REGENDERING THE LANDSCAPE IN NEW SOUTH WALES

Report for the Department of Environment and Conservation

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report offers a literature review as the initial step in the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) Cultural Heritage Division's "Gendered Landscapes Project". It outlines some of the possibilities of such a project within the context of this state government agency by presenting an overview of research in the topic area, with an emphasis on studies of national parks and women. It also offers a case study examining gender and landscape in historical and art images associated with the NPWS "Historic Site" township of Hill End.

The report proposes, from a social constructivist perspective, that "landscape" is a spatial representation of human relationships with nature, while "gender" is the representation of sexual difference, and that both concepts are malleable, cultural constructions. However, in agreement with Kay Schaffer's *Women and the Bush* (1988), the report argues that in Australia two dominant historic modes of gendering the landscape have been to represent it firstly as the site of white masculine endeavour ("no place for a woman") and secondly as a feminine being ("Mother Nature").

Definitions of the terms "landscape" and "gender" have been numerous. Landscape is defined here to be a complex representation that examines aspects of natural, built or imagined environments and stresses their relationships to other places and things. It is understood in multiple ways by different users and observers and for different audiences, as not only factual but experiential The report also examines a variety of feminist approaches to questions of gender, history, geography, representation and reform as they may impact on questions of landscape. Feminist scholarship in these topic areas is categorized into three main approaches described as "liberal feminist", "radical/ socialist feminist" and "postmodern feminist". Each approach allows for different questions to be asked and different strategies of interpretation and reform to be proposed. Liberal feminism celebrates individual women in particular landscapes, while radical/ socialist feminism emphasises social struggle, and postmodern feminism focuses on language and representation. Each feminist approach discusses examples of relevant research relating to national parks research and gender/ women, and finally applies its analysis to the case study of Hill End.

The second section of the report examines some of the historical specificities of gender and landscape in Hill End. Hill End was chosen as the case study for this report because it is a prominent NPWS "Historic Site" and because it has long been understood and presented in an obviously masculine register, stressing the activities of male gold miners and largely ignoring women's contributions to the landscape. It was also chosen because of the extraordinary richness of its visual representations, that are well documented in Gavin Wilson's publication *The Artists of Hill End* (1995). The case study begins with a short history of Hill End "as if women mattered", drawing on the recently-commissioned NPWS history of Hill End by Alan Mayne. The main part of this second section then consists of visual analysis of 20 images associated with Hill End. Semiotic-type readings variously consider the material history of the images (how they came to be produced and kept), their iconography (some of the possible meanings of the imagery), and other

questions of their cultural meaning. They operate as "pressure-points" to generate discussion about how to rethink the relationships of gender, landscape, history and heritage in Hill End. This "re-gendering" interpretation of Hill End imagery offers one way of expanding and regenerating our perceptions of NPWS landscapes.

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PREAMBLE: TWO IMAGES OF A GENDERED LANDSCAPE (1089 words)
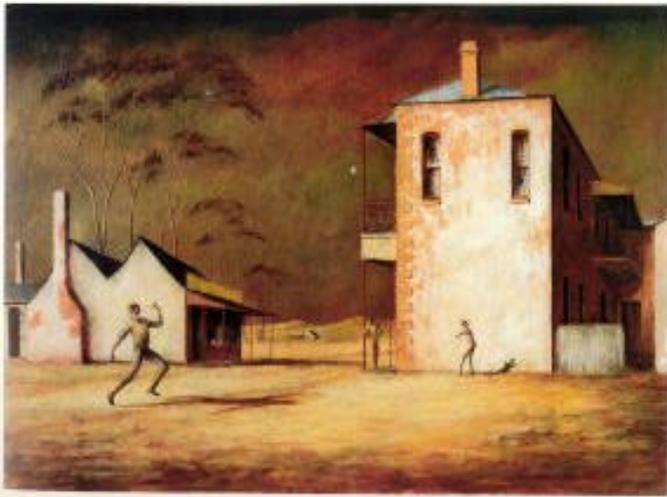
↑ Plate 2. Russell Drysdale *The Cricketers* 1948
Oil on Hardboard, 76.2 x 101.5cm
Private collection

→ Plate 3. Russell Drysdale *Woman in a Landscape* 1949
Oil on canvas on hardboard, 101 x 66.3cm
Held Art Gallery of South Australia

These two paintings encapsulate the two main ways in which rural landscapes have been seen to be "gendered" in Australia. *The Cricketers* (plate 2) is an iconic image for most Australians, a representation of white man making himself at home in the strange harshness of the outback. Several skinny youths are depicted playing an energetic game of cricket in front of some old buildings upon a bleak yellow plain. There is tension between the wide open spaces of the horizon and the claustrophobically close brown clouds; there is tension between the dark sky, apparently threatening to storm, and the harsh, low-angled sunlight casting long shadows from the figures across the land. Most of all, the painting derives its power from the contrast between the self-absorption of the human figures engaged in their quintessentially English (men's) game, and the melancholic, un-English environment in which it is being played out. In this "masculine" gendering of the landscape, white man is an actor perching precariously on a harsh land.

Woman in a Landscape (plate 2) is less familiar to most viewers. It depicts a large, middle-aged woman standing on a red earthen plain, gazing into the distance. She is positioned in the close foreground, while homestead and denuded trees are depicted in the far background, all enveloped by a yellowish-blue sky. The woman is almost the same height as the painting, giving her a massive appearance. Her dress and hat are respectable but dark and shabby, style-less, suggesting both an ahistorical quality of endurance, as well as carelessness towards feminine frippery. She has no jewellery, no wedding ring. In her dusty, flat white shoes she seems rooted in the ground, larger, stronger and more immovable than the trees behind her. Whereas the men painted by Drysdale are typically stick-thin, this woman is thick as a large tree trunk. She is a woman who has worked long

and hard on the land, who in the hard struggle for survival seems to have merged with her environment: calm and resilient, tough and capable. She would help you if you needed but she could also knock you down if necessary. She seems free of the constraints of bourgeois society. She might be Aboriginal. In this feminine gendering of the landscape, woman is not just in the landscape, she has *become* the landscape.

These two images were painted in the late 1940s, using the NSW town of Hill End as their backdrop. They form an important part of the oeuvre of artist Russell Drysdale, who is credited as having "radically changed both Australian landscape painting and the general perception of Australia". His work is seen as a crucial step in shifting the focus of Australian landscape art from pastoral landscapes of pleasant rural scenes near the coast (the "gum-tree woodlands of the colonial period"), to images of awkward white settlement in the outback (the "surrealistic red desert") (Thomas, 1982, 244). Nonetheless, art historians are divided in their interpretations of the meaning of Drysdale's imagery. Does it suggest "stark loneliness… dramas of human frustration... [a] 'disquieting' atmosphere" (Smith, 1979, 248)? Or does it suggest the opposite, that white settlers have finally come "to terms with the Australian outback, and are at one with its grand expanse" (Thomas, 1982, 244)? The meanings associated with the imagery stretch beyond Hill End and regional adaptations to place, to encompass the even bigger questions of Australian national identity and more generally to human relationships with nature.

And what of the role of gender in these landscapes? That the same place in each image can be seen to project a different gender, masculine and feminine, suggests the malleability of both gender and landscape as cultural constructions. Landscape is a spatial representation of human relationships with nature, while gender is the representation of sexual difference. Landscape can consist of views that are close or distant, urban or rural, peopled or unpeopled, pure or desecrated; it can have almost any emotional resonance or political implication. Landscape has been inscribed with varying and complex representations associated with gender, for example: fertility and reproduction, sexualised beauty and sensuousness (Lee 1997, 107; Colomina, 1996), (masculine) sublime and (feminine) picturesque (Day, 1996), genital metaphors (such as projections and caves, Schama, 1995, 373), gendered spatial boundaries (Rowley, 1991; Spain, 1992) and gendered work roles (Burn, 1991; Pigot, 1994). Western civilisation has long forged a crucial association between women and nature in the notion of "Mother Nature" (Ortner, 1973).

While almost any type of gendering may be conceivable, in Australia the two dominant historic modes of gendering the landscape have been to represent it as Drysdale has done: firstly as the site of white masculine endeavour ("no place for a woman") and secondly as a feminine being ("Mother Nature") (Schaffer, 1988). These two dominant modes of landscape gendering as masculine and feminine may seem balanced and thus fair, but they are not. In fact, women (and Woman, and femininity) tend to come off second best in both scenarios. Furthermore, many commentators would suggest that even in the first scenario, it is not the *landscape* that is masculine but the historical actors who are using it. Even there, the landscape may be best understood as feminine   in a complex

partnership, sometimes nurturing and sometimes abusive, with the white men that occupy her. Even there, the figures of men can be seen to represent *masculine culture* as it is enacted upon *feminine nature* in the form of the landscape.

Australian rural landscapes are not "no place for a woman" any more than they are no place for a man. To represent such places as if women were insignificant or absent is inaccurate and unjust. Women have been active in, and crucial to, the occupation and development of regional Australia, both before and since British colonisation. Such historical presence is also not recognised in the second type of gendering of the landscape, as a female entity. In this scenario, Woman is conflated with nature in a metaphor weighed down with the fears and desires of those empowered to articulate their world view   historically, these are usually men. Simplistic, archetypal images of Woman as Nature are common: as all-fertile, all-nurturing, all-wild or all-vengeful. Such conflations tend to lose sight of the fact that women are both natural and cultured beings, like men. Instead, the image of Woman has been used to convey (mostly men's) feelings about nature (and nation and identity). Inevitably, such images and landscapes have also constructed particular understandings of Australian femininity that have not always been to women's benefit. Where is the history of women's engagement with the landscape in Australia? And where are women's articulations of *their* feelings about landscape, nature, nation and identity?

Section 1 Gender and geographical landscape

INTRODUCTION

> Landscape looms large in the Australian imaginary, although its infinite
> variety has been reduced to a rather singular vision… most often it is
> represented as a hostile, barren environment… Vance Palmer refers to the
> bush as a cruel mother—"an enemy to be fought". The metaphor calls to our
> attention a common construction of the land as mother earth within a Western
> European discourse. But in Australia the fantasy of the land as mother is one
> which is particularly harsh, relentless and unforgiving. (Schaffer, 1988, 22)

> [T]hey use two well-worn phrases about Australia: that it is a "man's country"
> where "woman's place is in the home"… (Encel, Mackenzie and Tebbut,
> 1974, 40)

In popular and academic understandings of the history and landscape of Australia,
women are typically "shadowy figures" that "hover on the fringes" (Anderson, 1993,
3; Giles, 1987, 1). The best-known characters of Australian history and society are
male: the convict, the Aborigine, the explorer, the digger, the bushranger, the soldier,
the squatter, the selector, the swaggie, the jackaroo, the factory worker, the commuter,
the home-owner, the bureaucrat, the professional, the artist, the politician, the
unemployed, the yobbo, the redneck, the criminal, the media magnate, the yuppie.[1]
Women are usually represented in either complimentary associations with these male
figures (as daughters, wives and mothers, often carrying out the role of "God's
police") or as alienated from their proper positions (as "damned whores",[2] "deserted
wives", "bad mothers").[3] They sometimes occupy a male role such as reformer or
politician, although, it might be argued, as an "honorary man" rather than in any
distinctively feminine or feminist manner. Generally, though, Australian women have
long been imagined to be safely at home, bringing up the kids, juggling a bit of part-
time paid work and awaiting their man's arrival back from his struggle with the city
or the bush.

> By contrast, the notion of "Woman", as the principle of femininity, is
> thoroughly imbued throughout Australian understandings of "nature" and the
> landscape. It is almost impossible to speak of landscape without using sexual
> metaphors: eg, virgin forest, fertile soil, penetration of the interior.
> Paradoxically, while "women" as real historical individuals are largely absent
> from popular representations of Australian landscape, "the idea of woman,

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[1] Sue Rowley offers a similar list of masculine iconic figures at the opening of her essay on
representations of Australian women's spatial confinement in art and literature in the Federation period
around 1900: "'The Australian story' seems to be one of travellers: of explorers, immigrants, pioneers,
drovers, shearers, gold-seekers, bushrangers and swagmen" (Rowley, 1991, 69).

[2] *Damned Whores and God's Police* is the title of Anne Summers' ground-breaking feminist history of
Australia, 1975, which argued that its title described two major stereotypes that had been used to
represent and oppress Australian women. Kay Schaffer's important recent book, *Women and the Bush*,
1996, argued persuasively that the "bad mother" stereotype (for example, as unleashed in the public
furore over Lindy Chamberlain) is a more relevant and psychoanalytically potent image for
contemporary Australia than "damned whores".

[3] Liz Grosz suggests that women are typically represented as either the same as, the opposite of or the
compliment to men (Grosz, c.1980s). Simone de Beauvoir argues that woman is man's "other" (1972).

embedded in linguistic constructions" is thoroughly imbued in it (Schaffer, 1988, 79)

From the beginning of its European history, the Australian landscape has been perceived to have the "female" qualities of passivity, inviolability, mystery and allure. "Man", or "mankind"—the civilising or colonising masculine force—has left the "mother" country, Britain, to "possess" or "conquer" or "tame" or "master" or "subdue" this wilderness, the object of desire of male explorers, pioneers and settlers. The inland is "empty": an absence or void that needs to be filled by the presence of the newcomers. (Falkiner, 1992, 118)

This literature review discusses issues associated with gender and the Australian landscape in order to analyse the representation of men and women (as historical entities), Man and Woman (as representative types), and masculinity and femininity (as historically variable constructions of gender), and to canvas alternative strategies for their presentation. The first section of the report offers a general literature review analysing definitions of landscape and offering three feminist approaches to interpreting relationships between landscape and gender, drawing largely from the disciplines of geography, history and heritage. The town of Hill End is mobilised here to offer examples of how these issues may be seen to operate in a particular landscape. The second section of the report analyses gender and landscape specifically in relation to perceptions of landscape in visual images of Hill End.

Hill End deserves some introduction because of its significant role in this report as an example landscape and case study. Hill End is a small town in mid-New South Wales (NSW), situated mid-way between Bathurst and Mudgee. Millennia of Aboriginal occupation were disturbed by scattered pastoral activities in the early nineteenth century, and then rocked by the development of Hill End from the 1850s as a "gold boom town", which by the 1870s boasted a population of 7,000-8,000 men and women from around the world. The Holtermann Nugget was unearthed in Hill End in 1872, reputedly the largest chunk of gold-bearing rock ever found in the world. The town survives with an important collection of intact nineteenth century buildings and a small local community of about 200 residents (Guppy, 2001, 6). Traditionally a working class area where locals have got by on intermittent pastoral work, fossicking for gold, rabbiting, and more recently, tourism, the community has also long been interspersed with the comings and goings of a great variety of outsiders, including many artists apparently attracted by the eroded landscape and the town's strange sense of historical continuity. In 1967 the NPWS bought up most of the properties in town with the intention of turning it into an "Historic Site". It is an atypical "park" for the NPWS because it encompasses no "natural" bushlands and is only 130 hectares in size, much of it a seriously degraded mining landscape. The NPWS currently administers 29 dwellings in Hill End, largely occupied by ordinary citizens, including many people from the "old families" (as they are locally described) who have lived in the area for five or six generations.

Hill End was chosen as the case study for this report because its history has long been understood and presented in an obviously masculine register, stressing the activities of white male gold miners in several late nineteenth century gold booms and largely ignoring women's contributions to the landscape (Mayne, forthcoming). It was also chosen because of the extraordinary richness of its visual representations that are well

documented in Gavin Wilson's publication *The Artists of Hill End* (1995) and include: the large-scale photographic documentation of the town commissioned by Holtermann in the 1870s (Burke, 1973); a group of nationally significant paintings executed in and about the town between the 1940s and the 1970s by leading Australian artists including Russell Drysdale, Donald Friend, Margaret Olley, Jean Bellette, David Strachan, John Olsen, Brett Whiteley, Jeffrey Smart and Gary Shead (Wilson, 1995); and a recent resurgence of art practice encouraged by an artist-in-residency program in the town run by the Bathurst Regional Gallery. Art has been a crucial means by which people come to understand landscape and the environment in Australia (Burn, 1991). The second section of this report analyses examples from this variety of Hill End imagery in order to imagine how gender can be reinscribed into our understanding of the landscape there.

This study is the first step in a NPWS initiative to reconsider the ways that gender inflects the conservation and presentation of natural and built landscapes across the broad variety of sites and places that it manages for the NSW Government. It forms part of the institutional overhaul of the NPWS, described by historian Alan Mayne:

> During the late 1990s the NPWS embarked upon a radical reform of the entire agency. This refocussing of the Service's emphases and activities was driven by recommendations contained in the planning report *Visions for the New Millennium*, and led to the rewriting of the Service's corporate plan and mission. The reforms sought to forge effective partnerships with community interest groups, and acknowledged the agency's role in regional economic and social development (Mayne, forthcoming).

This report was prompted by concern felt within the NPWS' Cultural Heritage Division about the types of projects being undertaken by the NPWS, the interpretation techniques in place, the focus on particular technologies and the lack of detailed site-based analysis. As the brief for this report explained:

> Typically most NPWS management documents have been "the traditional narratives of industry, land use, employment, the economy, politics, transport and other public sphere activities primarily involving white men" (Reekie 1992, 3). In addition, NPWS like other heritage agencies, has tended to concentrate on the built components of cultural heritage management. As a result of this women have barely had a voice in the presentation and interpretation of heritage places on NPWS estate.

> The Gender and Landscape project aims to ensure that women have an appropriate presence in the narratives which surround national parks and the places of cultural significance within them and that we have some understanding of gender specific responses to landscapes managed by NPWS. The project is concerned with understanding how whole collections and indeed landscapes can be inherently "gendered" through past social and economic mores and how these mores affect responses to landscape. (NPWS, 2002a).

The following questions are of interest to the broader "Gender and Landscape Project" of which this report forms an initial step, although they could not all be canvassed here:

> How have mainstream or dominant images of Australian landscape influenced women? Do women perceive and engage with landscape differently from men? How do male roles across landscape shape or influence women's roles? What role does landscape play in identity making for women? Do different landscapes offer women different forms of identities? How do women's lives become visible across landscape? What insights do feminism, spatial theory, landscape assessment, post-colonialism and/or cultural studies offer in understanding women's relationships to land? (NPWS, 2002a)

A more informal, but useful, list of three questions was aired in conversation with Catherine Snelgrove and Sharon Veale during a site visit to Hill End, in explaining the broader project aims:

> How are women presented in our national parks? How do women experience our national parks as visitors? How do women employees experience NPWS employment? (Hanna interview with Veale and Snelgrove, 2003)

The issues have also been categorised as:

1. Conceptualising the landscape
2. Managing the landscape
3. Presenting the landscape (NPWS, 2002b, 2)

The problem of why and how women have been represented so differently from men in the Australian landscape is complex because it is historical as well as geographical, and because it concerns myths and imaginaries as well as facts. This study could address the history of gendered actors or "agents" within the landscape, the gendered roles of academics, artists and "authors" who create representations of the landscape, and the gendered perception of the people who are the "subjects" that variously read and consume these representations of landscape, for example as residents, citizens or visitors. In any of these approaches there is a need to acknowledge that women, like men, are not a homogenous social group, but are differentiated along characteristics such as race and ethnicity, class and socio-economic background, sexuality, age, ability, occupation and location. Since, as is discussed below, the term "landscape" could refer to the representation of *anything* with physical or imagined spatial extension, while the term "gender" refers to the representation of sexual difference, the possible extent of a literature review combining these two topics, even one limited to Australia, is extremely large. Many researchers have touched upon these issues, and there are streams of relevant commentaries in the disciplines of human geography, history, art history, literature and philosophy, amongst others. This study could not hope to interrogate all the relevant literature, but it has canvassed a broad variety of readings. There has been a special effort made to trace studies of gender and national parks, both in order to learn from the concerns already discussed, and to avoid duplication.

Thus this report is largely a literature review, an intellectual overview of how gender may affect a broad range of issues associated with landscape, space, place and nature. Any literature review is selective and operates from a particular intellectual perspective. This one offers special consideration of the interpretation of gender in landscape *art*, and how this may influence our understanding of landscape, place and social relations in general. It also tends to focus in on question's of *women's* relationships to place in Australian *history*. Why are so many people are aware of white man's struggle to make the land productive but are sketchy about the roles undertaken by white women, migrants and Aboriginal people? How can the undoubtable historical contributions of women come to be better understood in public representations of Australian landscapes (especially those managed by the NPWS)? Of the issues posed above in the Gendered Landscapes Project, it tends to address those around "Conceptualising the landscape" and "Presenting the landscape", "How are women presented in our national parks?", and to a lesser extent, "How do women employees experience NPWS employment?".

While I am aware that "gender" does not refer exclusively to women, and should equally be applied to men, this report emphasises issues around the representation of women and femininity because that has been the emphasis in the feminist literature to date. I make efforts to comment on the representation of men and masculinity where possible. I have sympathies with all three feminist approaches described in the section below entitled, "Three feminist approaches to gender and landscape". However I consider my position to be most closely aligned to that of "postmodern feminism" because of my understanding of gender and landscape as socially and culturally constructed rather than given or "inherent", because of my insistence on the heterogeneity of gender and of landscape, and because of the emphasis I place on language and representation as a means of both critique and intervention (Nicholson, 1990; Owens, 1983; Gibson & Watson, 1994).

I am impressed by Dolores Hayden's combination of intellectual analysis and urban activism in the *Power of Place* project. This was both a book that argued for more democratic strategies of historic preservation in urban space (Hayden, 1995) and an organisation that instigated substantial community art projects commemorating such histories in Los Angeles. The *Power of Place* evidences its own contention that:

> [I]t is possible to enhance social meaning in public places with modest expenditures for projects that are sensitive to all citizens and their diverse heritage, and developed with public processes that recognize both the cultural and political importance of place. (Hayden, 1995, 9)

Similarly, this report attempts to be persuasive rather than dogmatic, and to offer strategies for making achievable changes in the public representations of gender and landscape.

DEFINING "LANDSCAPE"

> The ways into the forest are limitless…
> (McKinnon, 2002, 24, quoting from the film, *Wild*, 1992)

Landscape is a surprisingly complex term, with a long history of different meanings and approaches. James Duncan (1995) argues that there are two main understandings of the word. In the first approach typical of the humanities, landscape is defined as a painterly "way of seeing" that developed in Holland and Great Britain. He suggests that its traditional function was to confirm class position. An example of this is Gainsborough's landscape painting, *Mr and Mrs Andrews*, which according to John Berger is a view that emphasised the landowning couple's "proprietary attitude towards what surrounds them" (Berger, 1972, 107). The landscape is presented as something owned by the man who commissioned the painting. The painting thus participates in the naturalisation of this commodity-status of the land, and by implication condones the redefinition of poor people who can no longer access that land as "trespassers" or "poachers". Thus in the humanities approach, landscape does not simply present objective views of the land, it depicts particular perspectives that privilege certain social relationships with the land.[4] In the second main approach, according to Duncan, human geography understands landscape as a material portion of the physical and cultural environment. Its traditional focus, on peasant meanings inscribed into folk landscapes, was derived from Germany via Alexander von Humboldt and Carl Sauer's Berkeley School. Its function was associated with forging local or national identities. Both main approaches to landscape, perceptual and occupational, are obviously entwined with each other, and both meanings were apparent even in the European root words from which landscape evolved: the Dutch word *landschap*, the Anglo-Saxon word *landskift*, and the German root word *Landschaft* (Schama, 1995, 10; Calder, 1981, 6).

A further understanding of landscape, related to the latter definition above, but important to our study of national parks, operates in the realm of physical geography. Physical geography distinguishes itself from human geography by its focus on "things of natural origin" as opposed to "things of cultural origin, i.e. created by people". Thus physical geography is concerned with "non-human" or "environmental" landscape as it is manifested in the "physical elements of our world: landforms, soils, rivers, air masses, ecosystems, and so on".[5] This is a positivist, scientific approach that has been central to the notions of landscape used by national parks institutions around the world since their foundation in the late nineteenth century. However, as in other areas of science, its claim to objective "truth" has been disrupted in the postmodern climate, not least by feminist critiques which have questioned the social positioning and gender assumptions of researchers (Keller and Longino, 1996; Rose, 1993). Within human geography, the positivist assumption of an opposition between the observer/ scientist and the observed/ landscape (be it "natural" or "cultural") has itself been disrupted. Human geography concerns itself not only with "things" "created by people" in the landscape but, more fundamentally, how we inhabit the landscape, and how we approach it, represent it and understand it.

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[4] In his aptly titled essay, "Lying about the landscape" Aboriginal activist Gary Lee describes the function of the Australian landscape art tradition as "the theft of indigenous land": "The landscape tradition was overtly developed as a way of describing and consolidating colonial hegemony over Australia." (Lee, 1997, 100-101).

[5] This definition comes from a web-page at the School of Geography at Buffalo University in upper state New York, at:
http://www.geog.buffalo.edu/~naumov/TA/GEO101/Lectures/Lecture1/notes1.html#What%20is

While the art historical approach to landscape as a perceptual experience is explored in the second part of this report, this first section of the report analyses landscape in its geographic context as "a portion of the physical and cultural environment". What kind of *portion* is landscape, and how does it differ, for example, from the concepts of "place", "nature" and "environment"? I think we use the word "landscape" to focus our understanding of the entirety of built or natural environments into manageable themes. We also use the word "landscape" to construct generalisations and relationships between "places" or "sites" otherwise understood as distinct (thus we discuss "coastal landscapes", "urban landscapes" or "goldfields landscapes" to bring together observations about places in different parts of the country or the world). "Landscape" has been distinguished from "place" because of the latter's "'experiential dimension' and association with the idea of belonging" (Higman, 2002, 5 quoting Relph, 1976). You do not have to have experienced landscape or belong to landscape, although this is one way of analysing it. Landscape addresses the multiplicity and relational aspects within places and between places; it constructs place as textual and open to multiple interpretations. In addition, it is increasingly used as a metaphor to describe non-natural and non-built environments, for example, the imagined landscape of memory[6] or the landscape of the body.[7] Ultimately the term landscape could refer to the representation of *anything* with physical or imagined spatial extension.

Winty Calder rightly pointed out that landscape can cover "a whole spectrum of concepts and is uncertain unless the context indicates the intended meaning" (Calder, 1981, 6). Calder offered an outline of the possible different approaches one could take in analysing landscape within human geography, but suggested that it was necessary to obtain a *singular* "understanding of the landscape" by attempting an amalgam of these approaches. Her "total landscape concept" was offered as a way of avoiding the "risk of confusion and misunderstanding when people from different backgrounds attempt to evaluate landscapes, to determine what is good landscape and what is bad" (Calder, 1981, 13). This argument suggesting that landscape can be pinned down once and for all, can be contrasted with the famous essay by D.W. Meinig, "The beholding eye, ten versions of the same scene" (1979). I think Meinig's essay has become a classic precisely because it allowed uncertainty to reign. As Meinig explains in his introduction, if you take a group of people to a lookout and ask everyone to describe what they see and what it means, it will soon be apparent that:

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[6] Maria Pallotta-Chiarolli's essay on migrant access to health services opens with an interesting metaphor by P. Rack: that describes psychotherapy (and by extension, personal memory) as a process of landscape-construction:

> The client is not alone: behind him [her] the practitioner glimpses a crowd of other people-family friends, parents, grandparents, living and dead. Eventually the practitioner cannot see a person sitting in the chair talking to him [her], but a person set in a landscape. It is a distinctive landscape, unique to the individual [with]… some of the milestones and goalposts along the path that the client has trodden to reach his [her] present position, a path that stretches back into the past, into the background of the picture. (P. Rack (1982) *Race Culture and Mental Disorder* London, Tavistock, quoted in Pallotta-Chiarolli, 1996, 78)

[7] There is, for example, an American play with this title by John Guare, an architectural installation pieces addressing the concept (see http://www.arch.rpi.edu/projects/faculty/massie/), and a recent book by David Williams entitled, *Body Shop : Uncovering the Landscape of the Body's Interior* (Channel Four Books, 1998). Higman mentions the human body as "surrounded by its own portable bubble of corporeality that defines personal space or 'body-place'" (Higman, 2002, 5).

> [W]e will not—we cannot—see the same landscape… any landscape is
> composed not only of what lies before our eyes but what lies in our heads
> (Meinig, 1979, 33-34).

Meinig admitted that "ten landscapes do not exhaust the possibilities" (Meinig, 1979, 47), and indeed, none of his approaches mentioned gender. Nonetheless, his variety of approaches is worth outlining because it illustrates the range of traditional modes of analysis of landscape used in human geography. Meinig suggested that people may variously see: landscape as Nature (pristine, untouched by humankind), landscape as Habitat (humanity's home), landscape as Artifact (a showcase for human production), landscape as System (scientific understanding of interrelations), landscape as Problem (polluted or colonised), landscape as Wealth (assigning monetary value to everything), landscape as Ideology (offering clues to the culture's values), landscape as History (a cumulative record of achievement), landscape as Place (a unique site) and landscape as Aesthetic (expressing majesty, harmony or visual pleasure). However Meinig's essay was an important departure from traditional geographic approaches because it failed to privilege any one view: he implied, through his example of the crowd at the lookout, that a layperson's perspective was as valid as a professional's. By blurring the object (landscape)/ subject (viewer) distinction, by not setting up a hierarchy of correctness, and by not attempting to resolve conflicts and contradictions between views, Meinig presented landscape as socially and culturally constructed, and radically uncertain.

Henry David Thoreau understood this 150 years ago:

> It is in vain to dream of a wilderness distant from ourselves. There is none
> such. It is the bog in our brains and bowels, the primitive vigour of Nature in
> us, that inspires that dream. (*Journal* 30 August 1856, cited in Adams and
> Gruetzner, 2000, 10)

The pluralist, relativist approach that stresses the perspective of the onlooker has opened the way for more issues associated with women and gender to be articulated amongst a complexity of new ways of writing about place and landscape. In fact, feminism has become a crucial approach in postmodern human geography, one of a broad range of new culturally divergent perspectives on place, including: multiculturalism (Thompson et al, 1997, Fincher and Jacobs, 1998; Thomas, 2001); racism (Mitchell and Smith, 1990; Mohanram, 1999); homosexuality (Valentine, 1993; Bell, 1991); disability (Butler and Bowlby, 1997; Gleeson, 1999); and creativity (Prince, 1984; Gibson, 2003). In this expansion of its understanding of landscape, human geography is becoming increasingly interdisciplinary, sharing research questions and methods that are also being developed in other fields such as art and architectural history, planning history, literary history, film studies and cultural studies. There is an increasing emphasis on the subjectivity of the viewer/occupant, on how their memories, experiences and social positioning help to mediate their understanding of place. An example of this is offered by Aboriginal academic Marcia Langton:

> Land and landscapes shared by settlers and indigenes are divergently
> imagined… Whereas settlers see an empty wilderness, Aboriginal people see a

busy spiritual landscape, peopled by ancestors and the evidence of their creative feats. (Langton, 2000, 14)

Several influential spatial ideas have also emerged in recent years from the broad expanse of debates that cross disciplinary boundaries and is known as "contemporary theory". These include Michel Foucault's notion of "discourse analysis" and his critique of "the gaze" (personal and institutional) as an exertion of power through space (Foucault, 1980a; Foucault, 1980b), as well as Michel de Certeau's notion of "practices of space" as an alternative to traditional urbanist assumptions of an objective bird's eye overview (Certeau, 1984). A related concern has entailed working through the assertion that "representation constructs reality", that all our perceptions of the world are structured in various types of language, including our perceptions of place, space and landscape, and that there are no unmediated truths. Contemporary theory does not tend to use the term "landscape" but rather, "space" and "place". In everyday speech the two terms can be used interchangeably, but academic usage usually distinguishes "place" as "space" that has been culturally marked.[8] In this report, I use the term "space" to refer to the conventional Euclidean understanding of space as unbounded; "place" to mean "a space with a history" (Carter, 1987, xxiv).

Paul Carter applied much of this theoretical apparatus to offer a new "spatial history" of Australia in *The Road to Botany Bay* (1987). Carter criticised the supposed coherence of conventional history, describing it as a "fabric woven of self-reinforcing illusions" which reduces "space to a stage" with an implied "all seeing spectator" who views the entirety of events as if from a "satellite eye". He condemned this as "imperial history… [whose] primary object is not to understand or to interpret: it is to legitimate". In particular, Carter criticised its reliance on positivism, its tendency to invest its own meanings (its "new paternities") onto "fixed and detachable facts… [such as] actual houses, visible clearings and boats at anchor" rather than attempt to grapple with "the intentions that brought them there… [or] the material uncertainties of lived space and time". Carter questioned the very constitution of space when he pointed out that many academic studies "take it for granted that the newcomers travelled and settled a land *which was already there*" while in actuality, "historically that country remained to be described". Thus he suggests that the traditional distinction that we make between space and place is invalid: space does not precede place (Australia was not *already there* before Europeans travelled to it); rather, space, as much as place, is brought into existence by cultural activity (Australia was produced by the "processes of discovery" and "the act of naming") (Carter, 1987, xx-xxvi, my emphasis).

So how does all this discussion of landscape, space and place help us to understand landscape within the context of the NPWS in general and Hill End in particular? Jill Cowley offered a useful description of "cultural landscapes" as understood by the National Parks Service in the USA:

Cultural landscapes can be thought of as geographic areas that retain evidence of the interactions between people and the land over time. They "include both

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[8] The relationship between these terms is debated. For Michel de Certeau, place is that which is bounded and regulated, while space is that which is "practiced" in everyday use and movement: "Through everyday practices, through use, places are transformed into spaces" (Ferrier, 1990, 46 citing de Certeau, 1984 *The Practice of Everyday Life*).

cultural and natural resources and the wildlife or domestic animals therein" and are "associated with a historic event, activity, or person" or "exhibit other cultural or aesthetic values". Evidence can be tangible (physical elements within the landscape) or intangible (e.g. stories and oral histories that relate to the landscape). Cultural landscapes range in scale from small gardens to large rural areas, and include areas with no visible signs of human modification. (Cowley, 1999, n.p.)

A similarly sophisticated approach to landscape was offered in the NPWS *Cultural Heritage Strategic Research Framework 2001-2005* . Firstly, the framework understood "landscape conservation" as "a holistic approach which INTEGRATES NATURAL, CULTURAL AND COMMUNITY VALUES". It acknowledged "both TRADITIONAL AND CONTEMPORARY ASSOCIATION of Aboriginal people with the environment as well as physical evidence". This landscape approach emphasised the "multiplicity of cultural heritage values (i.e., social, archaeological, architectural, historical), and the principle that communities are the primary determiners of social significance" (NPWS, c.2001, 1, 2, framework's emphasis). Secondly, the policy discussed the way that NPWS has changed its cultural heritage management "from a site-based approach to a landscape approach" (NPWS, c.2001, 4). The NPWS most recent policy thus emphasised landscape as the integration of a complexity of interpretations, including the contextualisation of place within broader frameworks. This contrasted with former approaches that assumed that scientific understandings of geology, flora and fauna alone determined an area's significance, that tended to ignore local understandings of place, and that typically focused on individual sites rather than placing them in their broader social, historical and environmental context. By encouraging a new breadth of approaches to landscape, this new policy encouraged more complex types of analysis that incorporate a plurality of perspectives, and makes explicit recognition of the importance of indigenous meanings and recent local community attitudes.

For the purposes of this report, landscape is thus understood to be a complex representation that examines aspects of natural, built or imagined environments and stresses their relationships to other places and things. This approach is sympathetic with recent shifts in the NPWS' institutional understanding of landscape from being constituted in a singular, physical description of its "natural" properties (usually botanical, zoological and biological characteristics as defined by western scientists). Landscape is now understood in multiple ways by different users and observers and for different audiences, as not only factual but experiential.

Using this definition in relation to our case study, I can analyse Hill End's landscape in a complexity of ways, drawing parallels with other places and themes, for example using Meinig's classifications. Thus Hill End is a small rural town with a struggling local economy typical of many towns in regional Australia (Habitat). It is a remnant of a nineteenth century town with many Anglo-Australian heritage buildings that can be compared with other historic townscapes and heritage buildings produced under the British Empire (History). Its immediate environs have been spectacularly exploited through alluvial and underground mining activities over many decades thus presenting an important example of historic ecological degradation (Problem). Perhaps this is why its natural values have been barely been considered (Nature), an ironic situation for a NPWS site. Its scenery has inspired Australia's artists and craftspeople to create images of local and national importance (Aesthetic). Local

residents have also suggested that Hill End is unique (Place), that is has something special that is felt in the hearts of its local residents: "the strange and supernatural spirit and feeling that exists here and is so well known especially to we, who have lived with it for years" (Prior, 1980: Jack Stewart oral history p3). In order to appreciate the significance of this range of different understandings of Hill End, and especially to develop an understanding of the Hill End landscape as "Gender", let us first examine something of the analyses provided by feminism.

THREE FEMINIST APPROACHES TO GENDER AND LANDSCAPE

To address the complexity of feminist arguments as they may relate to landscape, I am mobilising three feminist analyses developed in my PhD research on Australian historiography (Hanna, 1995; Hanna, 2000a; Hanna, 2000b). These three approaches are signposted by the terms "liberal feminism", "radical/socialist feminism" and "postmodern feminism". All three analyses address both sociological issues and questions of representation. This tripartite approach is inspired by an essay by geographer Louise Johnson, where she interpreted a planning textbook, A.S. Mather's *Land Use*, by presenting three separate examples of feminist analysis (Johnson, 1989).[9] In Johnson's essay, the first mode of feminist analysis focused on sexism or individual acts of discrimination, and I see this approach corresponding with liberal feminism, the predominant form of western feminism over the last couple of centuries. Johnson's second analysis focused on patriarchy and capitalism as systematic structures of oppression, and I link this understanding to radical/socialist feminism, characterising much of the socially challenging, often militant feminism of the 1970s and 1980s. Finally Johnson's third mode of analysis focused on phallocentrism or the means by which language and representation construct and differentiate women and femininity. This approach I associate with postmodern feminism, developing since the mid-1980s.

In my presentation of these three feminist approaches as they relate to gender and landscape, considered separately below, I offer a general explanation of the approach, illustrated with Johnson's use of that approach. I go on to offer a range of other examples from feminist history and geography, with an emphasis on descriptions of national parks research using that approach. I conclude with an analysis of how that approach could be used to enlighten our understanding of the case study landscape of Hill End.

Although this type of categorisation of feminism into different types is common, the details of my organisation are contestable, intellectually and politically.[10] I offer these

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[9] Johnson in turn acknowledged the class teachings of philosopher Elizabeth Grosz for this approach. However I understand that Johnson and Grosz might not necessarily agree with the ways in which I have developed this feminism categorisation.

[10] See for example, Nancy Tuana and Rosemary Tong's (eds) *Feminism and Philosophy* (1995), Louise Johnson's recent overview of feminist geography in Australia, *Placebound* (2000) or the chapter on feminist approaches in Waitt et al, 2000: 83-93. My categorisation is controversial because it conflates the two dominant strands of feminism from the 1970s and 1980s, radical feminism and Marxist/socialist feminism, which are usually represented in opposition to each other. Radical feminism is seen as prioritising "women" as the category of analysis, resulting in outcomes such as separatist communities for women, from which men were barred, while Marxist/socialist feminism prioritised "women and men in their class positioning", resulting in outcomes such as women activists

approaches because I wish to explore some of the different strategies made possible by this variety of feminist thought. Although these feminist approaches sometimes contradict and critique each other, I understand all three to share: a concern with sex/gender as an organising principle, an interest in the revelation of injustice, and the devising of tactics for reform or intervention. The postmodern perspective is the latest development, which provides the theoretical context which allows for this "pluralism of voices and approaches". However, I set out to maintain respect for the integrity and subversive potential of the earlier approaches as well. Each has its own justifications, advantages and logic, which I hope to demonstrate here. Each offers different ways of understanding the relationships between gender and landscape, and different types of institutional reform that might be attempted by an organisation like the NPWS.

The liberal feminist approach

The liberal feminist approach is informed by liberalism's "core belief" in "the importance and autonomy of the individual", as Nancy Tuana and Rosemary Tong explain in their book on feminist philosophy:

> liberals advanced a belief in the natural equality and freedom of human beings and advocated the creation of a social structure that would recognise the uniqueness of individuals and provide them with equality of opportunity. Nevertheless, liberal political theory developed alongside an acceptance of … the patriarchal family, in which wives were subject to their husbands. (Tuana & Tong, 1995, 5)

Liberal feminism has been associated with much of the "second wave" feminist movement starting in the 1960s. They advocated for women's equal rights to education, professional and work opportunities and equal pay for equal work, and they attempted to debunk rationalisations of women's inferiority for some tasks (such as abstract thought or heavy lifting) and superiority for others (such as caring for children) that tended to underlie arguments for rigid sex-roles. Much liberal feminist energy has been expended in identifying and reforming "sexist" laws and institutional practices that discriminated against women. Perhaps because liberalism is a dominant political ideology underlying democracy in Australia, liberal feminism has frequently met with support from established political and social institutions and has been relatively successful in carrying out many of its aims, such as increasing women's access to the public domain of education and paid work, introducing legislation outlawing discrimination against women, reforming laws that condoned violence against women and establishing welfare institutions for women such as refuges.

Liberal feminism typically emphasises the establishment of empirical "facts" as being able to help us understand current society and past events, paralleling the Enlightenment's faith in positivist scientific methods of establishing facts about the physical universe. It typically attempts to generate new facts about women as an *addition* to existing accounts in the hopes of simply making the established knowledges "more accurate and more comprehensive"(Allen, 1986, 174). Thus liberal feminism assumes that women were somehow accidentally omitted, and attempts to

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and women's issues becoming more prominent in established left-right political battles. In retrospect I see both strands as similar because of their structural sociological focus, their radical and imaginative critiques of the status quo, and the frequent utopianism of their proposed solutions.

correct this admission, without offering explanations for why it may have occurred in the first place.

One of the first tasks undertaken by liberal feminist academics during the 1970s and 1980s was to document the surprising extent of the absence of women in history, geography and other disciplines. Louise Johnson's liberal feminist voice pointed this out and discussed some likely consequences in her critique of Mather's "typical" textbook:

> The greatest gap in Mather's book is the total absence of any reference to the word, "woman". It is not just a semantic point but one of enormous importance to future planners… [If women] are not addressed *explicitly* in a book on land use, then they remain invisible, unacknowledged and beyond the caring of those empowered to allocate resources, shape neighbourhoods, transport systems and so on. (Johnson, 1989, 87)

A similar point was made about human geography in general by Monk and Hanson in their classic 1982 essay, "On not excluding half the human in all human geography":

> [T]he dearth of attention to women's issues, explicit or implicit, plagues all branches of human geography… [T]hrough omission of any consideration of women, most geographic research has been passively, often inadvertently, sexist. (Monk & Hanson, 1982, 11)

In history, there was also recognition of the absence of women in the discipline:

> The literature of modernity describes the experience of men (Wolff, 1985:37).

> Women do not appear in most Australian histories in any important way (Curthoys, 1988, 5).

> [Australian landscape art has a] long tradition that has tended to place women outside its concerns. (Ewington, c.1985, n.p.).

Liberal feminists have made significant efforts to develop new information about the lives, struggles and achievements of both outstanding and ordinary women, in Australia and internationally, resulting in a burgeoning liberal feminist literature in both history and geography. One focus of liberal feminist research has been the attempt to recover stories of women's experience in parallel with the male individuals celebrated in traditional history and geography. Thus much early women's history in Australia focused on the recovery of "women pioneers", as in Eve Pownall's *Memorial to the Pioneer Women of Australia* and Flora Eldershaw's *The Peaceful Army*, both published in 1938. Liberal feminist historiography has sought out the stories of women explorers (Middleton, 1982; Birkett, 1989, Domosh, 1991) and mountaineers (Irwin, 2000) to women professionals (De Vries, 1998; Willis and Hanna, 2001). Liberal feminist geography has described women's experiences of space, such as their access to public transport (Evan, 1984; Lang, 1992; Johnson, 1994) and their use of shopping centres (Winchester, 1992). Many studies have explored women's experience of the home, historic and contemporary, seen as a major site of women's experience of modernity (Reiger, 1985; Johnson, 1994; Ferber

et al, 1994; Richards, 1990, Hanna, 1991). The home of course was also a major site of employment of women as domestic servants in colonial Australia, "the leading job in paid employment for women" (Higman, 2002, xii; Kingston, 1975). Consideration of the home has also stretched to private gardens, historic and contemporary (Hughes, 1994; Martin, 1999, 2000, 2001; Malor, 1996). There is a substantial literature on women's experience of paid work (Game and Pringle, 1983; Watson, 1994), mostly urban but some on women's rural work (Burr, 1997), women's regional associations (Teather, 1992) and women's volunteer work (Little, 1997). There is a growing literature on the gender implications of public sculptures and monuments in the environment, particularly associated with war memorials (Bulbeck, 1991; Bulbeck, 1992; Speck, 1996, Graves, 2002). Finally, more of the traditional and contemporary roles played by Aboriginal women in the Australian landscape are now being acknowledged (Bell, 1983, Nicholls and North, 2001).

Of the questions asked in commissioning this report, none in the brief can be effectively analysed in the liberal feminist mode. However all the questions mentioned in informal discussion can be addressed: "How are women presented in our national parks?"; "How do women experience our national parks as visitors?" and "How do women employees experience NPWS employment?" There are two main ways that liberal feminist research has examined the experiences of women in national parks: by discussing the historic and contemporary experiences of visitors to national parks and by discussing women employees of national parks institutions.

Polly Kaufman's study of women in the American National Parks Service examined both issues, but used a radical/ socialist feminist analysis to discuss the women employees (thus that aspect of the book is examined in the next section of this report). However she used a liberal feminist approach to describe the early European women who visited the places that have since become national parks. This chapter, "Travellers and explorers" is exemplary in its discussion of some of the experiences of individual women who braved the nineteenth century wildernesses of Yosemite, Yellowstone and the Grand Canyon. Kaufman described the special clothes they developed (such as the "Yosemite suit" with long bloomers, used for horse-riding), and some of their writings, artworks and adventures. She mentioned the women in the family that opened the first hotel in Yosemite in 1864, and the first white children who were born there. She noted the writings by Sara Jane Lippincott that warned other women of the discomfort and difficulties of Yosemite but also described the experience of nature as "sublime". She acknowledged Helen Hunt Jackson for her concern with the indigenous heritage of Yosemite, and for trying to convince people to use indigenous place names. There were also the three sisters who climbed to Yosemite's highest peak in 1896 and slid down the glacier in one minute, and a waitress who was photographed pirouetting on Overhanging Rock in 1900, creating an image that became a best-selling postcard (Kaufman, 1996, 5-10). Kaufman also showed that mountaineering clubs typically began to accept women members from the 1870, leading to white women being involved in the European naming of places and plants:

> A sense of ownership of the landscape developed in the club women as they
> learned and even helped name plants, mountains, and lakes. A few Sierra Club
> men named physical features after their wives, following the traditional

gendered symbolism of naming lakes with women's first names and mountains with men's last names. (Kaufman, 1996, 22)

Kaufman also pointed out that by the early twentieth century, white women were lobbying for the protection of places such as the indigenous Anasazi cliff dwellings at Mesa Verde, Colorado. She argued that they were not just seeking "personal inspiration and spiritual renewal from the landscape; they had become activists who were ready to demand the preservation of spaces they had come to claim as their own" (Kaufman, 1996, 26). Kaufman thus demonstrated that the early women visitors to American national park sites were worthy of our historical attention. They were brave and cheerful adventurers, who adjusted feminine clothing constraints in ways that maintained their respectability but allowed freer movement, who joined white men in the privileges of colonisation (such as the sense of ownership in mountaineering, reinforced by renaming places), and who lobbied for the protection of indigenous heritage. They were not only present in the landscape but engaged, alongside white men, in making it their own. Thus the liberal feminist side of Kaufman's study posited an historical equality for women actors alongside men, although there is awkwardness in its failure to acknowledge the indigenous women displaced by colonisation.

I have found no similar studies of early women visitors to national parks in Australia, although I am sure that such studies will be undertaken and that similarly brave white women in Australia will be found to have helped colonise the Australian wilderness and to have lobbied for its protection.[11] A related study on this topic of women pioneers in the Australian landscape is Sally Irwin's study of Australian mountaineer Freda du Faur, although it shows that most of du Faur's adventures took place in New Zealand. Irwin does note that du Faur's father was instrumental in establishing the Kuring'ai National Park, and that his daughter cut her bushwalking teeth in that park (Irwin, 2000). Work remains to be done on other Australian women bushwalkers, perhaps following on from the Blue Mountains bushwalking track study, which documented many early women bushwalkers (Smith, 1999). James Weirick has also noted the environmental activism of Thistle Stead, Bessie Rischbieth and Marie Byles, and to the pioneering botanical science work by Ilma Pigeon and Rica Ericsen (Hanna interview with Weirick, 2003).

Meanwhile, there is just one research project in a primarily liberal feminist mode that has discussed the experiences and career opportunities of women *employees* in Australian national parks.[12] Black and Davidson's reports, *Women in National Parks*, phase 1 and phase 2, were well researched and executed. The phase 1 report explained the context for its commissioning:

> In Australian national park agencies women in field positions are in the minority, have low retention rates and few progress to managerial positions…

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[11] Indeed, this report recommends that the NPWS commission a study to fill this obvious gap in the historical record.

[12] There is also Lewis and Schaffer's study, "Women in environmental sciences" (c.1989) but it is limited in its relevance by its age and by being based on a mail survey of 218 questionnaires returned by a student cohort from a South Australian course in natural resource management. Thus its findings address the educational institution more than the national parks workplace, and in any case are well summarised by Black and Davidson.

> The number of women in paid employment has been significantly increasing, but issues of gender stereotyped jobs, different levels of pay, higher status associated with male positions, low number of women in senior positions and harassment and discrimination in the workplace continue to exist. (Black and Davidson, 1996, 1)

This report focused on establishing "the current number, status and role of women and men field staff in all Australian park and wildlife services". It found that while women constitute approximately 50% of the Australian population, 43% of the paid workforce and 40% of graduates in some natural resource management courses, they constituted less than one third of employees in natural resource management agencies across Australia. Moreover, within those agencies the majority of women were segregated into administrative and support positions in the lower pay brackets, and they constituted the majority of casual and part-time employees (Black and Davidson, 1996, 16-17). Although the number of women employed as rangers had doubled in the ACT, South Australia, Queensland and Victoria in the eight years prior to this report, the number of women employed as rangers in NSW, Western Australia and Tasmania had remained virtually unchanged. In NSW, women were just 22% of all rangers and only 10% of senior rangers, with none at the level of District Manager (Black and Davidson, 1996, 18). The authors suggested that the issue was not just one of justice for women but that the organisations were impoverished by women's lack of career progress:

> Women are not in decision making positions and so are less able to influence the direction of the agency and management approaches. We argue that there is a benefit, if not a need, to have a diversity of perspectives in management. Evidence suggests that women have a different approach to environmental issues (Brown and Switzer, 1991; Curtis et al, 1994). Natural resource agencies should be taking advantage of these different approaches.

Black and Davidson also discussed a significant aberration within these statistics, that women comprised about 30% of senior executive staff positions in the NSW NPWS. They put this down to the fact that women in executive positions in NSW "have been recruited from outside the agency, as opposed to having progressed through the organisation". They suggested that perhaps women should be recruited into all levels of the organisation from outside, "rather than wait for a 'filter through' process to occur" (Black and Davidson, 1996, 19). The report is an exemplary piece of liberal feminist research in that it relies on facts and figures to establish the problem that women experience inequality in the public domain of waged work, and in that it offers suggestions for reform within this system. It doesn't attempt to explain *why* women's representation in these organisations is unequal, or *why* one strategy to reverse this might be to recruit outsiders. Across government there have been significant changes to policy since Black & Davidson's 1996 report. Yet there has been no recent qualitative research which measures the impact of such changes on female staff working for the NSW NPWS.

In conclusion, what strategies and insights can liberal feminism offer to our understanding of landscape and gender in the case study of Hill End? In relation to Hill End history, I would first analyse the established histories and heritage representations to see how women are represented in comparison with men. I would soon discover that women are largely left out of the accounts of the town's history (Mayne, forthcoming). Secondly, I would attempt to develop knowledge about women's history in Hill End by promoting the life stories of outstanding women.

individuals living in the area. I would tend to rely on the conventional documentary modes of gathering information, and seek to display my findings alongside the established displays describing the history of men in the town. This liberal feminist strategy has in fact already been enacted to a minimal level, in so far as there is a display in the NPWS Visitor Centre in Hill End that pictures "Mrs Harriet Beard". This display describes her contribution to town life as an heroic pioneer who was active in the public life of the town:

> Harriet Beard overcame the disadvantage of a ne'er-do-well alcoholic husband to reap a fortune as a storekeeper, hotelier and mining investor. Well known for her generosity, she "grubb-staked" many penniless miners from her store, requiring as security only their promise to make an honest effort. Harriet Beard left Hill End, to retire to her newly built mansion at Bowral. Before leaving the township she burnt her account books, thus cancelling all debts owing to her from down-at-luck miners. The remaining stock in her store was distributed among the needy. She was long remembered as one of the most remarkable and best-liked women of her day. A woman who preferred action to words. (NPWS Visitor Centre display, Hill End, May 2003)

There are many more prominent and interesting women citizens deserving such historical attention, including: Glendora Lawson, midwife; Betty Goodwin, shopkeeper and midwife; Elizabeth Evans, hospital matron, Hannah Marshall, Craigmoor spinster and Maria Anderson, milk woman (Prior, 1980; Hanna interviews with locals, 2003). Finally, in its focus on employment, liberal feminism seeks equal opportunity, usually measured by the equal representation of women in paid employment. This latter issue would require ensuring a balanced representation of men and women NPWS employees at all levels in Hill End and, ideally, within the NPWS generally.

The radical/socialist feminist approach

In radical/socialist feminism, the emphasis has been on understanding and addressing gender and class struggle and oppression (Eisenstein, 1984). Transposing analytical elements from the Marxist framework, radical/ socialist feminism has critiqued western society as structurally exploitative. Women are not just unequal to men, they are systematically dominated by men. In this approach, the empirical measurement and attempted reform of isolated sexist acts or policies undertaken by liberal feminism is considered insufficient. These are simply the surface appearances of inequality, indicative of the underlying social structures of capitalism and patriarchy, as Elizabeth Grosz explained:

> Rather than consisting of visible acts, patriarchy is a latent system which organises, makes possible, and gives support to, individual acts of sexism. It provides the context, support and meaning for these empirical acts. Even if sexism were removed, it would not eliminate women's oppression. (Grosz, c.1980s)

Radical/socialist feminism is less interested than liberal feminism in "individuals". The life-stories of individual women stressed in liberal feminist studies are typically those of middle-class and wealthy women, while the life experiences and struggles of

working-class women have been neglected. Radical/ socialist feminism is more interested in women's group experiences, and in their feminist knowledges and networks. Rather than examining individuals, this approach tries to understand how patriarchy and capitalism influence the processes of socialisation of the sexes (males and females), into the genders (masculine and feminine). Where "sex" is assumed to be a biological fact, "gender" is understood to be "the multiple and contradictory meanings attributed to sexual difference" (Scott, 1988, 25). Gender is the social framework within which males and females are socialised into distinct ways of thinking, and into restricted social roles understood to oppress or disfigure women (Rubin, 1975), such as the "feminine mystique" (Friedan ,1963) or the "female eunuch" (Greer,1971). Alternatively, radical/ socialist feminism has also interpreted femininity as superior because of women's hard-learned capacity for nurturing, listening and caring (Chodorow, 1995; Kennedy, 1981).

Radical/socialist feminism has analysed the interactive effects of patriarchy and capitalism as ensuring that women are disadvantaged in their access to all aspects of public life and in many aspects of private life as well. Radical/ socialist feminists also sought *explanations* for why women have been constrained in their access to public life and privilege. They focused on the fact that women carry the social responsibility of "reproduction", in the Marxist sense, referring not only to the biological role of bearing children, but to the associated gendered role of raising children and caring for family members on a day-to-day basis so that they are fit for school and work. They argued that throughout western history women's ability to bear children has been used to identify them with nature, to their detriment (Ortner, 1974). Radical/ socialist feminists developed a social and economic theory analysing the western ideal of such differentiated roles for men and women, describing it as the "sexual division of labour": that men work outside the home, in the public sphere, "producing" goods and services for wages, while women work inside the home, in the private sphere, "reproducing" the family for love. Radical/ socialist feminists have criticised many aspects of this "ideal". Marilyn Waring's work critiqued the ways that men's work is considered primary to economic production while women's work is considered secondary (for example, housework and home-based child-rearing are still not counted in any national General Domestic Product measures) (Waring, 1988). Under the traditional sexual division of labour, men are the winners, both in terms of controlling public and private life, and in their power to represent their history and geography as natural and desirable. In response to this situation, radical/socialist feminism has argued that altogether new modes of social organisation are required, new ways of thinking, outside of the traditional, oppressive dualisms such as masculine/ feminine; nature/ culture, public/ private.

Louise Johnson provides a good demonstration of the radical/ socialist approach in her analysis of A.S. Mather's planning textbook as patriarchal and capitalist. Johnson discussed the apparently trivial point that Mather thanked male colleagues for intellectual help but he thanked a female assistant for typing and tidying his manuscript. In noting this as indicative of the wider societal sexual division of labour, Johnson observed that indeed, academic production often depends upon "the army of women who read, correct and type the manuscripts, and those who do the statistical, field or documentary hack work":

> [O]ne key support of patriarchal knowledge creation [is] namely, its indebtedness to the labour of women; as those who would do the shopping, cleaning and child caring, not to mention the cooking and emotional caring of the stressed-out, hard-working male academic. Such is one answer to an earlier question on male predominance and "success" in the academy… The feminist analysis is not just about marking out women as a neglected category, but about forcing men to recognise their place and their power as a sex, to challenge the universalising and prioritising of male experience... (Johnson, 1989, 87-88)

Johnson also argued that Mather was not just a male author enjoying male privileges conferred by the sexual division of labour, but that Mather also adopted a *masculine subjectivity* in his intellectual work, in his understanding of the landscape. Johnson criticised Mather's assumption of the inevitability of "men as makers of land use, culture and wealth", that this naturalised the western dichotomy of man-versus-nature. Throughout western history Mather could imagine only "a shifting balance between dominion and stewardship". By contrast, Johnson pointed to Carolyn Merchant's eco-feminist approach, which sees the man / nature dichotomy not as inevitable but as a sad defeat: "the triumph of a masculine principle of separation over feminine principles of unity" (Johnson, 1989, 89).

Merchant's argued that "male power over women" paralleled "the separation from and dominion of men over nature" (Johnson, 1989, 89). I understand eco-feminism to form part of the socialist/feminist approach because of such structuralist thinking that draws parallels between different social structures of hierarchical exploitation, and because of its call for wholesale social change. Thus Ynestra King has argued that:

> The ecological crisis is related to the systems of hatred of all that is natural by the white, male western formulators of philosophy, technology and death inventions. I contend that the systematic denigration of working-class people and people of colour, women, and animals are all connected to the basic dualism that lies at the root of western civilisation. But this mindset of hierarchy arises within human society, its material roots in the domination of human by human, particularly women by men… the goals of feminism, ecology and movements against racism and for the survival of indigenous peoples are internally related; they must be understood and pursued together in a worldwide, genuinely pro-life, movement. (King, 1995, 353)

In Australia, Valerie Brown and Margaret Switzer prepared a more modest but politically strategic eco-feminist discussion paper for the Federal Labor Government (Brown and Switzer, 1991). The paper partook of liberal feminist techniques in so far as it avoided talk of hatred, domination or exploitation between the sexes and relied on empirical evidence rather than theoretical assertions. Nonetheless Brown and Switzer stressed the importance of recognising women's difference from rather than their similarity to men in order to argue firstly, that women have a fundamentally different relationship to the economic system in Australia from men (and thus require separate consideration by environmental policy-makers):

> Taking an overview of women's and men's uses of the environment, it emerges that most women and men spend their working days in different

physical environments—working mainly in different industries, and in different sectors within an industry. They have different levels of income, and so different experiences of resource use and resource management. Their areas of influence on and their experience of the environment differ as a consequence of different occupations and levels of responsibility. Risks of illness differ. The extent and nature of physical and social responsibility for others is also different, both in the paid work and household settings. (Brown and Switzer, 1991, 4)

They concluded that women's "uses of the environment prove to be sufficiently different from those of men to represent a distinctive *habitat*" (Brown and Switzer, 1991, iv, 4). Secondly, Brown and Switzer argued that women have a greater concern for environmental issues (and thus should be more encouraged to become participants in government policy-making). Again avoiding controversial explanations for these differences, they present evidence for the contention that "Australian women take environmental issues very seriously":

> Over 200 local community groups have been formed with the purpose of achieving environmentally sustainable household management. More women than men belong to environmental and conservation organisations. National surveys indicate that, of those under 50 years, more women than men are concerned about environmental issues (ABS Cat.4115)… A key informant study of 300 women working on environmental issues in research, teaching and conservation found that women placed considerable emphasis on their capacity to provide practical action, education, and an independent perspective on ecological sustainability. Women as a group also gave high priority to environmental issues being considered as part of an integrated system rather than as isolated problems. (Brown and Switzer, 1991, 11, 12)

Many of the questions formally posed in the brief for this report fall into the radical/ socialist approach in their assumption that men and women have differently gendered interactions with the world:

> How have mainstream or dominant images of Australian landscape influenced women? Do women perceive and engage with landscape differently from men? How do male roles across landscape shape or influence women's roles? What role does landscape play in identity making for women? Do different landscapes offer women different forms of identities? How do women's lives become visible across landscape? (NPWS, 2002a)

Liberal feminists can't really answer such questions because they would assume that individual differences in background, education and life-choices would invalidate any such generalisations about men and women. Postmodern feminists also would have problems with the generalisations implied in these questions but less because of questions of women's individuality than because of their insistence on the heterogeneity of women as a complexity of social groups. The radical/ socialist feminist approach is more willing to broach such structuralist questions about the cultural effects of gender differentiation and to suggest more generalising and often quite confronting explanations. Nonetheless some of the questions posed here have

not been addressed in any of the research I have encountered in the literature search for this report. Meanwhile, several others are discussed below.

Do women perceive and engage with landscape differently from men?
This question involves the assumption that despite all the conceivable differences amongst women in terms of their age, ethnic background, education and personal experience, to name just a few measures of social difference, that all women share an common, "essential" perspective on the world in general and landscape in particular, different from men's. Much radical-socialist feminist research has been conducted in line with this essentialist approach.

Monk and Norwood's *The Desert is No Lady* argued that women's responses to the desert in the south-western United States, while varied amongst themselves, were also noticeably different from the dominant male responses represented in American history and geography. Annette Kolodny's *The Land Before Her* (1984), suggested that the gendered activities of pioneering women in the American west focused on establishing a home, garden and community, and that this generated a very different relationship with the landscape for pioneering women from that of pioneering men, which had focused on exploiting the wilderness.

In the Australian context, Kay Schaffer has also suggested that leading women writers have expressed their relationships with the landscape in fundamentally different ways from that of men:

> Women writers… have registered conquest of the land as an alien concept…
> A resistance of the dominant masculine desire for mastery over the land marks
> their writings… Novels like Katherine Susannah Pritchard's *Coonardoo*
> (1929), Eleanor Dark's *The Timeless Land* (1941), and Mary Durack's *Keep
> Him My Country* (1955), for example, despite differences in ideological
> perspectives, all depict the land as an enduring, maternal presence destroyed
> through the white man's attempts at conquest... The fiction written by these
> female novelists reconstructs the battle in terms of a tragedy rather than a
> victory of white presence. (Schaffer, 1988, 103, 106-107)

Elaine Lindsay has argued that whereas Australian male writers, artists and film-makers "seem to be fixated on the desert as the key to national identity", women seem to have "been significantly less inclined to look to the desert for their geographical and metaphorical bearings" (Lindsay, 2000, 21, fn 71). Her study of spirituality in Australian women's literature brought her to the conclusion that:

> Women find it possible to access the divine wherever they are, in their houses
> and gardens, in the company of friends or family, or in the act of creation.
> Unlike those men enamoured of Desert Spirituality, they do not have to go on
> long and painful journeys by themselves… Australian women's spirituality
> will have achieved its potential when the map of Australia's sacred places has
> been redrawn; when people work with, rather than against, nature and the
> land… (Lindsay, 2000, 278, 280)

Delys Bird also argued that colonial Australian women's writings "offered a different perception of the landscape":

Constructed from a female space, using what are considered peculiarly feminine forms, colonial women's writing allow for… an alternative to the male manipulation of the environment, enacting a response potentially less destructive than is the familiar pattern of fear and fascination, threat and desire that structures those official male accounts of the Australian landscape… As the women plant and milk, churn and sketch, the negotiate a knowledge of the details and nature of the land which is different from a typically masculine, imperialist, exploitative relationship with the landscape. Women gain control too, of course, but as they familiarise and accommodate to the new environment they respond to *its* difference, discovering within it elements that enable a sometimes perverse liberation. (Bird, 1989, 2, 15, Bird's emphasis)

In *Australian Women Artists* (1980), Janine Burke also suggested that women artists had produced quite different representations of the Australian landscape from men artists. Burke suggested that women "drew the very stuff of art from what was closest to them—the immediate rural and domestic feeling of their lives". Less convincingly perhaps, she also contended that women's exclusion from the formal art schools meant they were free to record "the new land with a naïve delight… unencumbered by a romantic vision" and "free of the European conventions in dealing with the landscape" (Burke, 1980, 13, quoted in Bird, 1989, 18).

An alternative way of examining this question of differences between women and men's perception of and engagement with landscape, is to attempt an empirical comparison of women and men's responses to visual images of landscapes. The Australian Heritage Commission has sponsored several conferences attempting to codify an appropriate criteria for visual landscape assessment, which, in theory at least, could include gender (Ramsay and Paraskevopoulos, 1994; Johnston, 2002). Richard Lamb has developed approaches for trying to measure people's responses to visual images of landscapes under controlled conditions, however he has not measured differences between men and women in the responses (Lamb, 1994).[13] There however are significant methodological, conceptual and political problems with this empirical approach.[14]

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[13] The only reference I have found to such a study is by a Canadian postgraduate student, Xue Pye, who wrote a Master's thesis entitled, "Understanding group differences in assessment of landscape values" at the University of Guelph with adviser Cecelia Paine, but I haven't been able to access it to read it.

[14] Professor James Weirick has outlined some of the advantages and difficulties of this approach in an helpful explanation forwarded to me by email:

"Several problems emerged in Australia and overseas:

(1) after initial enthusiasm, doubts were raised about the methods which were based on professional judgment - i.e. as an edifice built upon "elite", unrepresentative values;

(2) establishing a defensible basis for measuring more representative "community values" absorbed a lot of time and effort, with generally predictable results, i.e., it was found most people (across cultures) liked "natural" scenes, water in the landscape and no buildings;

(3) an exclusive focus on "scenic value" tended to become reductive, the measurable parts never seemed to capture the quality of the whole;

(4) "scenic value" measures also tended to absorb and mask cultural /ecological values, with political consequences in the big environmental debates, such as clear-felling old growth forests (the Victorian VMS, based on major viewsheds, was pilloried as a device to put forest operations out of sight, out of mind);

(5) moving from a research program to an operational planning/management system proved exceptionally difficult on a number of levels, from data collection and data management, to

How do women's lives become visible across landscape? There would seem to be several radical/ socialist feminist ways of approaching this question. One way is to emphasise women's close historical identification with the home, and to ask how such domestic aspects of western culture are visible in landscapes. This approach is used in the analysis of images of Hill End in Section 2 of this report.

This approach was also apparent in one of the arguments forwarded in *The Road to Botany Bay* (1987), where Paul Carter critiqued the masculine myth of the "nomadic bushman" pioneer. This myth, understood to have been formulated in Russell Ward's *The Australian Legend* (1966), has typically excluded recognition of women's presence in the bush, and minimised the significance of rural home-life in general. Drawing on research by Patrick Morgan in Victoria, Carter argued that far from being nomadic bushmen, the first white settlers in Gippsland were typically business-oriented "family men", and that their wives were "the bush historians". Moreover, Carter (and Morgan) compared the cultural background of selectors with that of suburbanites, and found these to be much closer than is usually assumed: in their shared "middle class values… their ambition to be respectable, to achieve security and a stake in property" (Carter, 1987, 278). Carter quoted Morgan's assertion:

> The detached, self-owned house on its quarter–acre block, surrounded by its high paling fence, is an urban memory of the country farm. The emphasis on being independent and self-contained is common to both. [15]

This argument would seem to hold much potential for expanding the visibility of women's lives across landscape, allowing women to enter history as actors (as pioneering selector's wives), as authors (as bush historians), and as central to a domestic culture that characterises both farming life and suburbia.

An alternative way of answering the question of the visibility of women's lives across landscape is to point to the relative *invisibility* of women's lives across the landscape, but to argue that this very invisibility is important. Several feminist researchers have emphasised how women's work historically has been "process-oriented" (such as raising children, cooking meals, washing clothes) rather than "product-oriented" (such as building a house, mining for gold, creating documents). This is a challenging problem for feminists attempting to display heritage that recognises women's contributions to history (Johnston, 1993). As Miranda Morris argued:

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replicability, defensibility, flexibility etc… it must be acknowledged that twenty years ago, part of the difficulty…was due to the primitive status of affordable GIS technology..."

Weirick concluded: "I still think visual assessment is important, and must be acknowledged in any study of the Australian coast. My own view, would be to link it very strongly to

i) "landscape ecology", i.e. the spatial patterning of ecosystems;
ii) cultural landscapes i.e. the pattern and traces of human occupation; and
iii) aesthetic value - the latter frankly acknowledged as an expression of informed professional judgment."

An alternative form of critique of this approach is offered in a web-page presented by the renowned Russian conceptual artists, Vitaly Komar and Alex Melamid (http://www.diacenter.org/km/). Komar and Melamid present "the most wanted paintings" and "the least wanted paintings" in each of 14 countries (unfortunately not including Australia), based on their interpretations of professional market research surveys of aesthetic preferences and taste with ludicrously amusing results.

[15] Here Carter quotes an "unpublished manuscript" by Patrick Morgan, but also in this passage cites Morgan's 1983 essay "Forgotten in the fertile crescent" *Quadrant* November.

Women have left fewer scars or monuments in the landscape. In celebrating our heritage it is important that we value those who have trodden softly. (Morris, 1999, 18)

Oral history has been advocated by radical/ socialist feminism as a crucial technique for obtaining historical information where there are few material remains and little documentary evidence of the ways that women have lived (Gluck and Patai, 1991; Dunn, 2000). Oral history offers a way of understanding history from the perspectives of people who are typically otherwise disempowered, who may be less literate, less educated or less confident in articulating their world views in public forums. It has been argued that oral history enables a relatively "democratic" mode of information collection from a much broader population base, although it can be abused, and requires careful ethical management (Shopes, 1994).

Much of Polly Kaufman's *National Parks and the Woman's Voice* can be seen as falling into the radical/socialist feminist approach, firstly because it made extensive use of oral history rather than traditional documentary sources of information. It drew on a staggering 500 oral history interviews with women employees (and "wives" of employees), including 140 interviews gathered in the 1970s by Dorothy Huyck. Secondly, it critiqued the National Parks Service not merely on the basis of unequal treatment of men and women employees, but for its historical roots in the military, which was seen to result in a masculinised workplace culture. Finally, Kaufman suggested not merely that women employees were the equal of men but that they brought different (and often superior) feminine values to the service:

Women's socialisation as nurturers and carriers of culture, their smaller size, and their outsider status contributed to changes they made as Park Service employees. Women brought new interpretations to battlefields, where they emphasised the cost, not the tactics of war; to visitor protection where they used "voice judo" as opposed to confrontation; to controversial historic space where they present "the other side". Women interpreters were instrumental in bringing the significance of their own racial and ethnic cultures to parks and in preserving cultural landscapes in natural parks. They introduced women's history in more than one hundred parks. Women maintenance workers mitigated development in parks by finding less intrusive methods than wholesale bulldozing in making landscape changes. Women trained in resource management reintroduced such lost species as Kemp's ridley sea turtle and the swift fox. A few Park Service women sacrificed their careers when they spoke out against outside interests whose goals threatened the integrity of existing national parks. (Kaufman, 1996, xv)

Black and Davidson's study of Australian women employees in national parks, although mostly liberal feminist in its assumptions and methodology, also proffered a radical/ socialist feminist way of understanding women's generally less "successful" career paths, implying a critique of the liberal feminist solutions typically proffered in EEO. They suggested that women employees might have different goals and aspirations from their male colleagues:

Women should not be obliged to fill positions which they see as undesirable and meaningless. We wonder therefore if the pattern of women's employment brings into question the masculine culture of a workplace but also the systematic way we define success and progress (arguably as masculine). If from a base-level ranger situation women *choose* not to move upwards, for whatever reasons—lifestyle, family, the nature of the work—then aspiring to 50/50 numbers is unrealistic and not effective. Equal opportunity policies are based on the premise that the agency has the ability to modify is own structures to enhance women's opportunities, but we wish to point out that "opportunity" is not necessarily senior management or upward movement and perhaps we need to review our concept of "success" (Black and Davidson, 1996, 19)

Jeannette Hope's essay discussing the difficulties faced by women archaeologists in the NPSW also combined a thorough (liberal feminist) statistical analysis of men's and women's employment figures with a more theorised (radical-socialist feminist) analysis of institutionalised problems. From her experience as a senior manager there, she identified problems such as a "masculine" and "macho" work culture, a high incidence of complaints of harassment and a tendency to be "competitive and resistant to change" (Hope, 1993, 182). She was particularly perturbed by the marginalisation of cultural heritage work, which was associated with women, relative to the importance placed upon natural heritage work, which was associated with men.

In conclusion, how can the radical/socialist approach be applied in analysing landscape and gender in the case study town of Hill End? Whereas the liberal feminist approach concentrated its heritage questions on individual women pioneers and its contemporary analyses on the conditions of women's employment, in my radical/ socialist feminist approach I would be more interested in broader class issues, and would seek out the "black armband" issues of social struggle between historic groups as the "real" meaning that should be drawn out of landscape. If, as Margaret Anderson argued persuasively (1993), Australian heritage practice has typically whitewashed past gender struggles and repressed recognition of women's contributions, what alternative approaches are possible? I would collate and transcribe all the oral histories that have already been produced with residents (Marjorie Prior's collection, 1980, shows how even testimonies from men are full of respectful stories about women's work and struggles). I would publish an inexpensive and easily read historical account of the town derived from this source. If possible, I would also engage in further oral history research, including documenting images and objects valued by the locals. I would promote the development of house museum displays in local residences, such as *Beyer's Cottage* and *Craigmoor*, that showed different aspects of women's lives in the town (working-class and middle-class, different types of domestic work, from different eras). I would consider how to broach painful or controversial issues that were, nonetheless, crucial to many women's experiences, such as poverty, domestic violence, infant death, suicide, extra-marital affairs, brothels, gambling, alcoholism, and also how to display crucial private issues experienced by women, such as childbirth, childrearing, spirituality and caring for unwell family members. At the organisational level of the NPWS, as a radical/ socialist feminist I would acknowledge the history of dispute and misunderstanding between the NPWS and some sections of the local community (Mayne, forthcoming; Prior, 1980). In collaboration with town representatives, I would attempt to generate

conditions that would be amenable to a more harmonious future. Some positive steps have been taken in this direction with the recent residential establishment of a park ranger and his family in the Hill End township.

The postmodern feminist approach

Postmodern feminism has been somewhat more dispersed than liberal or radical/socialist feminism, much more *slippery* as a term and as a practice. If the spirit of the modern age was "progress", the spirit of the postmodernism has been "uncertainty", even uncertainty about the term "postmodern" itself (Lyotard, 1984; Jameson, 1984; Nicholson, 1990; Deutsche , 1991). In their *Introduction to Human Geography*, Waitt et al explained postmodern feminism as a reaction against socialist feminism's dependence upon "a unitary category of woman" and its inability to "adequately appreciate the diversity of gender experience for different women":

> Much of feminism had been ethnocentric—dealing largely with the concerns of white, middle-class, heterosexual women. The very different experiences of women of colour, or of working-class women, had been largely ignored… the "missing sisters" disrupted assumptions about gender unity, and demanded that their experiences and ideas be recognised within, and that they transform mainstream feminisms. (Waitt et al, 2000, 90-91)

In ignoring indigenous women, women of colour, and women who were poor, disabled or non-English speaking, earlier feminist geography approaches had also effectively ignored the many landscapes associated with them. As a result, most earlier feminist generalisations about "women's" relationships to the landscape could be seen to be inherently flawed. It was obvious that Kaufman's study of American national parks had failed to consider thousands of years of occupation by indigenous women (Kaufman, 1996), that Bird's analysis of gender and landscape had failed to note any interactions between white and Aboriginal women (Bird, 1989, 19, fn 76), and that my own semiotic study of women in public housing in Green Valley had avoided learning about the opinions of current working class residents (Hanna, 1991). This didn't actually invalidate these studies, but emphasised their partiality, and indeed the partiality and impossibility of objectivity in any research.

Whereas radical-socialist feminism assumed that there was some sort of essence of femininity that could be pinned down and, ideally, catered to, postmodern feminists are more likely to argue that we can only gain knowledge of sex or gender as it is culturally constructed in specific social and historical circumstances. In comparison with the radical-socialist understanding of a unitary womanhood, postmodern feminism has tended to focus on "differences" amongst women as well as between men and women. Indeed, the term "woman" itself has been undermined for being a generalisation masking many ambiguities (Riley, 1988). The "sex/gender distinction" was argued to be a dichotomy which obscured as much as it revealed, largely because of the coherence it attributed to both gender and sex (Gatens, 1983). Even the human body was seen not to be an ahistorical, biological given, but to be inscribed and constructed through representation (Kirby, 1991; Grosz, 1995). Equally the world and the environment, like space and time itself, were considered to be social constructions, open to endless negotiations and renegotiations of meaning.

Thus, whereas earlier feminist analyses typically assumed that meanings were fixed and should be fought (for example, that bras meant patriarchal control and should be removed and burnt), postmodern feminism argued that meanings may be variable (for example that bras can be functional, titillating and/or uncomfortable, thus solutions specific to the situation should be applied). Whereas Sherrie Ortner argued that the identification of women with nature was "universal" and bad (Ortner, 1974), postmodern feminists have been inclined to argue that the identification of women and nature is culturally specific to the west, and admittedly widespread but not absolute. Thus the "Preamble" to this report opens with a postmodern feminist assertion that landscape can be gendered masculine or feminine. Postmodern feminism suggests that a diversity of identifications between gender and landscape might be important and meaningful, offering scope for intervention. Rather than condemn the identification of women with nature as in Ortner's famous essay (1974), postmodern feminism recognises that many positions on this question are possible, that, for example, many feminists have *promoted* the identification of women and nature as positive. There is, for example the psychoanalytic stream of thought that includes Gaston Bachelard's phenomenology of water, and offers an alternative to the misogyny often associated with the identification of women with nature (Bachelard, 1983). Bachelard argued that "from a psychoanalytic perspective… all water is a kind of milk. More precisely, every joyful drink is mother's milk" (Bachelard, 1983, 117):

> [I]f the feeling for nature is as durable as it is in some people, that is because in its original form it is at the root of all feelings. It is filial devotion; all forms of love have in their make-up something of the love for mother. Nature is for the grown man, Madame Bonaparte states, "an immensely enlarged, eternal mother, projected onto infinity"… To love the *infinite* universe is to give a material meaning, an objective meaning, to the *infinity* of the love for a mother. (Bachelard, 1983, 115,116, Bachelard's emphasis)

Postmodern feminism typically has avoided making assertions about inherent "truths" but instead examined the ways in which strategies of representation and discourses of knowledge can influence power relations and generate different meanings. In contrast with the "realist" overview favoured by the liberal feminist and radical/socialist feminist stances, postmodern feminist critiques have examined the instability of meanings in representations such as art, literature, mass media imagery or everyday language, focusing on details or gaps, Freudian "slips" or recurrent metaphors. In this way it has close links with the cultural studies approach described by Meaghan Morris and John Frow:

> Cultural studies often operates in what looks like an eccentric way, starting with the particular, the detail, the scrap of ordinary banal existence, and then working to unpack the density of relations and of intersecting social domains that inform it. Rather than being interested in television or architecture or pin-ball machines in themselves—as industrial or aesthetic structures—it tends to be interested in the way such apparatuses work as points of concentration of social meaning, as "media" (literally), the carriers of all the complex and conflictual practices of society. (Morris and Frow, 1993, xviii)

This strategy of focusing on details also corresponded with a certain shift in the political tactics associated with postmodern feminism. While the notion of a coherent

sisterhood in feminism has collapsed, so has much of the infighting about what needed to be done. Instead there is another understanding of feminism as a heterogeneous set of social and intellectual manoeuvres being enacted by many different people in many ways and many places. There are few "correct" lines of action being advocated but rather many strategic, temporary and inventive tactics and alliances.

One important analytic tool developed within the postmodern emphasis on representation was the concept of "phallocentrism", which is used to describe the dominant western tendency to privilege maleness/masculinity and devalue femaleness/femininity. Thus Louise Johnson's postmodern voice used the notion of phallocentrism to critique the way in which A.S. Mather's text book represented the task of planning by enacting dichotomies or binary oppositions in ways that diminish women and femininity (such as public/ private, public/ domestic, culture/ nature, man/ environment, rational/ irrational, physical and economic/ social). For example, she pointed to how women's use of the environment was associated with "social" planning, which is then sidelined when "real plans are drawn up" (i.e. those focusing on the economic and the physical). Because of this dichotomous mode of representation, women were understood to "inhabit prescribed but also unimportant spaces" (Johnson, 1989, 89) where:

> [T]he male element was privileged and the feminine marginalised. The presence of the feminine as a necessary other, however, as the invisible negated side, meant that this element was fundamental to the operation of these texts. The subjection of the feminine thereby becomes the base on which these texts and their concrete effects are built. (Johnson, 1989, 90)

Such arguments use tiny details to argue the big issues. In many ways, postmodern feminism is a continuation and a deepening of the profound feminist critique of western knowledge begun by liberal and radical-socialist feminists, but the level of attack is now upon "discourse" and "representation". Australian feminist academic Susan Best has embarked on a theoretical project that mobilises postmodern and poststructuralist theories to argue that "space is a sexualised concept":

> [T]he concept of space has been, and still is, constituted by and through the body of woman, whilst the disembodied "human" subject who gives form to… the spaces of "human" geography, is undeniably masculine. So through the problematic of space, the sexes are embodied very differently. Or, rather, one sex is *all* body – space, substance, matter, matrix – and the other has *no* body, no spatial extension, but *forms* bodies, space and matter. It is the difference, in other words, between being space and having space… (Best, 1993, 28)

Best discussed an impressive array of contemporary and historic theorists in evidencing this widespread metaphorical identification of women and space, from Simone de Beauvoir and Julia Kristeva to Steven Hawkings, and then back to the beginnings of western philosophy with Plato:

> It [the receptacle/ space]…continues to receive all things, and never itself takes a permanent impress from any of the things that enter it, it is a kind of neutral plastic material on which changing impressions are stamped by things

which enter it, making it appear different at different times. And the things which pass in and out of it are copies of the eternal realities, whose form they take… We may indeed use the metaphor of birth and compare the receptacle to the mother, the model to the father, and what they produce between them to their offspring. (Plato *Timeus and Critias*, quoted in Best, 1993, 29)

As Best pointed out, Plato's definition of space positions woman as a blank receptacle for the active male seed, while the father is conceptualised as an ideal with "no spatial extension", "no body as such". She suggested that this is an "unfortunate" theoretical assumption still too often adopted by "male theorists" (Best, 1993, 29). However, rather than to deny this widespread identification of woman with space, Best offered an alternative feminist tactic, to embrace it, or at least to explore its ramifications. Best's essay offers some important considerations about the operation of metaphor in representation as well as an investigation of "the feminisation of space". The implications of this mode of inquiry seem far-reaching, and suggestive of new ways of understanding the traditional western identification of women with nature.

In her famous essay, "Things to do with shopping centres", Meaghan Morris contributed to postmodern feminist thought by sharing her meditations on the methodological pitfalls she hoped to avoid in her research project on women and space. Morris wanted to avoid the pose of an observant assumed to be somehow outside the cultural fray. She wanted to avoid constructing an image of the "representative" shopper—that simplifies diversity amongst women and even within any one woman. She wanted to avoid celebratory sociology. She wanted her study to not merely reflect the theoretical assumptions she'd started out with but to be somehow challenged and directed by the ideas that it interrogated. She hoped that her project might occupy the "odd gap" as she called it, between formal descriptions of existing structures and personal reminiscence, that is, *between* "designer's meanings" and "user's meanings". She advocated attempting to *occupy* this gap: not to "close" or to "bridge" it, but to "dislocate the relationships between the poles that create it" (Morris, 1988, 12).

Pat Grimshaw, Marilyn Lake, Ann McGrath and Marian Quartley's award winning history of Australia, *Creating The Nation* (1994), offered another postmodern feminist approach. They also attempted to question and reinterpret phallocentric representation, but in the realm of *Australian history*, and in a deliberately populist manner. They did not attempt a women's history, rather, their book integrated women and feminist themes in a general history, as if women and femininity mattered in a general way. This approach was well demonstrated in the first chapter, dealing with the founding of colonial Australia, which took the metaphor of "birth" as its theme. Whereas conventional histories of Australia speak of the establishment of Sydney by the landing of the First Fleet of convicts in 1788 as "the birth of the nation", this chapter returned the metaphor of birth back to women. One of the births explored in this chapter was experienced by an Aboriginal woman whose efforts to have her child in Government House were foiled. We are lead to understand that her attempt to give birth in the geographically specific site where colonial authority was focused, may have been an attempt to ensure a more harmonious relationship between her people and the white colonists. That she was misunderstood and prevented from carrying out her plan is a poignant metaphor for the subsequent history of poor relations between white and indigenous people in Australia. This chapter was ingenious for being a

good read accessible to a broad audience, while at the same time inverting many entrenched dichotomies in the traditional representation of Australian history. For example, it shifted the focus on men to an engagement with men and women (both as active agents); it shifted the focus on colonists to an engagement with both white and Aboriginal people; it shifted "birth" from being metaphor used to describe men's activities to being a bodily function *also understood as a cultural act* that enabled an indigenous women to actively attempt an important political outcome.

Another postmodern feminist approach to gender and landscape in national parks is presented in the collaborative essay by Jackie Huggins, Rita Huggins and Jane M. Jacobs, "Kooramindanjie: Place And The Postcolonial" (1995). This excellent article was written collaboratively by an Aboriginal woman academic and her mother together with a white woman geography academic. Like *Creating a Nation*, this essay was a good read while addressing important theoretical issues. It described a visit to Kooramindanjie, a national park in Queensland also known as Carnarvon Gorge, which was undertaken by the three authors in 1993. Whereas Jacobs had been engaged as an "expert" some years before to examine Aboriginal rock art in the area, Jackie and Rita Huggins were "traditional owners" who had not visited for some years. The essay lingered over the irony of this group encountering national parks tourist displays that assumed all visitors were white tourists and that the Aboriginal traditional owners were long gone. It also explored several other sets of uneasy conjunctions: that each person approached the park with their own history and that such "places have many pasts" for different visitors; that the notion of "a sense of place" can be politicised; and that there are power relations that shape the meanings attributed to place and the ways in which we might "dwell" in place. The essay suggested that new approaches may be required for thinking through the problems of identity and place, local and global, past and present (Huggins et al, 1995, 172-3), and referred approvingly to Paul Carter's *Road to Botany Bay* for its attempted "imaginative geography of desire". It also alluded to the Aboriginal notion of "the land my mother" and the importance of a birthing place for offering lifelong connections with creatures, trees, mountains and all living things (Huggins et al, 1995, 178). The essay thus "occupied" an "odd gap" between many dichotomies that concern postmodern feminism, undermining phallocentric oppositions such as scholarship (writing a research paper) versus action (visiting a national park); white expertise versus indigenous knowledge; understanding a national park as recreation for white people versus understanding a national park as an inhabited place with continuing cultural associations with the landscape.

So how can the postmodern feminist approach be applied in analysing landscape and gender in our case study town of Hill End? Postmodern feminism enacts many different strategies for analysing and critiquing cultural activity in ways that might be applied to Hill End. At the same time, it is crucial to bear in mind that postmodern theory generally problematises policy-making and planning because of the inherent difficulties identified in communication and action (Watson and Gibson, 1995). People bring their own readings to bear upon every representation, and nobody can control the meanings that will be generated around this or any other historic place. Nonetheless, acknowledging this lack of control does not invalidate attempts to make better presentations of historic sites, although it might encourage certain types of considerations. The postcolonial underpinnings of postmodern feminism might demand first of all that greater due be given to Aboriginal culture in the various

historical representations in and about Hill End. Serious consultation with Aboriginal staff and relevant communities would be required to develop any proper course of action. I imagine that strategies could include offering widespread recognition throughout the site that this has been Aboriginal land, that particular sites could be developed to explain traditional Aboriginal cultural practices, that the history of Aboriginal engagement with white culture could be elaborated (such as giving more credit to the Aboriginal pastoral workers who first discovered gold in the area, Mayne, forthcoming), and that the specificities of Aboriginal women's culture be acknowledged. Secondly, I would like to see attempts to rewrite the history of Hill End in ways that incorporated women and women's issues into core understandings of the place. I am sympathetic to Anne Bickford's argument that it is not enough to develop separate women's sites for heritage presentation. Rather, proper recognition of women's contributions and issues could be attempted in every historical representation (Bickford, 1992). Thus, if there is a display about the miners killed in a mining accident, then that display should also include interrogation of what happened to the wives and children left without a provider. A historic house museum might not only show the fine objects collected by the family but could explain how ordinary domestic tasks and leisure activities were achieved by both men and women, whether women gave birth in the house, where servants lived and what kinds of work they did. Such displays can demonstrate historically specific examples of lived femininity and lived masculinity. Finally, I imagine that the postmodern feminist focus on *details* as "points of concentration of social meaning" could translate very well into heritage presentation. I can imagine fabricating displays that illustrate memorable stories from oral history interviews (see Section 2), such as the tin of muddy water used to wash the week's clothes and then bath eight children; or the container carried by the "hard woman" who walked 16 miles a day in order to sell her milk and feed her children. However, rather than engage "experts" to come up with ideas conceived in faraway places, a postmodern feminist strategy might advocate engaging the community in an *ongoing process* of historical recovery and heritage presentation. One way might be to commission community artists to develop such historical displays in collaboration with local residents, thus allowing for an interdisciplinary heritage presentation that undermines the phallocentric dichotomies between expert and amateur, insider and outsider, past and present, history and art.

Section 2. Case study on Hill End

INTRODUCTION

The second section of this report offers a case study on landscape art and visual imagery associated with Hill End. "Landscape", or the representation of place, is a major genre in the western tradition of "high art". Landscape imagery has been produced in particular periods of western history by white men and some women (Parker and Pollock, #), and has been usefully analysed as a showcase for cultural identity (Schama, 1995; Smith 1960; Burn, 1990). Landscape typically offers insights into the ways in which the "subject" (i.e. both the artist and the viewer who identifies with the image) understands and appreciates the place depicted. The techniques of landscape art interpretation are increasingly being broadened, turned towards the analysis of a wider range of imagery by a wider range of authors (including imagery by women and indigenous people) and depicting a greater diversity of places in a range of media including craftwork, cartoons, film and other forms of popular culture.

A feminist analysis of visual imagery associated with Hill End just one of many ways in which I could have attempted to discuss and illustrate the themes of this report within a context relevant to the NPWS. The idea of an authoritative history of women in the landscape in NSW was mooted but I felt it was too large and complex to be achieved within the constraints of the study. Several regions were suggested as possible case studies and Hill End chosen because, as mentioned above, its history has long been understood and presented in an obviously masculine register, stressing the activities of male gold miners and largely ignoring women's contributions to the landscape (Mayne, forthcoming). The idea of focusing on visual representations of the landscape in Hill End developed as the project progressed, partly in response to the extraordinary visual richness of the place, and partly because that approach meshed well with my original training as an art historian. Art has been a crucial means by which people come to understand landscape and the environment in Australia (Burn, 1990). It is a media that is accessible to a wide general public through exhibition and reproduction. It is also an especially "textual" medium that is susceptible to new readings and interpretations, such as that provided by a feminist analysis. Indeed, this study may operate as a pilot in developing a NPWS approach to landscape that focuses on cultural representations of place in art and writing, and that might be developed through the NPSW linking in with local cultural institutions. It is increasingly recognised that government agencies consulting with local communities through community art projects can operate as an invaluable form of information exchange and community development (Hayden, 1995; Stewart et al, 2003).

In this case study, I first introduce Hill End with an emphasis on women's history in the area, and then offer feminist interpretations of a selection of images associated with its landscape. These images vary in their artistic status and have been chosen because they were considered visually informative and helpful in discussing the feminist themes established in the first section of the report. The analysis has little basis in connoisseurship. Rather I offer semiotic-type readings that sometimes consider the material history of these images (how they came to be produced and kept), discusses their iconography (some of the possible meanings of the imagery), or examines how they inspired certain types of questions for me. They operate as pressure-points that can generate discussion in a variety of ways, although the

overarching issues remain: how can rereading these images help us to rethink the relationships of gender, landscape, history and heritage.

AN INTRODUCTION TO HILL END, AS IF WOMEN MATTERED

This introduction to Hill End's history, as if women mattered, relies upon Alan Mayne's *Hill End: Reading an Historic Goldfields Landscape* (forthcoming). Mayne's history, commissioned by the NPWS, offers a helpful overview of Hill End's historiography and an account of its various stages of historical development. It draws on secondary histories of Australia, newspaper articles, local court documents and oral history accounts.[16] Mayne admits that "Women and children, like the Wiradjuri peoples, the gold seekers from China, and many others who were part of this landscape, remain on the margins of historical understanding". Nonetheless he regularly notes the historical presence of white, Aboriginal and migrant women where possible. My account summarises his overview but emphasises women's stories and women's presence, brings in a few other women's stories from other sources, and points to areas where further research on women might be possible. Thus this is largely a "liberal feminist" styled "women's history", albeit brief and introductory. Other feminist methodologies offering other types of historical representation are conceivable and worthwhile and I particularly look forward to Marjorie Prior's forthcoming book on Hill End, drawing on her extensive oral history work in the area over twenty years. In the meantime, this approach seemed to be most appropriate for being accessible to my potential audience (NPWS employees and possibly Hill End residents) and manageable to write. To avoid constant repetition of the reference, "(Mayne, forthcoming)", and because I don't have a hard copy with page numbers, all information in this historical account should be assumed to be from Alan Mayne's history unless otherwise stated.

As Mayne points out, the history of Hill End has been nearly swamped by its own myths and legends. A small country town in the highlands between Bathurst and Mudgee west of Sydney, the historical focus has been on its heyday of 1872-1874, when gold-rush fever gripped the town, the population mushroomed (estimates vary from 7,000 to 50,000, with some commentators claiming that it temporarily rivalled Sydney in size). The world's largest "nugget" was unearthed in the Star of Hope mine by Bernard Holtermann. Makeshift tents dotted the hills and gullies, and men laboured in the baking heat of summer and the freezing snows of winter, gold-panning in the creeks and digging deep in underground mine-shafts. In their frantic hopes of making a fortune, literally no stone was left unturned and no tree still standing (chopped down for building materials and fire wood), although most diggers were disappointed. The town is presented as suffering a long, slow decline from these "glory" days, until, effectively a ghost town, it was rediscovered in the 1940s by the famous artist, Russell Drysdale. Inspired by the desert-like scenery, Drysdale created great works of art that changed the face of Australian landscape painting. Or so the story goes.

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[16] Mayne's account offers only restricted use of Marjorie Prior's oral history research. He quotes solely from her summary report of 1980 and shows no sign of having accessed the much more extensive information apparently available on the tapes kept at the Hill End NPWS office.

Mayne's history makes a creditable attempt to overturn these somewhat masculinist myths. Hill End was never close to being as big as Sydney[17], and neither was it ever a ghost town.[18] Mayne makes a good case for "reading" Hill End as a "resilient" town. Its endurance was dependant upon the hard work of its residents, women as well as its men, and especially upon the stabilising influence of its family structures over many generations. This tone is set in the opening chapter, with Mark Hammond's remarkable observations upon his arrival in 1868, when he attended a public party at a Weir's Hotel:

> I soon found that the parties doing the fantastic were men, their wives and daughters, brothers and sisters, and their neighbours, and that these dance parties once a week had almost become an institution. The persons taking part seemed to enjoy themselves thoroughly. Their conduct was exceedingly respectful towards each other. I noticed that Mr. Weir, his wife and her sisters, added to the enjoyment by their friendly intercourse with the visitors. In a word, it had but little appearance of the ordinary hotel gatherings. In short, it was a happy family.

This pleasant image of a stranger being welcomed into a respectable, cheerful, family-styled community is greatly at odds with the usual representations of goldfields life as rough and macho. Mayne's history is thus iconoclastic, in a gentle and engaging way. Drawing on historical overviews, statistics, local records, and some oral history, Mayne offers a more complex and nuanced understanding of Hill End's history by mobilising the metaphor of "layers" of different types of inhabitation by different types of people over time, as interacting with each other and with the landscape.

Mayne's chronological history begins with some description of the traditional indigenous owners of Hill End, the Bularidee subgroup of the Wiradjuri, and their dispossession by European pastoralists. Although the chronology positions both groups as "before the gold rush", Mayne rightly emphasises that neither can be confined to this period:

> An Aboriginal presence in the region between Bathurst and Mudgee has continued to the present day; and pastoralism underpinned the local economy both before and after the gold rushes.

Mayne acknowledges that until recently both "formal and vernacular" historical accounts have asserted that Aboriginal presence in the Hill End district "was tenuous, did not long survive European settlement, and left indistinct traces". However he suggests that new heritage methods of interpretation involving archaeological and oral history methods is undermining this understanding. Seventeen Wiradjuri sites have been recorded within a 10 km radius of Hill End and 62 sites within a 20 km radius, comprising "camps, rock shelters, stone arrangements, carved trees, quarries, and

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[17] The 1861 census counted 124 people within the township boundaries while the 1871 census found just over 700 people. The *Atlas of the Settled Counties of New South Wales*, 1875, recorded Hill End as "a mining township" with just over 700 residents (Mayne, forthcoming). The large population numbers of 7,000-8,000 at the peak of the gold boom in 1872-1873, generally accepted by historians, includes many itinerant people "scattered across the Hill End-Tambaroora goldfield". The estimate of 50,000 given in some accounts seems wildly exaggerated.

[18] Even at its lowest twentieth century ebb, during the 1970s, Hill End could boast over 100 inhabitants, and it population has been stabilised during the 1990s, at around 200.

burial places". None of the Aboriginal sites on the NPWS Register have been identified as specifically "women's sites" (Hanna interviews with Kendall and Duncan, 2003), although women would have been present at many or most of the ones that have been recorded. The archaeological evidence suggests there was indigenous habitation in the area for at least 7,000 years. Mayne has gathered together a variety of scholarship to describe something of the Wiradjuri lifestyle before colonisation:

> The Wiradjuri lived in extended family units which occupied inherited territories of roughly 5,000 square kilometres… Wiradjuri subgroups.. together comprised at least 300-400 people in the lands around Hill End at the time of first European settlement. Wiradjuri society was acutely attuned to the land. Totems honoured local fauna, and clans and families possessed clearly defined territories. The transgression of territorial boundaries through hunting forays or the abduction of women were avenged by warfare. Ethnographers categorise the Wiradjuri as hunter gatherers. Wiradjuri women harvested a wide range of plant foods, and their menfolk hunted possum, kangaroo and wallaby, grubs, snake, and fish. However food gathering did not entail ceaseless wandering. The only major movements within and across Wiradjuri territories seem to have been governed by cultural practices rather than forced by seasonal variations in food supply. Clear rules fixed the position of camps and the arrangement of people within them. The social landscape of the Wiradjuri was extensive, well ordered, and stable.

While this mentions the gathering work done by women, I would also like to know more about the local indigenous women's culture, such as approaches to childbirth and childrearing, and also the extent of contact between early women colonists and indigenous women, as is attempted in Grimshaw et al's feminist history of Australia (1994). Meanwhile, Mayne is careful to present evidence of continuing Aboriginal presence in the township stretching into the twentieth century. Several stories mentioned Aboriginal women as they were perceived by later white residents of Hill End:

> Thomas Henry Roberts, who settled at Hill End in the late nineteenth century, remembered "Black Mary in her gunyah, who tried to be friendly to me but unsuccessfully"… In early twentieth-century Hill End, European children "were in mortal terror of two fat, jolly aborigines known as Black Nelly and Black Fanny who rode up over the plateau rim from the Macquarie at intervals", because of the legends that had sprung up about the string of murders perpetrated across central New South Wales during 1900 by Jimmy and Joe Governor, and Jacky Underwood… "Nellie", reputedly the last full-blood Aboriginal in the Hill End area, died during Harry Hodge's childhood…

The account of the second layer of inhabitation, the European pastoral intrusion into the Bathurst district from the 1820s, with its initial dependence upon convict labour, makes no mention of women. Hill End was a little slower than Bathurst to be incorporated into the pastoral economy because of its "rugged" uplands character, thus it was the 1830s before European men such as Thomas Charles Suttor, William Cummings and the Cox family were establishing grazing properties in the area. These pastoral properties were in a good position to cater to and benefit from the population boom brought on by the gold rushes that began in the area in the 1850s. Until then,

population growth of Europeans in the area had been slow, while for indigenous people it was negative:

> The entire County of Wellington, which included Hill End, contained only 1,600 Europeans at the beginning of 1851. On the eve of the gold rushes the newcomers still barely outnumbered the surviving Wiradjuri inhabitants of the Wellington district, whom Crown Lands Commissioner W.C. Mayne estimated at about 1,100 people… The Aboriginal population of Australia was more than halved between 1821 and 1850, from perhaps 600,000 to under 300,000 by mid century. It has been estimated that between a quarter and one third of the Wiradjuri in the Bathurst region were killed during the first wave of pastoral settlement…The Winburndale Rivulet, on the road from Bathurst to Hill End via Sofala, is still known as the site of an Aboriginal massacre by Europeans in 1826.

Mayne was careful also to acknowledge evidence of active Aboriginal resistance to European colonisation during this early pastoral period, including the "Bathurst Wars" of the 1820s. Mayne insists that the coming of the gold rushes in the 1850s did not wipe out the pastoral industries (or the Aboriginal people), that "elements of Hill End's pastoral landscape persisted" in place names, but more importantly in its role as a fall-back local industry that continued to underpin "mining—and the township itself" into the middle of the twentieth century at least. Thus in the1960s the Hill End CWA memoires written by Gwen Eyre stated that it was "mainly sheep" that supported the town population of "310 souls" (Eyre, c.1960, 3); she also mentioned rabbiting and timber. More research could be attempted using statistical, documentary and oral history methods to ascertain the extent of women's involvement in the long history of pastoral industries of Hill End, as convict and Aboriginal agricultural workers, house servants, and those who were family members of middle class settlers. Are there any surviving women's diaries or artworks?

The series of gold rushes that began around 1850 constitute three more layers in Mayne's history:

> History identifies three gold mining booms at Hill End. The first boom, from 1851 to 1870, consisted largely of alluvial mining and was centred at Tambaroora. The second boom, from 1871 to 1874, consisted largely of reef mining deep into the quartz veins of Hawkins Hill. The third boom, between 1908 and 1924, was sustained by ongoing alluvial mining and by a muted revival of reef mining at Hawkins Hill.

Mayne gives credit for the original discovery of gold in the district to "three Aboriginal shepherds whom Europeans called Daniel, Jimmy Irvin, and Tommy" who showed a gold nugget to their pastoral employer just south of Mudgee in June 1851, and then to another Aboriginal man who found a gold nugget at Louisa Creek (Hargraves) the following month, "thereby sparking the rush that created the Tambaroora goldfield", five km north of Hill End. By 1858 there were 2,300 diggers estimated on the Tambaroora fields, with a possible majority of them being Chinese.

> Hill End itself never contained a large Chinese population, although there were Chinese dwellings and shops in the town from the mid 1860s onwards,

and many Chinese lived on mining claims and garden allotments immediately around the township. The 1871 census recorded a marked decline in the Chinese population on the goldfields.

Mayne doesn't explain that the Chinese immigrants were almost exclusively men while by contrast, European women often came to the goldfields as family members, or seeking partners (Anderson, 2001), or inevitably, for prostitution. However he does allude to some of the racial sexual tensions consequent upon this situation as part of his description of the Hill End white people's racist behaviour in general:

> Europeans sensed a sexual challenge from the Chinese as well. It is reflected in the insults that Europeans hurled at one another. Johanna Leary was twice fined during 1866 for drunkenly taunting other women in Hill End for being "a bloody Chinaman's whore". Although on one level the widespread currency of such insults was bound up with assertions of European racial superiority, on another level it implies a permeability in personal relationships between Chinese men and European women that contradicted the monocultural expectations of European colonists.

That such relationships took place between European women and Chinese men is also apparent from oral history accounts. A prominent Hill End resident was Glendora Lawson, who lived in Rose Cottage and was respected for her skills as a midwife around the turn of the twentieth century. According to local legend, she had 14 children by a variety of partners including her English husband, a Chinese man and an American African. However, another local told me that "when Glendora came to take care of the women in their hour of need, she also took care of the men". This sounds like an old joke and the fact that is it still being retold suggests that Lawson's reputation was seriously impugned by her liaisons (Hanna interview with local residents, 2003). Yet the fact that such inter-ethnic relations could be practiced at some level within Hill End goes against the common understandings of Australian colonial society, and suggest that there is room for more research on the sexual mores of such small town. Mayne's emphasis on the stability of family life in Hill End surely masks a less respectable side to colonial life involving extra-marital affairs, prostitution and the like. One local told stories of a an extra-marital affair in town where a man would leave his own house at 10pm every night to go to the house of his lover and then return each morning at 6am. Another story of a publicly accepted sexual misdemeanour concerns Sarah Marshall, mistress of the grandest surviving house in town, *Craigmoor*, who had an illegitimate daughter before marrying a respectable engineer who accepted her illegitimate child alongside their marital progeny. Was nineteenth century western society more tolerant and forgiving in this remote place?

Mayne describes the build up of the population in the Hill End district throughout the 1850s and 1860s to the 1870s. The occasional mentions of women and children are often associated with the achievement of a certain level of domestic comfort and stability, as in the remark by American "adventurer", A.P. Peirce in 1872:[19] "I built a three-room wattle-and-daub house and sent for my family". As the *Bathurst Free Press* commented about Sofala in 1851:

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[19] Pierce made his living in a variety of ways, including vaudeville and painting, and was commissioned by Holtermann to paint a panorama of Hill End, called *The Mirror of Australia*. This "was intended to be shown around the country as a celebration of Hill End's important place in the European settlement of Australia" and long since disappeared (Mayne, forthcoming; Calloway, 2001).

The calico tent is being displaced by the slab and bark hut; glass windows are coming into fashion, the baker's cart is driving "damper" out of the field; vegetables are making their appearance; and milk for tea is becoming a possibility. The nomadic is turning into the civic life... The appearance of a respectably attired female is becoming usual.

By 1870 the town of Hill End was characterised by Mayne as "a place of families as well as of itinerant miners". The 1868 petition for a school recorded 113 children of school age within the district.

> [An] important feature of social life in the town was its homeliness. Historical interpretations emphasise the number of hotels in boom-time Hill End. What struck contemporaries, however, were the homes and gardens. Township routines of domesticity and family life were interwoven with the cycles of noise and activity at the mines and batteries. The *Empire* newspaper explained to its Sydney readers in 1871 that "what mostly strikes a stranger on his arrival here is the great number of pretty and comfortable cottages, the residences of miners, surrounded as they are by some pretty gardens, showing strong evidence of the wealth and stability of the place".

Mayne alludes to the remnants of these nineteenth century gardens as forming an archaeological record of the different gardening practices of various ethnic communities, from Cornish and Irish to German and Chinese. Hill End is also notable as a country town for its introduced trees and plants, most remarkably in Beyers Avenue, a handsome roadside planting of hundreds of European trees stretching along the Tambaroora Road for over a kilometre. Women would have had a significant role in the planting and maintenance of the cottage gardens, and many men were also keen gardeners (Martin, 1999, 2000, 2001). Further research into this area of cultural activity in Hill End would offer insights into the everyday lives (and diets) of a cross-section of Hill End's population, men as well as women.

Mayne goes on to describe the second, most intense phase of the gold rushes, perhaps best symbolised by the finding of the Holtermann Nugget on 19 October 1872. He also stresses that this phase of mining activity was effectively corporate-based reef-mining, deep underground, and dependant upon an industrial structure of men employed by mining companies rather than individuals trying their luck gold-panning in the open streams. A journalist visiting in 1872 declared that "Hill End is now in the hands of companies". Mayne also offers stories from the local court records during the 1860s and 1870s, that give some local colour to the social relations in Hill End, and are revealing for their gender and their racial implications:

> [S]lurs against Aboriginals were sometimes made by Hill Enders. In one altercation between neighbours during 1871, Ann Weyn was told, "you're not fit to be a mother; more likely to have been brought up by a tribe of blacks." Laying an assault charge in 1872, Emma Fisher complained that she had been punched by another woman, who had sneered that "she would sooner take a black fellow's money than mine"… Resentments simmered between adjoining homes. "Go in you dirty old black," yelled Charlotte Hartridge from her front door in 1873. The object of her anger, Jane Knight, claimed that she was minding her own business in her garden next door.

These incidents suggest that Aboriginal women were not considered "fit" mothers by white colonists, that white women were capable of punching and laying assault charges on each other, and that neighbours could attract verbal abuse for gardening. Mayne also offers many more court reports involving feisty women who were not averse to throwing rocks at houses, bashing men over the head with bricks, and using insulting language :

> Bridget Smith, for example, ran afoul of the police in 1872 for "throwing stones at the doors of houses of respectable people". Earlier in the year Mary Ross was charged with having hit baker James Cameron's head with a brick. But that was in retaliation, said a witness, for Cameron having "called her a 'flaming dirty poxed arse whore'". Cameron conceded to Ross, "I do not recollect calling you a bloody bitch, but I might have done so"… Emma Fisher was punched by her neighbour in 1872 when she complained about the chooks next door. Julia Casey was called "a bloody Irish bitch" when she went to collect her pigs after they had strayed into the neighbouring allotment… Adam Pendlebury angrily brought his neighbour Elizabeth Wythes before the police magistrate in 1868, alleging obscene language. Irked by the noise from the Pendlebury's young family (the youngest had been born only months previously), Elizabeth had confronted him and warned, "Adam, if you can't keep your children from me, I shall pull their ears as long as my bloody arm." She added an insult that earned her a one-pound fine: "you go around pilfering and stealing to keep your bloody family"… In 1896 the English family and their neighbour, Elizabeth Furness, lodged competing prosecutions for assault and insulting language. Neither party appeared at court on the prescribed day, and the cases were struck out.

Mayne however suggests that these accounts of minor disputes brought before the local court tend to reinforce his image of the town's respectability, by demonstrating how minor were the typical infractions. This major, second-phase gold boom was short-lived, and its early demise has come to be symbolised by the major fire in Clarke Street that gutted many commercial buildings in April 1874. However Mayne suggests that the loss of population from this time was largely that of itinerant single men, and that the "settled community of Hill End, in 1882 as in 1872, continued to be comprised married couples and their children". The third phase of gold-rush activity (Hill End's fifth layer of inhabitation) began around 1908 when the population of Hill End had "dwindled to about 500 people". This last boom provided modest employment and investment opportunities, and it rekindled the "rhythmic beat" of the stamper batteries pounding up ore that reverberated throughout Hill End for a number of years, although it all petered out by the mid 1920s.

Mayne describes the sixth layer of inhabitation as "poor man's diggings", which commenced with the end of the second phase gold boom in the 1870s, and became entrenched after the close-down of the third phase gold mines in the 1920s. However he questions the historical representation of life in Hill End after the 1870s boom as "unrelenting hardship and disintegration", suggesting that the boom itself was the exception in the otherwise "steady pulse of a small-town community". He preferred to characterize Hill End again by its "enduring resourcefulness and adaptability of the local economy".

Life after 1873 was indeed hard. But life had always been hard at Hill End, as is made plain by the boom-time cemetery headstones commemorating lives claimed by disease and industrial accidents during 1873… silicosis of the lungs… was the miners' disease, the "Miners' Complaint". Asthma, bronchitis, and tuberculosis were other chronic miners' conditions.

This emphasis on the difficult conditions experienced by working men is supplemented by Mayne's descriptions of the hard conditions also experienced by Hill End women. Many husbands died young, childbirth "sapped" their health, there was a high infant mortality rate, and "no household was immune from accidents and disease". Many families lived on the edge of destitution so that if something went wrong, everything fell apart:

William Taylor was gaoled in 1873 for larceny. Later in the year his wife Jane walked into the Hill End police station and asked that their four children—aged between five and eleven—be taken into care. As she explained, "besides these four children I have three others, and these four I find myself quite unable to support."

Mayne also relates several court cases detailing stories of domestic violence suffered by women, usually at the hands of drunken husbands. In my discussions with local residents, other issues were raised, such as the unrelenting hard work faced by women with few labour-saving devices in a resource-poor environment. I was struck by a story about a woman whose washing day involved doing all the muddy clothes and household linen, and then putting her eight children *through the same water* for their weekly bath. It was suggested that new historical displays in the town could depart from the gold-mining focus and present evidence of the backbreaking labour sometimes involved in daily domestic tasks (Hanna interviews with local residents, 2003). One elderly local recalled his father being impressed by a milk vendor known as "Mrs Toohey":

She lived on Bargon and would milk the cows and walk to Hill End every day. Eight miles up and eight miles back with two buckets serving all the miners on the way. She'd start off at the Green Valley selling milk, then Tambaroora and finish up at Hill End. Then she'd bring a load of food back for her children at Bargon. That's sixteen miles a day… My father used to say Mrs Toohey was the hardest woman he ever knew of. Men or horses couldn't have done what she did. (Prior, 1980: Les Hamilton oral history p2)

Residents also pointed out that it is all very well to celebrate local heroines such as the nineteenth century businesswoman Harriet Beard (indeed, Beard's story is still relevant, since people in town are currently drawing comparisons between Beard and the contemporary local businesswoman, Kerry Burns, who has regenerated the businesses at the General Store and the Great Western Store). But what about the other, less successful women? For some, the great difficulties and the isolation they encountered simply defeated them, leading to madness or suicide (Hanna interviews with local residents, 2003). The CWA memoirs tell of a "Mrs Charlton" who became deranged after the death of her baby, who would prowl the dark streets alone at night, dressed in black and "terrifying any merry miners wending their unsteady way home"

(Eyre, c.1960, 6). What desperation drove the woman who committed suicide at the riverside by slowly and deliberately swallowing a 15 foot length of cloth? Could such stories be substantiated or given their due in heritage presentations?

On the other hand, Mayne also offers stories evidencing the community's friendliness and resourcefulness. People grew vegetables in their gardens (there was a friendly rivalry amongst men to see who could grow the largest tomato each year) (Hanna interviews with local residents, 2003). They kept cows and goats for their milk, and chooks for eggs and special chicken dinners. Bruce Goodwin recalled, "Memories of my childhood home at Hill End are full of happiness and security… Mum was a great homemaker in a period when homes had to be made. She was forever papering the walls and making new curtains and cushion covers, varnishing the furniture and polishing the lino." Women made their own clothes. Harry Hodge remembered jam-making as a group activity. There as an active local community life, with community dances, clubs and annual rituals such as the Wattle Flat horse races. Gwen Eyre explained how several women citizens started up a branch of the CWA in the 1950s, and put together their resources to buy a cottage next to the general store, opposite the Royal Hotel. Whereas before, women would wait in their cars while their men were having a drink at the pub, the CWA premises gave them a place to play cards, have a picnic tea by the fireplace or clean up their children before the occasional picture show at the Royal Hall (Eyre, c.1960, 13). Mayne concludes that:

> Hill End's way of life was not so much a hand-to-mouth existence as a capital-poor one, in which the obvious input of men's heavy manual work was paralleled, augmented, and sustained by women's unpaid household labour, and anchored within a reciprocal network of stable families.

Mayne discusses his last two layers of inhabitation of Hill End in the chapter entitled, "Heritage town". First he describes the wave of major Australian artists who began to visit and live in Hill End from the 1940s, which has been well documented in Gavin Wilson's *The Artists of Hill End* (1995). These included Russell Drysdale, Donald Friend, Margaret Olley, Jean Bellette, David Strachan, John Olsen, Brett Whiteley, Jeffrey Smart and Gary Shead. They typically represented scenes from Hill End as eroded, barren and melancholic, as in Drysdales' *The Cricketers* (plate 2). Mayne points out that until the end of his days, and despite all evidence to the contrary, Friend insisted on describing the place as a "ghost town" and its residents as "peasants". By contrast, Jean Bellette enjoyed genuine friendships with town folk and was generally well-liked, despite the shock she caused by joining the men in the public bar for a drink (Wilson, 1995, 77; Hanna interviews with local residents, 2003). This impressive artistic engagement with the town has contributed to the recent resurgence of contemporary art practice in Hill End, which has been fostered by an artist-in-residency program run by the Bathurst Regional Gallery (using the houses formerly occupied by Friend and Bellette) (Wilson, 1995). Many of the images produced by these more recent artistic engagements with the landscape are gentler and leafier than those of the first wave of artists (see Wilson, 1995 and the Hill End artist-in-residency website at http://www.hillendart.com). One of the local people I interviewed was of the opinion that this artist-in-residency scheme had brought a breath of fresh air into the town, perhaps because of the artists' enthusiasm for the built and natural environment, and also because they tended to stay for four or five

weeks, long enough to get to know some locals (Hanna interviews with local residents, 2003).

Finally, Mayne discusses the NPWS adoption of the town as an "Historic Site" in 1967, emphasising the benefits that the NPWS has brought to the town although also alluding to the history of disputes between some of the locals and the state government bureaucracy. Both these last layers of inhabitation are seen to have contributed to a new understanding of Hill End within the public culture of Australia:

> Outback art and gold-rush history were starting to give back to Hill End some of the fame that had attached to it during the early 1870s. The attraction now was its heritage. Publicity showered upon the recently unearthed Holtermann photographs of gold-boom Hill End consolidated the town's emerging reputation as a heritage place. Hill End was proclaimed an Historic Site in 1967. Cultural tourism became Hill End's new growth industry.

At the turn of the millennium, the presentation of heritage in Hill End is a crucial focus for the town's identity as well as for its economic integrity as a tourist site. To stress the variety and complexity of different layering of inhabitation within Hill End, as Mayne's history does, offers a good model for heritage presentation in the town. It allows for the kind of complexity and richness advocated in the respected heritage strategies of the *Burra Charter*. It also allows for the interweaving of many perspectives on town life, including those of women from different classes, different historical periods and different ethnic backgrounds. It encourages the plural understanding of landscape that advocated in the NPWS framework paper (c.2001), and in this report: "landscape is understood in multiple ways by different users and observers and for different audiences, as not only factual but experiential" (Hanna, 2003, 17).

FEMINIST INTERPRETATIONS OF LANDSCAPE IMAGERY IN HILL END

These readings of images about the landscape of Hill End are offered with feminist analyses of the context of their production and discussion of some of their possible meanings. The feminist interpretations offered here draw primarily on liberal and radical-socialist feminist approaches. These readings attempt to dislodge the typical gendering of landscapes in NSW as either "masculine" through association with the men who enact history there in the apparent absence of women, or as "feminine" because they have been identified as a female entity (such as "Mother Earth"). These readings of the landscape at Hill End instead attempt to demonstrate the integral roles that women have played in Hill End, to delineate some of the ways that women have understood the place, and to develop more complex and nuanced representations of both masculinity and femininity within the place. More generally, this discussion of art and imagery particularly emphasises the complexity of the landscape and history of Hill End as being integrated with the historic and contemporary local community. [1]

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[1] A disturbing absence from my analysis here is any imagery or artwork by indigenous women. Aboriginal culture in Hill End has long been assumed to be "tenuous" (Mayne, forthcoming), but this is increasingly questioned by the evidence of Aboriginal artefacts found nearby and by the stories of Aboriginal heritage in some local families (Mayne, 2003; Hanna interviews with local residents, 2003). I could not find any indigenous women's imagery or women's sites associated with the Hill End area in the limited time I had available—my efforts consisted of approaching the Bathurst Regional gallery and the NPWS Aboriginal Sites Registers at Hurstville and Bathurst. This does not mean that such sites do not exist, but that they have not been recorded. As NPWS officer Michael Duncan observed, some sites are never brought to public notice until they are threatened (Hanna interviews with Kendall, Duncan and Torrens, 2003). If the approach of this report was to be developed in the future, more resources could be made available to track the existence of any craftwork or art imagery by or about Aboriginal-identifying women in the area, historic and contemporary.

Charles Bayliss' montage photograph, *Holtermann's Nugget* (1873) and Beaufoy Merlin's photograph of Louis and Mary Beyers and family on their back verandah in Hill End, 1872.

↑ Plate 4. *Holtermann's Nugget*, 1873. Photograph of nugget by Beaufoy Merlin and photograph of B.O. Holtermann by Charles Bayliss, combined in Bayliss montage photograph, *Holtermann's Nugget* 1873. Holtermann collection, Mitchell Library.

↑ Plate 5. Beaufoy Merlin *Untitled #18742 [Photograph of Louis and Mary Beyers with their two daughters on their back verandah in Clark Street, Hill End]* c.1872. Holtermann Photograph Collection, Mitchell Library.
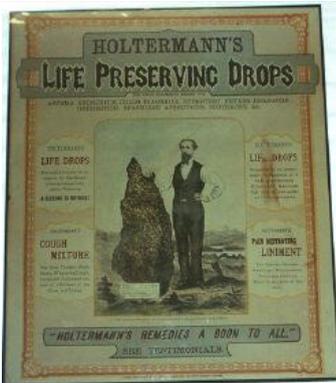
← Plate 6. *Holtermann's Life Preserving Drops*, 19th century advertisement poster incorporating Charles Bayliss' montage photograph, *Holtermann's Nugget* 1873. NPWS collection, Hill End.

The photographic image of *Holtermann's Nugget* (plate 4) is a famous depiction of Bernard Otto Holtermann standing with his hand proprietarily laid upon the largest chunk of gold-bearing rock ever found in the world, at Hill End in 1872. The "nugget" measured about the same height as a small woman and contained 100kg of veined gold (Busbey et al, 1996, 177). Comparing the nugget to a woman seems appropriate in so far as the image has the formality and solemnity of a wedding photograph, where the nugget takes the place of the bride. Like a wedding photograph it bears witness to a man's union with his heart's desire (McCalman et al, 2001, 9). This photograph has long contributed

to the myth of Hill End as a masculine landscape, "no place for a woman". It offered proof that wealth and glory could be achieved by an ordinary digger, feeding the dream that enticed so many people from around the world into lives of heartbreaking toil in the Australian wilderness. The fact that Holtermann is presented alone with his great find suggests that the successful digger was an isolated and determined individual, and that the diggings were a man's world.

It is an image that is misleading in almost every conceivable way. The rock pictured was not in fact a "nugget" but a section of underground stone veined with gold and noticed by shift-workers in the Star of Hope mine after a blast was let off early on the morning of 19 October 1872. Far from being discovered by Holtermann as an independent digger, the "heavy and fragile mass" was "separated from the matrix" of the mine shaft, laboriously brought to the surface and carried carefully to a dray by a dozen miners (Burke, 1973, 19). Holtermann neither found nor owned the "nugget", although he was a major shareholder in the company and mine manager at the time it was unearthed (Burke, 1973, 20). No photograph was taken of Holtermann with the "nugget" before it was whisked off to Sydney to be crushed (so that the gold could be extracted). Instead, within a year Beaufoy Merlin's assistant Charles Bayliss had made a montage of Merlin's photograph of the "nugget" with a photograph of Holtermann, to create this famous image, probably commissioned by Holtermann and certainly used in his later commercial ventures (Burke, 1973, 20, plate 6). Although he had arrived in Australia as a penniless migrant from Germany, Holtermann was already a fairly successful businessman and electoral candidate in Hill End, so this "nugget" did not represent a definitive shift from poverty to wealth for him (although it helped, no doubt). Finally, he was not isolated in his domestic life, having married local girl Harriet Emmet in 1868. He was probably living with his wife and one or two children in a comfortable house in town, like his partner Louis Beyers, who was photographed that year on his back verandah in Clarke Street with his wife Mary (Harriet's sister) and two daughters (plate 5).

I want to contrast the masculinised landscape of Hill End implied by the *Holtermann Nugget* with the domesticated, feminised landscape implied by the *Beyers Family* photograph.[2] This was one of over 600 images that documented Hill End in 1872/1873, known as the Holtermann Photograph Collection (Mayne, forthcoming; Burke, 1973), and which included dozens (perhaps hundreds) of images of women. These photographs are visual testimony to the historical fact that the Australian gold rushes attracted huge numbers of women as well as men to Australia and to the goldfields (Borrie, 1994). As Hill End historian Alan Mayne observes:

> [T]he photographs' greater value lies in the ways they reveal the township infrastructure that such a rush created — the rough-made roads and sidewalks, and the slab-built buildings with their roofs of bark, shingle, and corrugated iron — and detail the homeplaces which were as much a part of goldfields life as the headline-featured poppet

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[2] This image is from a series of over 600 photographs taken in a systematically record of Hill End in 1872 and 1873, commissioned in "an extravagant gesture" by Bernard Holtermann, and carried out by photographers Beaufoy Merlin and Charles Bayliss (Mayne, 2003, 18). Although Holtermann displayed the photographs at International Exhibitions in Hamburg (1877), Paris (1878), and Sydney (1879), they were forgotten until rediscovered in 1951 in the Sydney garage of Holtermann's daughter-in-law (Burke, 1973, 2).

heads and stamper batteries. In these photographic images of house-proud women, their menfolk dressed in Sunday best and their children briefly posed in artificial solemnity, we glimpse the lifestyles that would remain at the heart of this community long after the gold-rush crowds had gone. (Mayne, forthcoming)

Most of the photographs of women in Hill End picture them as accompanied by their husbands, families and friends, and almost all show them framed by their houses. There are several photographs of women engaged in commercial enterprise as shop keepers, one or two in street photographs but apparently none in the diggings themselves. This absence of women from the diggings may be a reflection of the reality of the time, or it may be a result of editorial work somewhere in the history of the production and maintenance of the collection. Although suggesting that women were largely confined to the domestic sphere, the Holtermann Photograph Collection nonetheless demonstrates that the gendering of the landscape in gold-rush Hill End was varied and multifaceted, rather than predominantly masculine—as is implied or explicitly argued in most of the historiography of the Australian goldfields (Anderson, 2001; Goodman, 1991). Margaret Anderson's historical sketch of the experiences of women in the Victorian goldfields argues that while we may now have only "glimpses" of women's lives on the goldfields:

> [T]hey are illuminating glimpses for all that, and not only for their alternative perspectives on the ways of men. A female world, on the diggings and in gold-rush Melbourne, also emerges from these sources, a world with its own ethos and its own dreams. (Anderson, 2001, 225)

The glimpse offered in the *Beyers Family* photograph suggests much information about Mary Beyer's life in Hill End. It illustrates the building inhabited by the family (of modest but solid construction with 12-pane glass windows, wooden front door and covered verandah), [3] the backyard garden (densely planted with ornamental plants—and vegetables?), the clothing styles (with Mary wearing a flowery cap and a dress with a heavy bustle and tight shiny bodice, while her husband and daughters are more plainly attired) as well as possible indications of the warmth of their relationships (in held hands and a close grouping). The garden is of particular interest as a place where women could exert their influence, to the extent that in the goldfields it was a sign of the extra domestic comforts that typically accompanied the presence of a woman in the household (Lawrence, 2001, 263). Suzanne Hunt suggests that domestic gardens worked as a kind of community art that "helped to beautify 'the howling wilderness'", but also conveyed "an image of civilised living" and "to the individual, a sense of place" (Hunt, 2001, 267). It is to be hoped that Beyer's House, which still stands in a derelict state in Clark Street, will be conserved and presented to the public in a way that may help expand our knowledge of the historic lifestyles, working patterns and gardening skills of women such as Mary Beyers (and subsequent inhabitants of the house).

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[3] This cottage, known as Beyers House is still standing in Clarke Street, although derelict and awaiting substantial conservation work.

Matilda Lister's *Bringing in the Beyers Holtermann Nugget* (1951) and Brett Whiteley's *Hill End* (1985-1990).
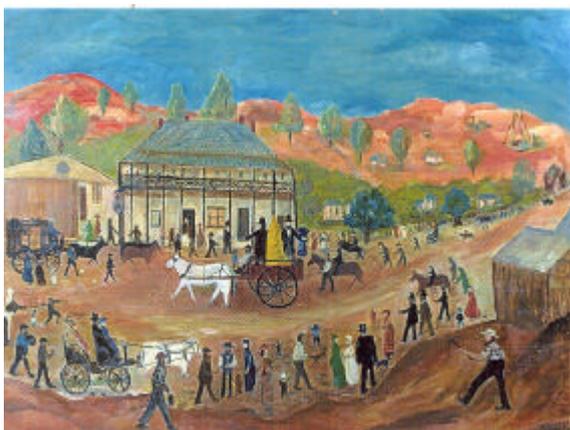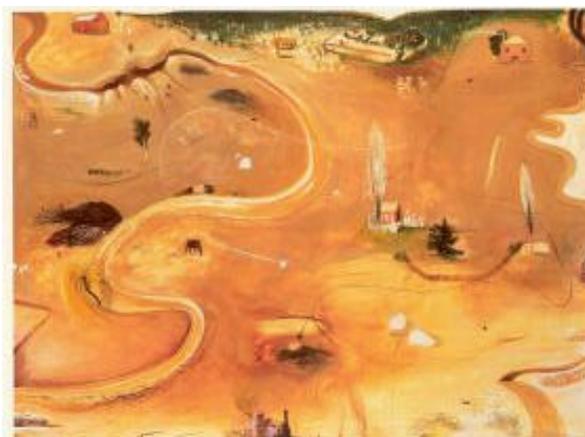
Matilda Lister's painting (plate 7), *Bringing in the Beyers Holtermann Nugget*, was a mystery until quite recently. It appeared as a black and white reproduction in Donald Friend's *Hillendiana*, where it was unaccompanied by any explanation (Friend, 1956), and again in Gavin Wilson's *Artists of Hill End* (1995, 92) this time appearing only with the uncertain biographical dates for Lister, "1889?-1965" (Wilson, 1995, 122). These dates however were helpful because they told us that the painting was a twentieth century recreation rather than one drawn from personal experience or memory. However it was missing for decades until it turned up for sale in a commercial gallery in Melbourne in 1996, when the Bathurst Regional Gallery snapped it up. As I had suspected, Lister was indeed a local, amateur artist and the image was painted in the early 1950s as part of the Hill End Centenary Celebrations, which had included historical re-enactments of key events (Judd, Lawson and Wilson, 2001, 7; Wilson, 1995, 89). Wilson explains:

> [Lister] was first noticed by her neighbour, Donald Friend, who encouraged her interest in oil painting. Although elderly, she went on to be recognised as a true primitive artist and was referred to in the media as Australia's "Grandma Moses". Lister was a regular exhibitor in the Blake prize for Religious Art and was awarded the D'arcy Morris Memorial Prize. (Judd, Lawson and Wilson, 2001,7)

The painting style is "naïve" with clearly delineated buildings and characters, telling the story of Beyers and Holtermann arriving in town on the dray sitting astride their golden, human-sized nugget. Despite this narrative and figurative clarity, it is a sophisticated image, presenting the landscape with a high horizon line and lyrical flowing lines reminiscent of Brett Whiteley's later (and larger) painting (plate 8). Whiteley has been accused of feminising the landscape by turning it into a sexualised female body— "all

curves and smooth rounded domes and inviting crevices – ready for the taking", as Gary Lee has observed (Lee, 1997, 107).[4] Lister also feminises the landscape in a European appropriation, but by presenting it as pleasantly domesticated. Unlike the harsh, desert-like images of Hill End looking like a ghost town which were being painted contemporaneously by Drysdale and others, Lister's presents Hill End in its heyday as the town centre of a colourful pastoral idyll, its busy (if muddy) streets surrounded by green pastures and rolling red hills dotted with trees of different shapes and textures.

That this might be a *gendered* contrast in perception is also suggested by the comparison between Maureen Hanson's painting *Church Hill End*, 2002 (www.hillendart.com/0010. htm) (plate 19) and Jeffrey Smart's *Nun's Picnic*, 1957 (plate 15). In Hanson's painting, Hill End's landscape is green, leafy and comfortable while in Smart's it is a red and rocky desert. This difference in approach to the Hill End landscape can also reinforce several studies suggesting there is a gendered difference in the European approach to the Australian desert. Elaine Lindsay argues that Australian male writers, artists and film-makers "seem to be fixated on the desert as the key to national identity, enlightenment, environmental renewal and racial reconciliation". Lindsay's analysis of the names indexed in Roslyn Haynes' *Seeking the Centre, The Australian Desert in Literature Art and Film* (1998) found that 78 per cent were male, confirming her contention that "women have been significantly less inclined to look to the desert for their geographical and metaphorical bearings" " (Lindsay, 2000, 21, fn 71). By contrast, she concludes her own study of spirituality in Australian women's literature by arguing that:

> Women find it possible to access the divine wherever they are, in their houses and gardens, in the company of friends or family, or in the act of creation. Unlike those men enamoured of Desert Spirituality, they do not have to go on long and painful journeys by themselves for their climactic meeting with God (or the absence thereof). (Lindsay, 2000, 278)

I am interested in Lister's painting also for the way in which it shifts the heroic, masculine emphasis of the Holtermann nugget story. Firstly the town depicted is not the rough and ready men's town of legend but is lively with diverse and animated people in respectable dress, including the many women and children who make up at least half the characters portrayed. Secondly, Holtermann is not shown alone with the treasure but shown in collaboration with his business partner Beyers, both sharing the glory with arms outstretched, looking a little ridiculous. Thirdly and most remarkably, although the entrée of the great nugget into town is honoured by being positioned in the centre of the painting, it is not honoured with anyone else's attention, whatsoever. There is none of the crowding or jostling around the dray that might be expected, rather everyone continues blithely on their way, chatting, shopping and playing, as if this event was a daily occurrence. Is this a feminist re-reading of the most famous moment in Hill End's history, presenting it as a cheerful event in the busy life of the town rather than as an earth-shattering masculine achievement?

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[4] As an Aboriginal commentator, Lee is critical of Whiteley's imagery for its imposition of a white, masculinised sexuality on the landscape that "depletes" the land of its traditional meanings" (Lee, 1997, 107).

Russell Drysdale's *Woman in a Landscape* (1949) , *The Drover's Wife* (1945) and *A Drover's Camp Near Deniliquin* (1944)

↑ Plate 9. Russell Drysdale *The Drover's Wife* 1945
Oil on Canvas 50.8 x 61cm
Collection Mr and Mrs Benno Schmidt

← Plate 3. Russell Drysdale *Woman in a Landscape* 1949
Oil on canvas on hardboard, 101 x 66.3cm
Held Art Gallery of South Australia
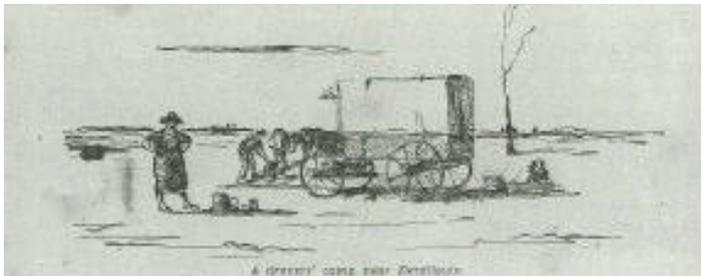
← Plate 10 Russell Drysdale
A Drover's Camp Near Deniliquin 1944
Pencil sketch for *Sydney Morning Herald* (16, 18 or 19 December 1944)

When Russell Drysdale's *Woman in a Landscape* (plate 3) won the Melrose Art Prize in South Australia in 1949, a newspaper debate erupted about its merits. One letter argued that "no outback Australian woman of white blood would be found with such hideous proportions and apparel as the artist portrays". Other letters expressed fears about the future of Australia's immigration program if it was to be shown in England or Europe, presumably because this woman's fierce appearance might be thought to be the fate that awaited all Australian women. Russell Drysdale is reported to have simply responded: "It was only Big Edna, that's all!", apparently referring to one of the locals with whom he had become acquainted at Hill End (Wilson, 1995, 61). Alex Torrens at the Bathurst Regional Gallery pointed out that the female figure in Donald Friend's *Hill End Bacchanal* looks very similar to Big Edna. She also alerted me to the Klepac monograph on Drysdale that discusses the painting in some detail. Klepac writes: "*Woman in a*

Landscape was just the 'big woman', as Drysdale referred to her in a letter, or 'Else', whom they all knew at Hill End, though she is sometimes also called Edna" (Klepac, 1996, 112-113).

I wondered what "Big Edna" thought about it, all of it. Had the painting affected her life? And how well did it reflect her perceptions of landscape in Hill End? Would it be possible to track down Big Edna and ask her? I asked two local women from Hill End "old families", Sheena Goodwin and Gwen Eyre, if they knew "Big Edna" or "Else", but neither was aware of anyone with that name. Both thought that the painting was not based on anyone local. Indeed, both thought that this painting was not of Hill End, that it did not *look* like Hill End—too flat, too red—but depicted somewhere further out west towards Bourke.[5] Gavin Wilson, author of the *Artists of Hill End* and long-time advocate for the town, suspected that Big Edna was not a single individual but an amalgam of country women that Drysdale had met. Indeed Drysdale had written at the time that if he was painting a woman, "it shouldn't be Edna or May or what have you, but a sort of archetype" (Klepac, 1996, 114) . Wilson also thought that the landscape in the painting was not simply Hill End (although the buildings in the distance have been identified there) but an amalgam of places Drysdale had visited. Klepac notes the close compositional similarity between *Woman in a Landscape* and *The Drover's Wife* (plate 9), Drysdale's painting of 1945, itself based on a sketch published by the *Sydney Morning Herald* in 1945 (Klepac, 1996, 85), *A Drover's Camp Near Deniliquin* (plate 10). The visual similarities between these images suggest that the landscape in *Woman in a Landscape* is at least an amalgam of Hill End and Deniliquin. It would seem to be an outsider's conflation of rural scenery and rural women, rather than a specific portrait of "Edna" in "Hill End". This interpretation is also supported by Alan Mayne:

> Hill Enders as a social type seemed to Drysdale and to Friend to encapsulate rural Australia, and to personify its history. The mood was well captured in Drysdale's prize-winning *Woman in a landscape* (1949)… (Mayne, forthcoming)

Paradoxically, this makes the task of tracking down "Big Edna" easier rather than harder. If Big Edna is an amalgam of country women, surely the way to ask "her" opinion is to ask regional women what they think of *Woman in a Landscape* and its characterisation of rural womanhood, and landscape? It would not be the whole truth, but then no interpretation can offer that. This would be getting at the point of looking at the painting in the first place, to develop a discourse of women's interpretations of the landscape and of their own place in the landscape. Indeed, the process was already begun with the newspaper debate over the painting being awarded a prize in the 1940s. Klepac offers an outraged comment from a Glenelg woman saying, "I have never seen a woman so hideous as that depicted. It is an insult to the bush folk" (Klepac, 1996, 112). Klepac also offers this intriguing comment from Mrs A. L. Ford from the Flinders Ranges, with the possibly misleading introduction, "Not everyone felt that Drysdale had denigrated country women with his painting":

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[5] Telephone conversation with Sheena Goodwin, May 2003 and Gwen Eyre, May 2003.

I sacrifice myself on the altar of Art. I am a "Drysdale"… I can account for the appearance of my sister on canvas. Her somewhat ungainly appearance is probably caused by worn sandshoes and a couple of obstinate bunions on her right big toe; "the simple unbroken line" of her figure, to the fact that she had not taken her "Venus Form" tablets lately, and that just when the artist was around, she left off her corsets. Her lank locks? Well her perm had only just grown out. The point is that Drysdale caught her off guard. To all the hunters with palette and brush I say, "Sneak up on them; catch them on the hop and you'll get a dozen Drysdales a week". (Klepac, 1996, 113, quoting Dutton, 1964, 40)

I suspect Mrs Ford did feel denigrated on behalf of all her sisters, but had the wit to turn it into a joke. Perhaps she also felt strangely proud of her "sister". The implication of her critique is more subtle than the Glenelg woman's comment, because she is not saying Drysdale was wrong, but that he had captured an image of femininity that women usually feel obliged to disguise. The meaning of the joke is uncertain. Is it about being resigned to living in a misogynist culture where men invade women's privacy, catch them off guard and represent them in ways that might shame them? Is it the irony that women should have to disguise their strength and capability with feminine frippery in the first place? Klepac seems to miss the irony in Mrs Ford's statement but goes on to discuss "the complex ideas" Drysdale had in mind while painting it (Klepac, 1996, 113), in the traditional art historical mode that privileges the intentions of the artist over the readings made by viewers.

It is significant that the women from Hill End, who were both already well acquainted with *Woman in a Landscape*, had never felt that this woman or this landscape was theirs. They didn't recognise themselves in it, although they didn't seem to be offended by it. The qualitative research in gathering (regional?) women's opinions about this painting has yet to be done, but might work well in the setting of an exhibition of landscape paintings about Hill End where visitors be invited to offer their opinions.

Jean Bellette *Still Life* **1955 and Alison Bennett** *Craigmoor House, Hill End (the Parlour)* **2003 and** *Craigmoor House (Floor Patchings)* **2003.**

Plate 1. Jean Bellette *Still Life* 1955
Oil on hardboard 90 x 120cm
Held Bathurst Regional Art Gallery

Plate 11. Alison Bennett
Craigmoor House, Hill End (the Parlour) 2003
Digital montage photograph on paper
Collection of the artist

Jean Bellette was one of the group of professional Sydney-based artists lead by Russell Drysdale and Donald Friend who "discovered" Hill End in the late 1940s. European-trained, married to Sydney's leading art critic Paul Haeflinger, and acclaimed as one of Sydney's leading modernist painters, Bellette was well accepted within this high-powered art clique. She was also well-liked by Hill End folk, who appreciated that she had bought a house in town. The fact that she enjoyed having a drink with locals at the Royal Hotel shocked some and endeared her to others. They apparently considered her a

"good sort" (Wilson, 1995, 77). Bellette contributed to the locality by taking art classes in Bathurst where her disciplined approach won admirers. She also helped initiate the Bathurst Art Prize, and in fact won the inaugural prize in 1955 with this painting, *Still Life* (plate 1) (Wilson, 1995, 80-81). Thus the painting serves as a reminder of her social engagement with the district, as well as presenting a powerful image in its own right.

Still Life is slightly larger than life-sized, featuring the usual domestic objects found in paintings of this genre: a table top set against a wall, some vegetables, some bowls, a milk jug, a tea-towel, a chair, light and dark, colour and shadow. Beauty is found in mundane items and expressed through the use of rich oil colours and weighty forms contrasted against sinuous lines. It reminds me of Cézanne in its careful composition and of cubism in its slight geometric distortions but it is lit with a brilliant Australian sunlight. The picture plane is busy and yet the organisation of colour and form is harmonious, possibly because of the rigorous balance of mostly primary colours (red, yellow and blue) interspersed with a few secondary colours (green and orange objects, and purple shadows?) and some detailing in black and white. It is a highly intellectual painting in its formal composition but it also expresses pleasure in everyday life experiences of fresh food and ordinary, useful objects.

The genre of still life was unusual for Bellette, who maintained a serious intellectual engagement with classicism (Tornatore-Loong, 2002). Her work more typically depicted classical Greek identities within landscapes, as in her *Minos of the Shades*, c.1951 (held National Gallery of Victoria, see http://www.ngv.vic.gov.au/collection/), also thought to have been painted in Hill End. Yet in much of her Hill End work, she depicted scenes from everyday life, such as the eroded alluvial riverscape in *Untitled Landscape*, c.1956, or images of ruins, as in *Ruins Near Bathurst*, 1949 and *Hill End*, c.1948. Even these landscape images conformed better with the "sombre themes" (Wilson, 1995, 80) she typically explored, described by Bernard Smith as places "where every root and rock presents some threatening archaic presence, where the mood is heroic and melancholic, a land where the gods are dead and man is dying" (Smith, 1989, 193, quoted in Wilson, 1995, 80). By contrast the *Still Life* is positive and life-affirming.

The *Still Life* depicts the elements of preparing a meal: celery, spring onions, swedes and chilies: a vegetable stew. The intimate depiction of this everyday ritual provides an important reminder of our integral, bodily relationships with the landscape. Such food is derived from the landscape, be it from market-gardens via shops or from the vegetable garden outside the window. Moreover, eating such food is crucial to our ability to interact with the landscape, by providing nutrients for our bodies. Finally, the rituals of preparing and eating meals are crucial, everyday modes of inhabiting the landscape, albeit usually *indoor*. Are not the interiors of houses just as much a part of the landscape as their exteriors? One might argue that interiors are, by definition, places from which the landscape has been excluded, or where remnants of it are allowed in only if tamed or domesticated. Yet this painting can serve to remind us that landscape is not just about external views but about chosen, "manageable themes" (Hanna, 2003, 13). We can choose to understand landscape in this *Still Life* as the integration rather than the opposition of these (gendered) dualisms of inside/ outside, production/ reproduction.

↑ Plate 12. Alison Bennett *Craigmoor House, Hill End (Floor patchings)* 2003. Digital montage photograph on paper. Collection of the artist

The interiors of *Craigmoor* provide an alternative site for developing approaches to the landscape of domestic interiors in Hill End. *Craigmoor* is Hill End's grandest home. Quite atypical in this town of small cottages, it is a large middle-class house and even contains a "Bishop's bedroom" for accommodating the Anglican bishop when he visited town. *Craigmoor* was built by James and Sarah Marshall in 1875, and inhabited by the family for a century until bought by the NPWS in 1975. Sarah survived her husband for twenty years and Hannah never married, living in the house with her widowed sisters Jean and Agnes until their deaths around 1950. Although the family was wealthy during the 1870s boom, when the money ran out Hannah and her sisters cared for everything just as it had always been, repairing everything as it wore out, keeping all the original furnishings and decorations. The next generation of Marshalls were unusual for resisting the temptation to tidy up and renovate. As an historic house that maintains the integrity of its original contents, it is in the same class as the Historic Houses Trust's *Rouse Hill* and *Meroogal.* The house has dark wooden panelling on the interior walls and ceilings that gives it a sombre air, and some people in the village believe it to be haunted by (female) ghosts. It is undoubtedly an important "women's site" for the NPWS.

A recent Conservation Plan carried out by the NPWS dealt only with the physical fabric of the house itself and its finishes (largely made by men), and didn't acknowledge the significance of the contents (partly made and entirely maintained by women). The Conservation Plan failed to call for oral histories or to plan a comprehensive cataloguing of the contents. Such oversights are apparently typical of the conservation strategies enacted in historic houses in Australia, which Marilyn Lake argues, have "often served to preserve women's historical *invisibility*" (Lake, 1991, 46, my emphasis; Young, c.2002). The contents are especially significant to *Craigmoor* because the Marshall women did many of the still life paintings and sewed many of the decorative and functional textiles, from embroideries to patched floor coverings and furnishings. Each of the beds has a hand-sewn geometric quilt made by the women of the family, and each of these is well-used and well-patched (these can be viewed on the National Quilt Registry at http://amol.org.au/search97cgi/s97is.dll). The quilt in Hannah's room is interesting for being made from bits of men's trousers.

The *Craigmoor* contents are very vulnerable to damage, so despite the great interest burgeoning around it, the house is currently opened only a few times each year, to small numbers of visitors who are carefully supervised by volunteer guides from the village. This delicacy and inaccessibility of the *Craigmoor* interiors contrasts with the robustness of the men's heritage at Hill End which, in its mining manifestations at least, is obvious and pervasive. This gendered difference in the historical products of men's and women's work, leading to the neglect of women's heritage, has been discussed by Miranda Morris:

Women have, on the whole, had more to do with creating home than building houses and a concentration on fixed heritage disadvantages those whose domain has lain in the creation and arrangement of moveable heritage, as well as in the responsibility for social reproduction and the maintenance of cultural heritage. (Morris, 1999, 17)

Craigmoor presents a problem not unlike the issue of allowing public access to fragile natural environments. The NPWS may be able to adapt its own expertise to develop sustainable ways of expanding the public's access to the house while minimising damage. One way may be through publication and other forms of representation. Alison Bennett's montage of digital photographs of the interiors is an exemplary way of promoting the house and its associated women's history (plate 11). Bennett's images are delicate panoramas that offer documentary accuracy in their detailing of the contents, but also a profound sense of the feminine care taken in the maintenance of the house, and of the fragility of these interiors. There are gently distorted perspectives arising out of the meshing of slightly different views, and jagged edges in the framing of the images. This handcrafted patch-working of images parallels the visual effect of the Marshall women's own careful textile repairs around *Craigmoor* (plate 12) It also draws attention to the constructed nature of Bennett's photographs, and by implication, to the constructed nature of our representations of history and place.

Emily Mouledale's *Needlework Sampler***, 1880 and Mrs Smithers'** *Necessity is the Mother of Invention,* **crochet centrepiece, c.1930**
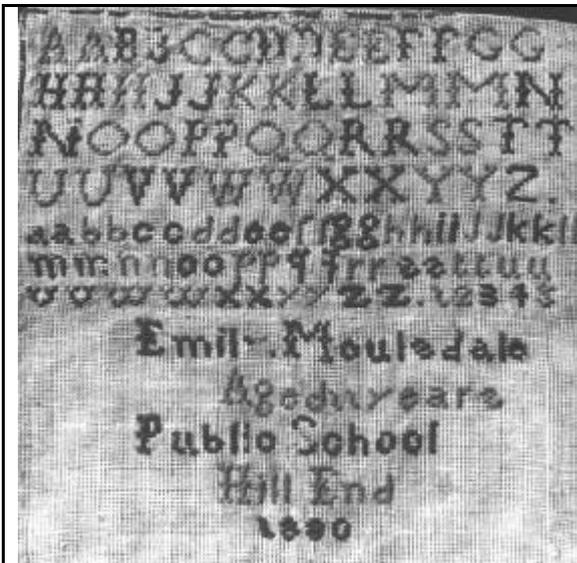
↑ Plate 13. Emily Mouledale's Needlework Sampler, Aged 11, 1880, displayed in *The Hill End Historic Needlework Exhibition*, organised by the women of Hill End and held in the Royal Hall at Hill End during Easter 1981. Photo courtesy of Marjorie Prior.
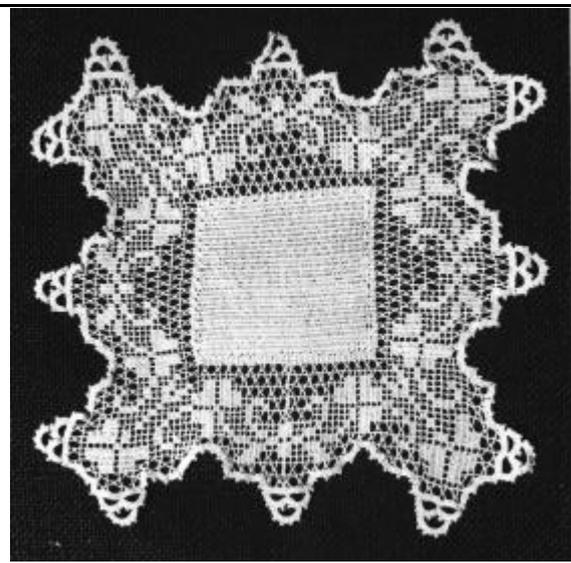
↑ Plate 14. Mrs Smithers *Necessity is the Mother of Invention,* crochet centrepie*ce*, c.1930, displayed in *The Hill End Historic Needlework Exhibition*, organised by the women of Hill End and held in the Royal Hall at Hill End during Easter 1981. Photo courtesy of Marjorie Prior.

These treasured pieces of historic needlework were shown publicly for the first time in the *Hill End Historic Needlework Exhibition*. This was organised by the women of Hill End and held in the Royal Hall at Hill End during Easter 1981. Most pieces from the exhibition were photographed and documented by Marjorie Prior as part of her research into the early lifestyles of Hill End people. Some works from the Hill End exhibition were then re-exhibited the following year in *We've Watched the Logs Burn*, which was staged at the Bathurst Neighbourhood Information Centre, and also at the Bathurst Show where it took pride of place in the central pavilion. The Bathurst exhibitions included Prior's photographs of the informants, selected transcripts of Prior's oral history interviews, historic needlework, and other objects that represented the Hill End mining community lifestyle early last century. Both the Hill End and the Bathurst shows were funded by the women of Hill End and Prior, who also collaborated in hanging them. [6] Marjorie Prior remembers that on the weekend of the Hill End show there was a gang of bikies in town, visiting as tourists, and that two matriarchs in the group were so determined to protect the needlework that they slept overnight on the stage in the Royal Hall, overlooking the exhibit with shotguns by their sides (Hanna interview with Prior, 2003).

[6] I am grateful to Marjorie Prior for making these images of these needlework pieces available for this report, and for providing some explanatory context for them.

Emily Mouledale's sampler (plate 13), apparently embroidered at the public school in Hill End when she was 11, exemplifies the little girl's skills in reading, writing and needlework, and also, by implication, her feminine virtues of tidiness, agility and perseverance. It has no figurative references to the landscape or anything else, consisting entirely of letters and numbers, but it was created inside the public school room, i.e. within the Hill End landscape. It may have incorporated local materials such as dyes derived from the local environment (like the work of the recent artist in residency, Judy McDermott, who utilised materials from the Hill End landscape for her quilt works). The very existence of this sampler indicates a certain degree of leisure away from farm work and domestic work, access to education and time to create a non-essential, decorative item that exemplified Mouledale's literacy and feminine discipline. It must have been a difficult but important expression of her identity, resulting in an object that has also been carefully tended by successive generations.

Mrs Smithers' doily centrepiece (plate 14) also provides living proof that her skill and determination to create feminine niceties for the home has been appreciated by successive generations, even if her first name has been forgotten. The supposed function of a doily is to cushion the surface of a bench or table from wetness or scratch marks from objects placed there (such as vases or bowls of fruit). But I would suggest its real function is to signify that the domestic space is in order and under the proper care of a capable woman. Doilies are strongly associated with femininity in Australia, and not always respectfully. They are seen by some to be a bit fussy and old-fashioned (Anonymous, 1979). And yet this one has been carefully respected. Mrs Smithers' doily is remembered as being crafted during the Great Depression of the early 1930s. Its centrepiece is not the usual square of linen but rather is crocheted—apparently because there were no spare pieces of linen to be had. Hence the title bestowed upon it by the contemporary women of Hill End, *Necessity is the Mother of Invention*. The evident poverty of resources evidenced by the crocheted centre is difficult to imagine today, and provides a subtle insight into the difficult conditions endured by many women in Hill End throughout its history, struggling to feed and clothe their families. The fact that the doily was made at all might now be seen as heroic.

While preparing this paper I visited my parents, and my mother pointed out that the doily on her breakfast table was crafted decades ago by an old friend of our family called Maggie. I didn't know that Maggie had lived alone on her farm near Trangie, nor that she had crocheted her doilies on horseback, out riding, while looking after her property. Maggie's story elegantly confuses all the gendered oppositions associated with inside/ outside and masculine / feminine occupations. I suspect there is a litany of similarly surprising tales associated with the needlework at Hill End.[7]

[7] Marjorie Prior has collected information about needlework and family treasures in her book on the history of Hill End which is based on her oral history work over twenty years, *Hill End, Stories From the Old Folks* (forthcoming)

Jeffrey Smart's *Nun's Picnic* 1957, Julie-Anne Long (and collaborators) *Nun's Picnic Performance* 2003 and Maureen Hanson's *Church, Hill End* 2002.

↑ Plate 15. Jeffrey Smart
Nun's Picnic 1957
Oil on board, 34.5 x 43 cm
Private collection

   Plates 16, 17, 18. Julie-Anne Long and collaborators (Heidrun Löhr, photographer)
Exploratory Photographs for the Nun's Picnic Performance 2003

← Plate 19. Maureen Hanson
Church, Hill End 2002
[www.hillendart.com/0010.htm]

Jeffrey Smart's *Nun's Picnic*, 1957 (plate 15) seems to be a bit of fun. I don't know what it means or why people like it so much. It adorns the cover of Gavin Wilson's book, *The Artists of Hill End* (Wilson, 1995), giving it a certain symbolic priority. Perhaps it works on the cover of an art book because it is unmistakably a real place in Hill End, but at the same time it seems to be fantastic, a fabrication. Smart often constructed "surreal" landscape imagery using identifiable places but divesting them of their usual traffic, and inserting strangely convincing characters into them. Certainly, local resident Gwen Eyre can't recall ever seeing any nuns around town (Hanna interviews with local residents, 2003), although there might have been some in the town's heyday, ministering to the substantial Irish community. So what? What could be the content of the fantasy in 1957? I don't think it is sexual. It has something to do with the contrast of those fabulous habits against that red desert landscape. The dark sky behind them has been described as

foreboding but I think it mainly provides a pictorial balance against the nun's black frocks. It somehow cools the overheated reds of the landscape, rendering the image quite still and peaceful. Perhaps it adds to the overall surreal effect of the painting by rendering the time of day uncertain (is it night? Dusk? Stormy?). I think it is important that these figures are nuns rather than, say, monks. I think it matters that their gender is feminine. There is the contrast of their feminine role of caring for others against their self-centred contentment as they settle, delicate and birdlike, ready for a little nourishment. There is the nature/ culture contrast of those heavy clothes, constraining and symbolic, against that minimalist landscape. The nuns are completely at home in that weird landscape and at the same time entirely inimical to it.

The performance artist and choreographer Julie-Anne Long has carried a reproduction of the *Nun's Picnic* around with her for years, in her pile of favourite images, although she also cannot say exactly why she likes it. However, when the opportunity arose to take a 1residency as an artist in Hill End, Long decided it was time to develop something out of her fascination with the image (Hanna interview with Long and Valadon, 2003). In her application, Long suggested that she might examine the themes of "shifting identity, transportation and transformation" (Bathurst Regional Gallery, 2003). She has brought in a group of collaborators to work with her: photographer Heidrun Löhr, painter Lucy Culleton and video-artist Samuel James. The project is still at a preliminary stage, where anyone involved might yet take it off in any direction. Long is planning to stage a dance performance sometime in the next year or so, possibly at Bathurst or Hill End.

Heidrun Löhr allowed me to choose some photographic images of the work in progress, from her many pages of proof sheets. Several photos depict an attempt to restage the nun's picnic in Smart's location (plate16). Many of the other images of nuns wafting through the Hill End landscape are also evocative. The artists visited Kissing Rock on the outskirts of town, where the nun insinuated herself into the massive rock crack (plate 17), recalling images of the schoolgirl Miranda and her friends who went missing in the Australian bush in *Picnic at Hanging Rock*. The artists also worked at night, with streetlights and car headlights on the nun, who posed near the beautiful, disheveled picket fences that adorn many of the properties in town (plate 18). These images of the nun are melodramatic, almost gothic, mysterious and appealing in the same way as Smart's painting.

While these images may not consciously engage with spirituality, they can also serve to remind us of the central role that religion has played in the lives of many women in small towns like Hill End. The church offered a focus for community life and a common source of solace for men and women in living in difficult conditions. Perhaps it is this contrast between the powerful historic role undertaken by the church and the whimsy in the imagery fabricated by artists such as Smart and Long that helps explain their appeal.

Christine McMillan's *Hill End I* (2001)
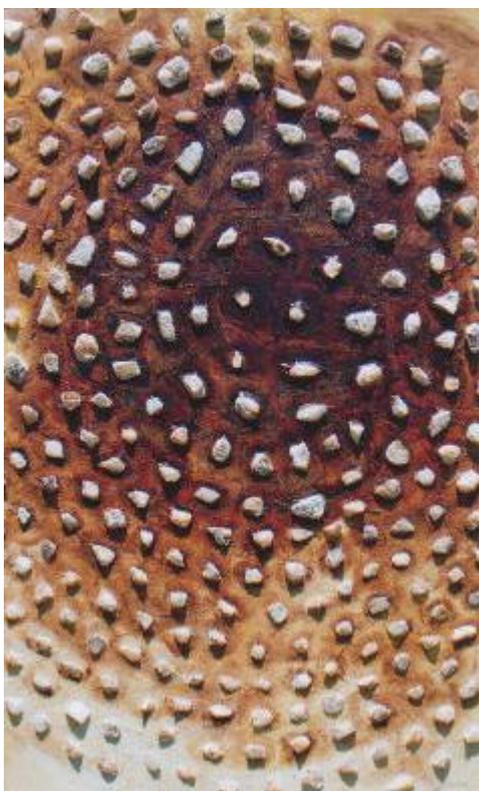
Plate 20. Christine McMillan
Hill End I 2001
120 x 74 cm, quartz, muslin,
Xanthorrhoea resin
[http://winsoft.net.au/~chboli/chrismcmi
llhillend.html]

Hill End I, 2001 (plate 20) is a contemporary work of abstract art arising from Christine McMillan's artist-in-residency in Hill End in November 2001, and formed part of her recent exhibition at the Bathurst Regional Gallery in May 2003. In this work, McMillan has combined the golden coloured resin of the native plant Xanthorrhoea (which she calls "my gold") with fragments of quartz found on the ground at Hill End. She has overlaid this with a fine layer of textile and then painstakingly pulled aside "the warp and the weft" of the muslin to "expose the quartz" (McMillan, 2003, http://winsoft.net.au/~ chboli/) (plate 21). The result is a collage on canvas which is strong but delicate. Christine McMullan's artist's statement explains her rationale for using these materials:

> Putting the quartz under muslin is symbolic of returning them to their strata within the earth. The quartz has been placed in a loose spiral pattern. The centre of the spiral is covered with thick layers of resin (my "gold"). The thick resin and richness of colour at the centre is symbolic of the heat which vapourised the gold and deposited it in veins of quartz.

When I briefly met McMillan, she mentioned being impressed by an anecdote in Angela Malone's novel, *Lucia's Measure* (2000), which was written in part while Malone was a artist-in-residence in Hill End. The novel offers a story of women preparing for the coming of winter by sewing pebbles into their skirts, presumably to keep in the warmth. This odd relationship between rock and textile, an inversion of inside and outside, is

alluded to in McMillan's work. *Hill End I* recombines landscape and textile in a loose spiral that also alludes to the elemental forces in the creation of gold. Quartz and native plants have been drawn directly from the landscape, recombined through the "weft and warp" of muslin in a golden spiral and brought into the art gallery, to ponder.

Plate 21. Christine McMillan *Hill End I* 2001 [Detail]
120 x 74cm, quartz, muslin, Xanthorrhoea resin.

CONCLUSIONS

Perhaps it is not possible to change deeply entrenched identifications of particular landscapes with particular modes of gender representation. However this survey of Hill End imagery suggests that even in a most traditional site, there has long been more diversity in such representations than is suggested by the dominant two modes of gendering of Australian landscape as a site of white masculine endeavour or as a feminine being.

A complexity of understandings of the Hill End landscape and its relationships with women has been evoked in the analysis of these art images. One understanding was simply to emphasise the historical *presence* of women in the landscape, especially in the boom time 1870s (e.g., as does the Holtermann Photograph Collection, and Matilda Lister's painting), but also throughout Hill End's history (e.g., apparent in the Emily Mouledale and Mrs Smithers needlework pieces, the *Craigmoor* interiors, Jean Bellette's *Still Life* and the work of the contemporary women artists). The variety of this imagery forms a counterweight against malestream histories that overly-emphasise the masculinity of the gold digging experience in particular, and of Australian rural history in general, and that seem to assume either that women were absent or their lives too dull to mention.

Beyond the evidence of women's mere presence, there is a particularity in women's engagement with the landscape made apparent by some of the images. Most of these images speak of women's special relationships to *domestic space and domestic work* in Hill End, leading to a complexity of issues in relation to landscape analysis. There is the suggestion that home-making and gardening are important factors in making life more comfortable, but also that they can signify "an image of civilised living" in the face of "the howling wilderness" (Hunt, 2001, 267) (e.g., in the Holtermann Photograph Collection, and the *Craigmoor* interiors). There is the argument that landscape should include consideration of interiors as well as exteriors of houses, that, for example, women's work in preparing meals (Jean Bellette's *Still Life*) may belong to landscape analysis, not only because meals are derived from the landscape but because they are crucial to men's and women's ability to work the landscape, and finally because they always take place *within* landscapes, even if that is inside houses—meals are a physical, bodily, spatial experience. Also importantly, domestic landscapes provide a powerful and intimate role in memory and imagination, as is well understood by psychoanalysts and phenomenologists (Bachelard, 1969). Finally, within this theme of domesticity, the evidence of some women's frugal maintenance of their homes and possessions (as in the *Craigmoor* interiors, the Mrs Smithers' crochet centrepiece), suggests a kind of "treading lightly" in the landscape that might be seen as a model for environmental sustainability.

Another point arising out of this analysis of imagery is the possibility of differently gendered *perceptions* of Hill End's landscape. Many of the women seemed to see Hill End as pastoral while men were more likely to view it as desert-like. This became explicit in the discussion of Russell Drysdale's *Woman in a Landscape*, where local women from Hill End felt quite certain that the red, desert-like landscape in his painting was not *their*

landscape (just as the woman he had depicted was not one of them). This difference was also apparent in Matilda Lister's historic recreation of a pastoral Hill End in contrast with the red, eroded earth of Brett Whiteley's (curvaceous but dry) landscape, and in Maureen Hanson's green and leafy *Church, Hill End* contrasted against Jeffrey Smart's *The Nun's Picnic*. This difference in perception was also noted in conversation with current artists-in-residence, Julie-Anne Long and Rosemary Valadon, who both mentioned their surprise at the scenery upon their arrivals in Hill End. Rosemary Valadon expressed it in terms of colours, that Hill End was so much more "yellow and green" rather than "red", as the (mostly male) artists of the 1940s and 1950s had painted it (Hanna interview with Long and Valadon, 2003). While there can be little doubt that Hill End has become greener and leafier over the last half century, Brett Whiteley's red earth Hill End was painted only fifteen years ago. The possibility of such a gendered difference in the perception of Hill End seems surprisingly crude, but might be tested with visitor questionnaires, art gallery surveys, or more in-depth focus groups interviews with tourists and locals. The question of *why* such a difference is also begging.

A final observation about this imagery relates to the work of contemporary women artists, where there seems to be a trend to draw quite literal parallels between their own art practice and the landscape itself. I am struck by several similar sets of relationships. Christine McMillan actually brings bits of quartz and plant resin into the studio and onto her canvas from outside. Alison Bennett's patchwork of photographic images in some ways reproduces the *Craigmoor* women's textile patch working of their interiors that she is documenting. Julie-Anne Long conducts a performance in Hill End that was inspired by a Hill End painting but she is bringing images of nuns into the streets and the bush around Hill End where Jeffrey Smart had (probably) only imagined them. In each case there is certain identification between the thing represented (the signified) and the representation (the signifier), which has a strange "reality effect" in their combination (the sign), evoking but also *re-inventing* the Hill End landscape in a complexity of ways. All contribute to the "re-gendering" of Hill End as way of expanding and regenerating our perceptions of landscape.

SUMMARY

This report offers a literature review as the initial step in the NPWS Cultural Heritage Division's "Gendered Landscapes Project". It outlines some of the possibilities of such a project by presenting an overview of research in the topic area, with an emphasis on studies of national parks and women. It also offers a case study examining gender and landscape in historical and art images associated with the NPWS "Historic Site" township of Hill End.

The report proposes, from a social constructivist perspective, that "landscape" is a spatial representation of human relationships with nature, while "gender" is the representation of sexual difference, and that both concepts are malleable, cultural constructions. However, in agreement with Kay Schaffer's *Women and the Bush* (1988), the report argues that in Australia two dominant historic modes of gendering the landscape have been to represent it firstly as the site of white masculine endeavour ("no place for a woman") and secondly as a feminine being ("Mother Nature").

Definitions of the terms "landscape" and "gender" have been numerous. Landscape is defined here to be a complex representation that examines aspects of natural, built or imagined environments and stresses their relationships to other places and things. It is understood in multiple ways by different users and observers and for different audiences, as not only factual but experiential The report also examines a variety of feminist approaches to questions of gender, history, geography, representation and reform as they may impact on questions of landscape. Feminist scholarship in these topic areas is categorised into three main approaches described as "liberal feminist", "radical/ socialist feminist" and "postmodern feminist".

Each feminist approach allows for different questions to be asked and different strategies of interpretation and reform to be proposed. Liberal feminism stresses questions of women's equality in historical representation and in the contemporary national parks workplace. It calls for reforms to a system that is assumed to be basically sound. Radical/ socialist feminism emphasises the importance of addressing more "black armband" issues of exploitation and social struggle, historical and recent. Whereas liberal feminism produces historical biographies of outstanding women in the public domain, radical/ socialist feminism studies the historical constitution of gender in society and its effects upon broad cross-sections of the population. Postmodern feminism examines the ways in which strategies of representation can influence power relations and generate different meanings, and is often linked to the postcolonial concern with indigenous politics.

The second section of the report examines some of the historical specificities of gender and landscape in Hill End. Hill End was chosen as the case study for this report because it is a prominent NPWS "Historic Site" and because it has long been understood and presented in an obviously masculine register, stressing the activities of male gold miners and largely ignoring women's contributions to the landscape. It was also chosen because of the extraordinary richness of its visual representations, that are well documented in Gavin Wilson's publication *The Artists of Hill End* (1995).

The case study begins with a short history of Hill End "as if women mattered", drawing on the recently-commissioned NPWS history of Hill End by Alan Mayne. The main part of this second section then consists of visual analysis of 20 images associated with Hill End. Semiotic-type readings variously consider the material history of the images (how they came to be produced and kept), their iconography (some of the possible meanings of the imagery), and other questions of their cultural meaning. They operate as "pressure-points" to generate discussion about how to rethink the relationships of gender, landscape, history and heritage in Hill End.

A complexity of understandings of the Hill End landscape and its relationships with women are evoked in the analysis of these images. One understanding is the evidence offered by many of these images of the historical *presence* of women in the landscape, as a counterweight against malestream histories that overly-emphasise the masculinity of the gold digging experience in particular, and of Australian rural history in general. Most of the images speak of women's special relationships to domestic space and domestic work in Hill End, leading to a complexity of issues in relation to landscape analysis: that home-making and gardening were important factors in making life more comfortable within the Hill End landscape; that home-making could signify "an image of civilised living" in the face of "the howling wilderness"; that meals are related to landscapes not only because they are derived from the landscape and because they are crucial to men's and women's ability to work the landscape, but also because they always take place *within* landscapes, albeit usually inside houses; that the evidence of some women's frugal maintenance of their homes and possessions suggests a kind of "treading lightly" in the landscape that might be seen as a model for environmental sustainability. There was also the suggestion of a gendered difference in the perception of Hill End, that men might be more likely to perceive it as desert-like and women more likely to perceive it as pastoral.

Perhaps it is not possible to change deeply entrenched identifications of particular landscapes with particular modes of gender representation. However this survey of Hill End imagery suggests that even in a most traditional site, there has long been more diversity in such representations than is suggested by the dominant two modes of gendering of Australian landscape (as a site of white masculine endeavour or as a feminine being). Overall this analysis of imagery contributes to the project of rereading the landscape of Hill End in more complex ways than the usual two modes (i.e., the site of white masculine endeavour or as a feminine being). This "re-gendering" interpretation of Hill End imagery offers one way of expanding and regenerating our perceptions of NPWS landscapes.

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- With Alison Bennett, 8 May 2003.
- With Sharon Veale and Catherine Snelgrove in Hill End, 8 May 2003.
- With artists-in-residence, Julie-Anne Long and Rosemary Valadon, 7 May 2003.
- With Bathurst Regional Gallery Acting Director, Alex Torrens by phone, email and in person, May-June 2003.
- With Marjorie Prior by phone, 16 May 2003.
- With James Weirick, informal conversations, February-May 2003.
- With NPSW Aboriginal information officers by phone, Vanessa Kendall, Hurstville, and Michael Duncan, Bathurst, 13 June 2003.

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