities [hatreds] were imported … The desire to avoid old-world conflicts is more than a policy position; it is deep-seated in the Australian people, evident almost from the time European settlement began. Not high principles, but a quiet life of decent comfort has been the Australian choice. That was bland and passionless in the eyes of many migrants, but they too benefitted from the social peace.

Source 8.34

FOCUS QUESTION 8.7

Using the knowledge you have gained in Chapter 8, to what extent is John Hirst right to say 'Australia is much more melting pot than multicultural' in Source 8.34?

John Hirst, *Australian History in 7 Questions*, Black Inc., Melbourne, 2014, pp. 162–4.

8.7 End-of-chapter activities

The following tasks are designed to help strengthen your understanding of the material explored in this chapter and to encourage you to further analyse and evaluate the events, ideas, perspectives and experiences that led to contested policies between 1996 and 2008.

Consolidating your understanding

Events

Copy and complete the table below to help you strengthen your understanding of the key events that shaped debates between 1996 and 2008.

Events	Summary	Evidence
Rise of Pauline Hanson and One Nation		
'Bringing Them Home' Report		
Reconciliation		
Australia's Pacific relations		
Migration and refugee policies		

Ideas

According to the criteria outlined by Andrew Markus in Source 8.12, is Pauline Hanson a populist politician? Justify your response.

Perspectives

1. Malcolm Fraser and John Howard were both Liberal Prime Ministers (you will recall the discussion of Fraser in Chapter 7). How were their views on multiculturalism, immigration and boat people different? You may wish to complete this question as a Venn diagram.
2. Did Howard help or hinder the process of reconciliation? Refer to two sources within your response.
3. How did Hanson contribute to the immigration controversy of 1996?

Experiences

1. Explain the challenges faced by Pacific Islander migrants in Australia.
2. Describe Australian attitudes to Asian immigration as outlined in Source 8.30. Does this reinforce or challenge Hanson's perspective?

Asking historical questions: research task

Research and examine one of the following events.
- Passing the *Native Title Amendment Act, 1998*
- The 'Northern Territory Intervention' (or NT 'National Emergency Response')
1. Write a brief summary outlining what happened, why it occurred and when it took place.

2. Explain how the event impacted Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
3. Find one source about your event and choose two others from this chapter to create a three-question source analysis activity that examines the key perspectives and experiences of Indigenous people from 1996 to 2008. Some suggested command terms to use for your questions are below:
    - Identify, describe, outline
    - Explain, discuss, compare
    - Analyse, evaluate, examine

Once completed you may wish to exchange your activity with one of your peers so you can brainstorm and discuss potential responses.

Analysing causes and consequences

1. What were the causes and consequences of the Pacific Solution?
2. Read the following extract from Rudd's Apology to the Stolen Generations (see Source 8.22).

'A future where we harness the determination of all Australians, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, to **close the gap** that lies between us in life expectancy, educational achievement and economic opportunity … A future based on **mutual respect**, mutual resolve and mutual responsibility. A future where all Australians whatever their origins, are **truly equal partners**, with equal opportunities and an **equal stake** in shaping the next chapter in the history of this great country, Australia.'

In small groups, discuss to what extent you think this has been achieved since 2008. Consider the words in bold as part of your discussion.

↑**Source 8.35** Kevin Rudd on screen in Federation Square, Melbourne, apologising to the Stolen Generations, 13 February 2008

CHAPTER 9
Continuities and changes, 1834–2008

9.1 Introduction

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have lived on this continent since 65 000 BCE, or for 2600 generations (taking a generation to be 25 years in Aboriginal society). At 1788 it is estimated the Indigenous population was 750 000 across the continent.[1] In 1788 newcomers invaded Australia, took and colonised Aboriginal lands. The story of immigration in this book explores these non-Indigenous colonisers and how they created a nation, which until recently excluded the original owners. The sources below provide an overview of immigration history. Use them to draw conclusions about how migration helped to create a nation.

Source 9.1 gives the approximate net overseas immigration statistics to Australia for different broad periods, and the overall intake:

Source 9.1

- 1788–1830 – 58 000
- 1831–1925 – 2 136 000
- 1926–2019 – 8 807 000
- 1831–2019 – 10 943 000

- 1788–2019 – 11 001 000

- The highest inflow in any one year was 315 700 in 2008
- COVID-19 in 2020 caused the greatest crash in net migration in Australia's history

Compiled from Charles Price, 'Immigration and Ethnic Origin', in Wray Vamplew (ed.), *Australians. Historical Statistics*, Fairfax, Syme and Weldon, pp. 4, 6 and Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Australian Historical Population Statistics*, 2019, table 7.1, Cat. No. 3105.0.65.00.

The tables in Sources 9.2 and 9.3 show the rhythm of immigration through the decades in finer detail.

Australia's immigrant intake by decade, 1831–1925 ←**Source 9.2**

Decade	Number
1831–1840	117 090
1841–1850	142 275
1851–1860	613 660
1860–1869	174 508
1870–1879	183 946
1880–1889	381 871
1890–1899	65 328
1900–1909	1763
1910–1919	336 877
1920–1925	118 734

Charles Price, 'Immigration and Ethnic Origin', in Wray Vamplew (ed.), *Australians. Historical Statistics*, Fairfax, Syme and Weldon, pp. 4, 6.

Net immigration to Australia by decade 1925–2019

Decade	Number	Decade	Number
1926–1935	123 241	1976–1985	748 884
1936–1945	172 125	1986–1995	976 376
1946–1955	766 601	1996–2005	1 074 367
1956–1965	843 489	2006–2015	2 184 793
1966–1975	922 784	2016–2019 [4 yrs]	994 700

Compiled from Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Australian Historical Population Statistics*, 2019, table 7.1. Consult this table for yearly figures if required, Cat. No. 3105.0.65.00.

The table in Source 9.4 shows the top countries of birth contributing to this migration inflow in the late twentieth century.

→**Source 9.4** Main countries of birth of the Australian population 1954–2006

	1954	1961	1971	1981	1996	2001	2006
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
United Kingdom	664.2	755.4	1081.3	1075.8	1164.1	1126.9	1153.3
New Zealand	43.4	47.0	74.1	160.7	315.1	394.1	476.7
Italy	119.9	228.3	288.3	275.0	259.1	238.5	220.5
China	10.3	14.5	17.1	25.2	121.1	157.0	203.1
Vietnam	na	na	na	40.7	164.2	169.5	180.4
India	12.0	14.2	28.7	41.0	84.8	103.6	153.6
Philippines	0.2	0.4	2.3	14.8	102.7	112.2	135.6
Greece	25.9	77.3	159.0	145.8	141.8	132.5	125.8
South Africa	6.0	7.9	12.2	26.5	61.7	86.9	118.8
Germany	65.4	109.3	110.0	109.3	120.8	117.5	114.9
Malaysia	2.3	5.8	14.4	30.5	83.0	87.2	103.9
Netherlands	52.0	102.1	98.6	95.1	95.3	91.2	87.0
Lebanon	3.9	7.3	23.9	49.4	77.6	80.0	86.6
Hong Kong (SAR of China)	1.6	3.5	5.4	15.3	77.1	75.2	76.3
Total overseas-born	1285.8	1778.3	2545.9	2950.9	4258.6	4482.1	4956.9
Australian-born	7700.1	8729.4	10 173.1	11 388.8	14 052.1	14 931.2	15 648.6
Total population	8986.5	10 508.2	12 719.5	14 516.9	18 310.7	19 413.2	20 605.5

Table 7.39 in *Year Book Australia*, 2008.

The ebb and flow of immigration affected the percentage of those living in Australia who were born overseas. This is shown in the graph in Source 9.5.
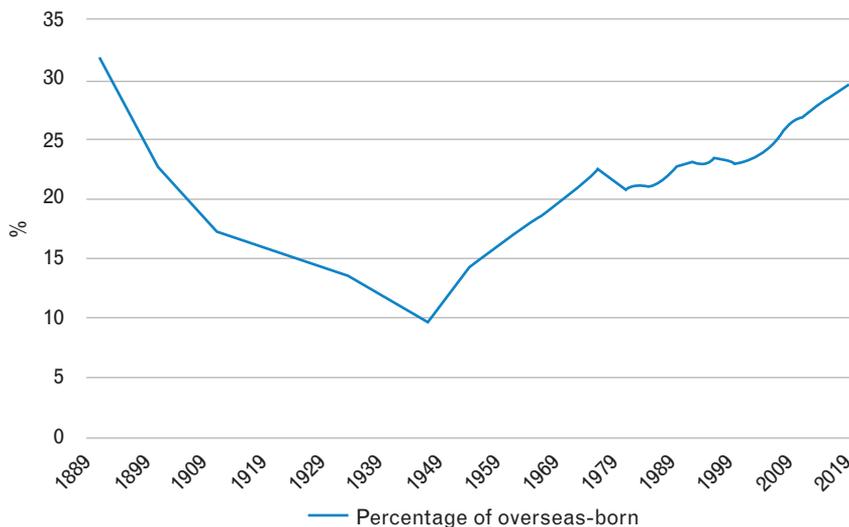
↑**Source 9.5** The percentage of overseas-born in the Australian population 1889–2019.
Courtesy Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Migration Australia*, 2018–19.

The graph in Source 9.6 shows the contribution of migration to Australia's population each year since 1953.

Migration program size as a percentage of
Australia's population
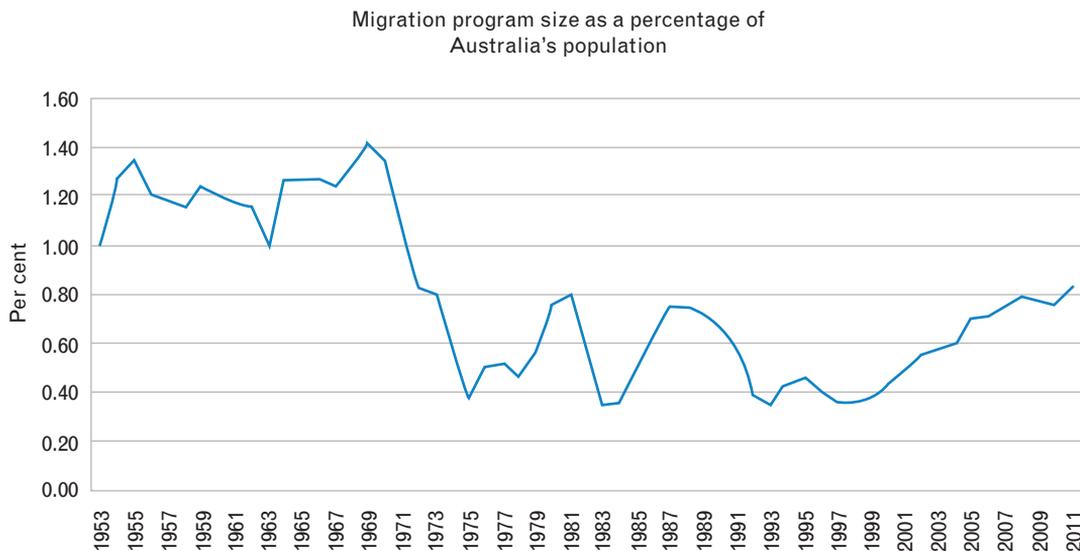
↑**Source 9.6** Migration intake each year as a percentage of Australia's population 1953–2011.
Courtesy of Andrew Markus, Monash University.

Of course, immigrants had a greater impact on creating a nation than these statistics suggest, because many of those who arrived then had families. Gavin Jones a policy consultant remarked in 1997:

The contribution of migration is more profound than is apparent … Migration builds up the population on which natural increase is based. Natural increase, then, would be much lower were it not for the migrants who have become part of the population in earlier years; the contribution of migration, in this sense, is greater the longer the period we are considering. For example, immigrants and their children born in Australia were responsible for almost 60 per cent of national population growth between 1947 and 1973.

Gavin Jones, *Australian Population Policy*, Australian Parliament, 1997, p. 7.

9.2 End-of-chapter activities

Consolidating your understanding

The following tasks are designed to help strengthen your understanding of the material explored in this book and to encourage you to further analyse and evaluate the events, ideas, perspectives and experiences that shaped this nation from 1834 to 2008.

Activities

1. Analyse Sources 9.1–9.7 and make a list of continuities and changes in immigration to Australia between 1834 and 2008.
2. Add to that list other ideas you have developed about continuity and change during your explorations of Area of Study 1 and Area of Study 2 of this book.

Using historical sources as evidence

Analyse Source 9.8 from 1925 and answer the questions that follow.

←**Source 9.8** A cartoon on immigration to Australia by Will Dyson, *Punch*, 23 April 1925

1. Describe the details in Source 9.8.
2. Explain what message you think Dyson was trying to convey.
3. In your opinion, how does Source 9.8 reflect on Australia's immigration programs over time?

Research task

Famous comedian, author, actor and artist, Anh Do tells his family's story of migration in 1980 from Vietnam to Australia in his memoir *The Happiest Refugee*.

Find a copy of *The Happiest Refugee* and read the early chapters on how the Do family emigrated to Australia, and then complete the following task.

Explain why Do's family fled Vietnam and the risks they took.

Constructing an argument: essay questions

1. To what extent did fear shape the colonies and new nation's attitudes towards migration? Refer to primary and historian sources within your discussion.
2. 'The role and experiences of women in colonial and early federated Australia did not change greatly between 1834 and 1913.' Discuss.
3. To what extent did Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples challenge European ideas of race and assimilation?
4. Evaluate the role that politicians played in shaping debates about immigration and multiculturalism from 1901 to 2008.
5. To what extent have the social and economic experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples changed? Use evidence to justify your response.
6. Analyse the role World War II played in transforming Australia. Refer to primary and historian sources within your discussion.

Extension viewing

Watch the series *Immigrant Nation: The Secret History of Us* (Screen Australia and SBS) found on YouTube at:

Part 1:
https://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/9646
Part 2:
https://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/9647
Part 3:
https://cambridge.edu.au/redirect/9648

Area of Study 2 Extension reading

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