Australian Rock

Essays on Popular Music

Jon Stratton

Contents

Introduction

Almost every Australian under sixty will know 'Khe Sanh'. They'll know it was recorded by Cold Chisel. They'll probably be able to hum it and may even have sung it, the men more likely than the women, drunkenly, at parties and barbecues. And 'Shout'. Not the Isley Brothers original or Lulu's version that made it into the English charts in 1964 but Johnny O'Keefe's 1959 version. O'Keefe's version resonated with Australians and, I will argue, not just because O'Keefe was Australian. Rather, because O'Keefe's version made sense to Australians, unlike that of the Isley Brothers which most Australians would not, anyway, have heard, and this, and the reasons for this, will form a part of this book's argument. Neither 'Khe Sanh' nor O'Keefe's version of 'Shout' is known outside of Australia. Nor is Billy Thorpe's great, anthemic, foundational Oz Rocker, 'Most People I Know (Think That I'm Crazy)'.

What is it that is specific about Australian popular music? For that matter, we could ask, and some people are beginning to, what is specific about American, or English, popular music? But my concern here is with Australia. Certainly it could be argued, and has been, that the majority of Australian artists aren't successful outside Australia because they are not as good as British or American artists. I do not find this argument compelling. Indeed, we could turn it around and ask what it is about certain artists, and their music, that enables them to be so successful in other markets. Surely it is not just talent. As consumers we need to understand the music, not necessarily in consciously analytic terms but we must be able to

appreciate the song structures, the rhythms, the chord sequences and so on. What has it been about AC/DC's music that has enabled them to become monster rockers in the United States, while the Easybeats could only manage one hit in England and that was produced by an American, Shel Talmy, who helped develop the English rock sound? I will argue that the Easybeats's music was too Australian for English and American ears. From this point of view, AC/DC's achievement was not to sound Australian, something Kylie Minogue also achieved with the help of English pop meisters Stock, Aitken and Waterman. I will be suggesting that Australian music has evolved its own particular sound as a consequence of the particularity of the Australian culture of which it is an element.

One of the most important components in the constitution of Australian culture, as it has also been in the construction of Australian identity, has been race. The preoccupation with race, and the exclusion of those designated as non-white, was one of the driving concerns behind federation. After federation the *Immigration Restriction Act* of 1901 formed the cornerstone of the White Australia policy. By 1973 the Australian government had eliminated race as a determining criterion for prospective migrants. Yet racism has lived on in Australian culture, partly because it played such a central part in the make-up of the Australian population for three-quarters of a century and partly because the cultural anxieties about race continue to permeate Australian society.

The specificity of Australian popular music may appear a long way from the Australian anxiety over race. It is not. One of the themes which runs through many of the chapters in this book is that race, and the prejudices and inheritances linked with race, have been central to the particularity of Australian popular music. Elsewhere, others as well as myself have discussed the connections between the government's policy of multiculturalism, established in the late-1970s as a way of managing the European migrants who had unexpectedly not assimilated into Australia's British-based culture, and race. Later in this Introduction I shall discuss how, in spite of this policy, Australian popular music has remained not only 'white' in its cultural assumptions but resolutely Anglo-American. Understanding this helps us to appreciate why, to take a seemingly banal example, in the 2006 Australian Broadcasting Corporation listeners' poll of their favourite 100 albums, the first non-white artist, Prince, comes in at number 61, with *Purple Rain*, followed by

Miles Davis at number 65 with *Kind of Blue*. No other albums by non-white artists are in the list. The list is almost completely filled by more or less tuneful rock albums—Beatles records are at numbers 4 and 5. Racially, rock is a genre dominated by white men.

Mainstream Australian popular music has been poorly served by academia. Philip Hayward's edited collection, *From Pop to Punk to Postmodernism*, published in 1992, was a watershed in the academic discussion of popular music in Australia. Looking back on it now though, it is a work deeply scarred by cultural cringe. Its dominant theoretical position is that Australian rock music is derivative and imitative. Graeme Turner also takes this position, with his usual clarity. He writes that: 'To look for "the Australian" element [in popular music] is to look for a local inflection, the distinctive modification of an already internationally established musical style'.[1] He goes on: 'The American and British dominance of popular musical styles and of the retail music market has been so comprehensive that one cannot really locate an indigenous musical style either in the mainstream or in the alternative fringe of the Australian rock and pop industry.'[2] Turner writes that what he '*won't* pursue ... is the hunt for a local sound—the audio equivalent of the "Australian look" in film'.[3] This, he explains, 'is a compromised concept' in film and 'in music it is simply untenable'.[4] The exception to this position in Hayward's collection is Vikki Riley's chapter on punk rock in Melbourne where she spends some time arguing the reverse, that Australian punk rock was not derivative of the English version, though influenced by it, and that it needs to be understood within the Australian cultural context—even so she uses the subtitle 'The British invent a movement—the colony responds'.[5]

More recently, in *Tracking the Jack*, published in 2000, Tara Brabazon has asked: 'What does it mean for a track of music to sound Australian?'[6] However, while arguing that: 'There is a proliferation of local styles that mould, critique and question Anglo-American popular music genres'[7], she suggests that these styles get incorporated into the globalised music industry and that, in the end, 'the failure to integrate Western styles with indigenous rhythm indicates that the style of Australian music is essentially derivative of American and European modes'.[8] In this argument, only the integration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander musics into Australian popular music would guarantee an Australian sound. While this would limit music that could be defined as Australian to

artists like the Warumpi Band and Yothu Yindi, both of which had a majority of Indigenous members, the absence of an Indigenous inflection in music that could be thought of as characteristically Australian needs to be acknowledged. We can contrast this with South Africa where the liner notes for a recent retrospective collection tell us that: 'The story of *Jiving to the Weekend Beat* is the tale of those pioneering South African bands of the past 2½ decades who sidestepped apartheid's separate development strategies by shelving recycled imported rock and roll formulae and tuned into a distinctive African groove.'[9] The Australian lack of cultural synthesis with local music suggests the anxieties of a different settler society—in short, the belief in *terra nullius* translates into an absence of culture, including music.

Denying the existence of a national sound, Brabazon asks: 'What does Englishness sound like?' and, answering that there is no English sound, writes that: 'Blur probably has more in common with [New Zealand band] Straitjacket Fits than Split Enz.'[10] What I think Brabazon means here is that Blur have more in common with Straitjacket Fits than that band has with Split Enz, in spite of both Straitjacket Fits and Split Enz being New Zealand bands. Brabazon's example is an unfortunate choice. Blur are a part of a very English lineage that includes the Beatles, the Kinks, and the Smiths which, in its most recent, nostalgic incarnation, is known as Britpop.[11] Moreover, like these other bands, Blur's Englishness resides not only in their lyrics, CD covers and the like, but in their sonic evocation of a white English musical tradition, a tradition not founded in rural folk music but in the commercial popular music of the music hall.[12]

Certainly it is the case that popular music is a globalised, international industry, and has become more and more so since the early days of rock'n'roll in the 1950s.[13] Nevertheless, much popular music is produced and consumed locally, and under local cultural conditions. Culture is an active process. As John Fiske noted: 'Culture is the constant process of producing meanings of and from our social experience.'[14] This book starts from the importance of the local. Recently, some cultural geographers have begun to think about the emplacement of popular music. John Connell and Chris Gibson's *Sound Tracks: Popular Music, Identity and Place*, published in 2003, is a good example. As these authors write: 'At various scales, and in a vast range of locations, music has been linked with place—whether in the subways of New York, the rainforests of New

Guinea or the clubs of Manchester—as cultural geographers and others have traced links between music styles, sub-cultures and places.'[15] For me, though, coming from cultural studies, what is lacking in this kind of understanding is Fiske's point; that is, the importance of culture itself, that sense that when people engage with music they do so out of their own knowledges and shared assumptions. People produce and consume and reproduce music according to their own cultural experiences and expectations. In this fundamental context they will endeavour to make sense, or not, of other people's music and will accept and reject, modify and transform, elements of that music into their own musical production.

The term that I find useful in thinking about a group's shared assumptions about what music is, or more specifically, what informs the production and consumption of music by the members of a group, is 'musical sensibility'. Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett has used the idea of sensibility in her discussion of the revival of klezmer music in the United States. She writes that:

> In the hiatus between the old and the new [klezmer] players can be found keys to changes of sensibility that have made today's scene possible. Whatever their ostensible subject, the essays in this issue [this is part of the Introduction to a special issue of *Judaism*] sound the sensibilities specific to the klezmer phenomenon of the last twenty-five years. They show 'klezmer music' to be a powerful index of what Raymond Williams has called changing structures of feeling.[16]

Williams's celebrated notion of structure of feeling was first thoroughly elaborated in *The Long Revolution* as 'the culture of a period: it is the particular living result of all the elements in the general organization'[17]; and was subsequently revised in *Marxism and Literature* as being 'concerned with meanings and values as they are actively lived and felt'.[18] Musical sensibility is one element in a structure of feeling. In this book I discuss aspects of what I call the Australian musical sensibility. By this I mean the shared assumptions of members of the Australian community, thought of here along the national lines of Benedict Anderson's definition in *Imagined Communities* as 'a deep, horizontal comradeship'[19], about what popular music is—and, indeed, what the genres are into which this music might be categorised, and the premises on which people make

aesthetic judgements, or perhaps better, judgements of preference, based on these shared assumptions. That is, to put it simply, the Australian musical sensibility refers to the repertoire of shared assumptions through which Australians experience and evaluate the music they make and to which they listen. This sensibility can, in practice, be inflected in different ways. The dominant musical understanding refers to that understanding most prevalent, and most taken-for-granted, in the national culture. This shared understanding overdetermines both the production and consumption of music in, in this case, Australian culture.

I have already mentioned race as a formative element in the construction of this Australian musical sensibility. We can add to this the importance of sex. The Australian sound is overwhelmingly male. I have already signalled the great preponderance of male artists in the ABC Favourite Album poll. While this dominance is also the case in Britain and the United States, it is even harder for a female performer to be taken seriously in Australia. Female artists here are expected to confine themselves to pop music. Music which it is considered requires an emotional investment, and which itself is taken seriously, is a male prerogative. As with all generalisations there are crucial exceptions here: Wendy Saddington, Chrissie Amphlett of the Divinyls, Rebecca Barnard of Rebecca's Empire and there are others. The core of Australian popular music, though, from Johnny O'Keefe, through the beat bands such as Easybeats and the Twilights to the Oz Rock bands like the Angels and Cold Chisel, has always been not only white but male.[20]

The essays in this book start from a discussion of the Australian musical sensibility. However, Australia is a very diverse place and even the major cities have evolved quite different cultures one from another—something which tends to be downplayed since the cultural nation-building project of the 1970s and 1980s. While I begin this book with three chapters that consider the Australian popular musical sensibility, I go on to examine what is particular to the musical sensibility of Perth. There are, as I have quoted Connell and Gibson noting, various scales in the consideration of the local.

Andrew Stafford acknowledged the different cultures of Australian cities when he published *Pig City*, a good social history of the conditions for the production and consumption of popular

music in Brisbane from the early 1970s to around 2000. As Stafford discusses, music of this era in Brisbane has tended to be reduced to a footnote, 'that music in Brisbane—especially the punk scene of the late 1970s—was overwhelmingly a reaction to the repression of the Bjelke-Petersen era'.[21] Whereas, as he goes on to write:

> it makes little sense to give a politician too much credit for the creation of a music scene. Major cultural movements result from an intersection of local, national and international factors. The Saints were not so much a reaction to living in a police state as they were a response to the music of not just the Stooges and the MC5, but the Easybeats and the Missing Links. And it's doubtful the national success of a string of Brisbane acts in the '90s—from Powderfinger to George—could have happened without the nationalisation of the Triple J network.[22]

I have quoted this paragraph of Stafford's extensively because he is making well—in empirical terms—the point that I was making above more theoretically. Culture is local. The evolution of a Brisbane musical sensibility during the 1970s drew on cultural elements from a wide variety of sources—culture itself is, inevitably, an effect of a kind of bricolage process—and Brisbane popular music was produced and consumed and reproduced in a specific set of local cultural, historical, political and institutional circumstances.

In 2005, Tara Brabazon published an edited collection that focuses primarily on the Perth music scene of the 1990s. In her Introduction to *Liverpool of the South Seas*, Brabazon thinks about the particularity of Perth and how its physical distance from other Australian cities 'shapes identity and consciousness, requiring strategies to manage marginality'.[23] Brabazon thinks about the importance of marginal cities—the beat explosion came from Liverpool not London, the '90s dance movement came from Manchester not London, grunge came from Seattle not New York—in cultural innovation. She argues for a specificity for Perth based on a combination of insularity and 'a huge migrant population that creates an associative web between cities'.[24] Into this almost paradoxical mix Brabazon throws globalisation, a recognition of the complex economic, political and cultural global flows that have marked and transformed all experience across the world and which have been gathering pace since the 1970s. Brabazon argues that there are 'advantages in being excluded from the main game'[25]

being played among the major global cities like Sydney, London and New York. Second tier cities, as she calls them, like Perth, Manchester and Seattle, '"talk" to each other, trading differences on the monopoly board of commodified sameness'.[26] In Chapter Five I describe this process in terms of what I call global counter-flows.

Brabazon views Perth as entering a time of musical visibility because:

> With all the creative, critical, institutional and economic attention focused on London, Los Angeles, New York, Sydney and Melbourne, bands, DJs, and producers in these [second tier] centres can 'hide in the light,' developing a sound, skill base and experience without early pressure.[27]

It is interesting and not surprising that the two books so far that think about the local in Australian popular music production should be about two cities considered secondary and, indeed, marginal in Australia. So far there is no book on the popular music of either Sydney or Melbourne. For these cities, the naturalisation of Australian popular music as an *Australian* phenomenon still has too great a hegemonic hold. Indeed, David Kent argues that: 'Australian rock music cultural history is most often portrayed from the point of view of its Sydney origins, and presented to readers as being representative of Australian history.'[28] As Kent indicates, the people of Sydney and Melbourne—especially Melbourne—continue to think of the music produced in these cities as the characteristic Australian popular music.

Australian popular music is still being reproduced as a hangover from the days of White Australia before the 1970s institutionalisation of a non-discriminatory migration program and a policy of multiculturalism. Another way of thinking about this is to acknowledge the continuities between the White Australia Policy and Australia's formal multiculturalism structure which works, as I and others have pointed out, by way of a core and periphery differentiation.[29] Anglo-Celtic culture occupies the core while cultures from non-English-speaking countries are placed in a periphery where they are acknowledged and valued—though in relation to the dominant values and practices of the core—but are excluded from affecting the core culture and institutions of Australia. 'Anglo-Celtic' has become a common way to describe the dominant culture in Australia. It refers to a culture that is, primarily,

an amalgam of the cultures of the English and Irish settlers that evolved through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. As a descriptive term it is problematic because of the assumptions it makes about the evolution of the dominant culture. Its use is more a product of the organising structure of official multiculturalism. This structure enabled music played by ethnic groups to be placed in a broadened understanding of the Australian folk tradition. Graeme Smith explains that:

> Beginning in the second half of the 1970s and accelerating in the 1980s, multicultural music gained a new public among groups of left-liberal activists embracing the politics of ethnicity and cultural pluralism (perhaps echoing the left's involvement in the folk revivals of the 50s and 60s).[30]

However, because of the way official multiculturalism is organised, as Tony Mitchell has commented, 'many local "ethnic" music groups [remain] trapped in local community "ghettos" partly caused by the rather solemn and tokenistic image inherent in the concept of Australian multiculturalism'.[31]

In valorising ethnic cultures as distinct entities, Australian multiculturalism also ensures a barrier between those ethnicised cultures and 'mainstream' Australian culture—or, more correctly, a bar that works to minimise influences from the subordinate, ethnicised cultures affecting the mainstream, but not the other way round. In Australian popular music this gets played out on the one hand in the anthropologisation of non-dominant musics—Greek, Italian, Lebanese, Vietnamese musics are all taken seriously in Australia as exemplifications of the cultures out of which the musics come—and, on the other hand, the almost complete lack of engagement by the hegemonic Australian popular music with these other Australian musics. Thus, for example, the ideological emphasis is for there to be no fusion of mainstream Australian popular music with any of the musics I have just mentioned.[32]

It is often argued that, in the United States, rock'n'roll developed out of a fusion of Anglo-American pop music, white country and western, and Black rhythm and blues (setting aside the prior impacts of these musics on each other such as white pop on the evolution of rhythm and blues).[33] Similarly, the regional *Tejano* music often called *conjunto* evolved as a synthesis of the central-European polka with Mexican rhythms.[34] These kinds of conjunctions have not

taken place in Australia—or, again to be more precise, the connections have been less dramatic, are less obvious and less acknowledged. A good example is the work of Susheela Raman. Raman was born in England in 1973 of Tamil parents who moved to Australia when Susheela was four. Thus, she grew up in Australia under the multiculturalism policy. She moved back to England in 1997 having spent two years in India studying music with Hindustani singer, Shruti Sadolikar. On her time as a singer in Australia she has said: 'I formed a funky band and we played covers and gigged all over Sydney but by the time I was in my twenties I realised that the music I wanted to make wasn't really suited to the Australian musical climate.'[35] Expanding on the type of music she sang in Australia, in the liner booklet to her first album, *Salt Rain*, she describes it as 'blues-based'. Raman's music now is a fusion of African-American vocal stylings with Indian stylings, jazz influences, as well as echoes of other musics.

On *Salt Rain*, released in 2001, Raman covers a number of traditional and religious songs in Sanskrit, Hindi, Tamil and Telugu as well as offering interpretations of 'Trust In Me' from the Disney film version of *Jungle Book*, and Tim Buckley's 'Song To The Siren' (Raman's version appears to owe more to This Mortal Coil's interpretation than to Buckley's original) and singing a couple of her own compositions. While the album is often categorised as World Music, Matt Cibula, in his review on the PopMatters website writes that: 'It's the death of "world music", and the beginning of something else entirely.'[36] What I think Cibula means is that, where one high profile strand of the music that goes by this generic naming is self-consciously created[37], Raman's music is a consequence of her diasporic influences. The problem for her, as the quotation from Raman so discreetly indicates, is that, in Australia, her kind of fusion music would be devalued by being classified not only as ethnic but as failed ethnic because it is not the popular music of her origin country frozen in a past time before migration and also because it seeks to synthesise Indian and other musics with Anglo-American popular music. In other words, Raman's music transgresses the bar between the dominant popular music and so-called ethnic musics in Australia without acknowledging the privilege of the former.[38] In England, to the contrary, Raman joins a group of artists such as Nitin Sawhney and Talvin Singh all of whom are producing music that synthesises their

South Asian diasporic heritages with the Anglo-American music with which they have grown up in England, producing music that is heard as another facet of English popular music. In 2001 *Salt Rain* was one of the nominations for the prestigious Mercury Music Prize for the best album of the year by artists of British and Irish origin, along with Radiohead's *Amnesiac*, P J Harvey's *Stories from the City, Stories from the Sea*, and Basement Jaxx's *Rooty*, among others.

For the same reasons, relatively few Australian popular music performers come from non-northern European backgrounds.[39] One important exception can be found in the make-up of the Atlantics. Formed in 1961, by 1963 when their hit 'Bombora' was released, this surf-sound band from Sydney's eastern suburbs had gelled into its classic line-up which included two guitarists who were migrants of Greek background, Theo Penglis and Jim Skiathitis, and Bosco Bosanac from what was then Yugoslavia (the *Howlspace* website lists Tanganyika and Egypt as places where members of the band were raised without any further explanation[40]). In his autobiography Billy Thorpe described the band as 'a good strong instrumental band with a style somewhere between The Surfaris, The Ventures and a Greek folk band'.[41] The band never acknowledged the possible Greek influence in their music, preferring to highlight that many Australians had thought that they were an American band—being considered American gave the band more credibility than if they had been identified as Australian.

Another exception was the early sixties singer Laurel Lea who appeared first on Johnny O'Keefe's television show *Six O'Clock Rock* and then on *Bandstand*. Born of Greek migrant parents, Lea's change of name from Lorraine Lianos helped her appear as if she was from an Anglo-Celtic background when the emphasis in Australian society was on migrant assimilation.[42] Lea started out singing in a travelling rock'n'roll tent show run by her parents, that played gigs like the Sydney Royal Easter Show—where in 1959 she was discovered by Peter Page, the producer of *Six O'Clock Rock*, who persuaded O'Keefe to go to see her perform.[43]

The list of 'Asian' members of Australian bands is even shorter—though the list I am about to give is by no means definitive. We can start with Lou Casch, the Ambonese guitarist. Casch, whose given name was Lodewyk Nanlohy, played lead guitar with the Dee Jays backing Johnny O'Keefe. Casch came to Australia in 1952 as a Colombo Plan scholar to study medicine at Sydney

University. In Indonesia he had played jazz and kroncong (a form of Indonesian music).[44] From the first half of the 1970s, pop-rock band Hush had two Chinese-Australian members, Les Gock and Rick Lum. In the late 1980s and early 1990s Amr Zaid, of South Asian background, played bass for the Alternative Rock crossover band Ratcat. There are also Ray Ahn and Keish De Silva of the 1980s and 1990s Alternative Rock band the Hard-Ons, and Quan Yeomans of Regurgitator, whose mother came from what was then North Vietnam. It is worth considering that, setting aside Casch and the members of Hush, who were playing before both multiculturalism and the Alternative Rock scene, the short list I have just mentioned is of men and that they play in Alternative Rock bands. It could be suggested that people of visibly non-European backgrounds found it easier in the 1980s and 1990s—that is were more attracted to, and were more accepted by audiences—playing music in Alternative Rock bands than in, say, Oz Rock bands. At the least, while, inevitably, this list is incomplete, it does suggest how much artists from non-northern European backgrounds are the exception still in Australian popular music.

The biggest concentration of non-Anglo performers is to be found in Australian rap, a form that has evolved since the early 1990s.[45] Of the musicians I have mentioned none appear to have consciously brought music from their heritages as part of their contributions to the bands they joined. Not, of course, that they should have but, in the context of the bar that suppresses influences from non-Anglo-American musics, this is something to consider. Susheela Raman, again, is one example of an Australian artist from a non-northern European background who has felt it necessary to move countries to better develop her music, which does have such influences.

The high degree of musical assimilation in Australian popular music is also reflected in the historical narrative told about the music. The received story starts with Johnny O'Keefe, might mention Col Joye, and then restarts with the bands of the Beat Boom in Australia, typically Billy Thorpe and the Aztecs and the Easybeats. From there, this narrative goes, there developed the tripartite structure of Australian popular music in the 1970s and 1980s: pop-rock, Oz Rock, also known as Pub Rock, and Alternative Rock. Pop-rock and Oz Rock, so the story goes, were both grounded in the Beat Boom bands with pop-rock being heavily

influenced by the English Glam Rock bands. Aligning with the dominant and, it must be said, colonialist, Anglo-American narrative about punk, Alternative Rock is usually said to have been stimulated by developments in New York and London, as is implicit in the subtitle quoted earlier from Riley: 'The British invent a movement— the colony responds'. One example of a version of this history is Toby Creswell and Martin Fabinyi's *The Real Thing*.[46] Even the much lauded 2001 ABC television series, *Long Way to the Top*, and the accompanying book by James Cockington with the same title, take a similar approach. One way of thinking about the project of my book is that it functions as a critique of this story. I want to suggest that this narrative, naturalised as the true history of post–Second World War popular music in Australia, is problematic.

As we shall see in this book, there are many fallacies in the story. However, before thinking about alternate narratives, we should consider what has made this story so powerful, what understandings are implicit in it that might reinforce the worldview of the majority of Australians. Two main understandings are central to this mythic history. The first one has already been noted, the assumption that Australian popular music is derivative, a claim made about Johnny O'Keefe and the other rock'n'rollers of his generation. In this way of thinking, Australia can be proud of O'Keefe as our best rock'n'roller, but he is embarrassing when thought about up against the Americans. The everyday understanding of O'Keefe's biography is that he pretty much came out of nowhere, imitating American rockers like Bill Haley, Elvis Presley and Jerry Lee Lewis. Among other things, it is 'forgotten' in cultural memory that 'Shout', which O'Keefe recorded in 1959, was a cover of an African-American rhythm and blues song written and recorded by the Isley Brothers. It is also 'forgotten' that O'Keefe started performing in 1955, a year before Presley's American national breakthrough. Jerry Lee Lewis's national breakthrough was a year after Presley's and Haley's 'Rock Around The Clock', while released in 1954, only became a national hit after it was used over the credits of *The Blackboard Jungle* in 1955. In other words, we need to revise the received story that describes O'Keefe as the great, but derivative, Australian rock'n'roller.

The claim about derivativeness is also made for the Australian Beat Boom bands. Put simply, the Australian Beat Boom is assumed to have been initiated by the success of the Beatles and Australian beat bands are considered to be pale imitations of English originals.

I shall challenge this claim in Chapter One so I shall not develop the argument here.

It is significant that this received narrative of Australian popular music has, first, Australians taking up an American musical style. This connects well with long-held fears about the impact of an American popular culture which, it was said, was both commercialised and directed at the lowest common denominator in order to maximise profit. Thus, this part of the traditional narrative of Australian popular music can be read as expressing fears about the 'pollution' of Anglo-Australian culture by American culture. Hidden in the claim about the derivativeness of the Australian Beat Boom bands is an anxiety about the Americanisation of Australian culture at a time when Australia was looking more and more to the United States for economic, political and military support. Given that the Beatles were narrativised as iconically English in Australia, the supposed derivativeness of Australian beat bands reinforced the claim of Australian culture to Englishness in the face of growing Americanisation.

The second understanding central to this history of Australian popular music has to do with the emphasis on whiteness—an emphasis that downplays the significance of African-American influences on Australian popular music and reflects the historical importance, and ideological consequences, of the White Australia Policy. Thus, for example, no mention is made of the importance of African-American troops in Australia during the Second World War and the music that they listened and danced to. Raymond Evans, though, has written that:

> Live Rhythm and Blues music of a high calibre, along with jazz and boogie, was a constant feature of the African-American troops' largely segregated canteens, such as the Booker T Washington club at Surry Hills, Sydney and the Dr Carver Services Club in South Brisbane. Many Australian jazz devotees, both male and female, who either performed at these clubs or attended as invited guests to listen and dance also absorbed the spirit of this music and incorporated it into their repertoires of taste.[47]

Nothing is said in the conventional story about the importance of Black rhythm and blues artists to the developing sound of Australian rock'n'roll. However, in press reports of the time, as Peter Doyle tells us, rock'n'roll was 'typically defined for readers as

"badly played rhythm and blues" among other things'.[48] Rhythm and blues, often classified as rock'n'roll in Australia, played a big part in the evolution of the tough sound of many Australian rock'n'roll bands. Jon Hayton, lead guitarist with Dig Richards and the R'Jays in the late 1950s, has described how, at school, he knew 'every note, every bar and every beat of all our favourite songs which were mainly Bill Haley, Elvis, Little Richard, Jerry Lee Lewis, Freddie Bell, Chuck Berry'.[49] Leon Isackson writes about how, in 1959, determined to get his friend Ryanny into the first version of Ray Hoff and the Offbeats, he and some of the band, 'set to work teaching [Ryanny] how to play 12 bar blues'.[50] What these examples suggest is that, unlike in the United States, where the preoccupation with racial segregation meant that rhythm and blues was distinguished from rock'n'roll, in Australia, where there was no visible Black presence because of the White Australia Policy, ironically, rock'n'roll aficionados did not have pressure on them to minimise the importance of African-American artists and, consequently, placed these performers and their rawer, less tuneful material, on the same footing as the white American artists, many of whom were tending to sweeten the music for consumption by middle-American youth. The conventional history of Australian popular music corrects this and aligns the history with conventional understandings of Australia's more general history by simply excluding the African-American influences.

In the standard conservative history, then, all this is 'forgotten'. The sold-out visit of Little Richard in 1957 is 'forgotten'.[51] Yet, at the Newcastle Stadium concert:

> Two girls scrambled on to the stage from the audience, evidently to help get the 'singer' over the footlights, and before stadium attendants could get through the mob, Little Richard was lying on the floor in front of the stage being trampled.

And here is a description of the Sydney Stadium show from the *Sydney Morning Herald* of 5 October:

> After the show ended squealing girls mobbed the singer and knocked over a police sergeant who tried to hold them back.
> Little Richard's strip act was the climax to a frantic eardeafening rock 'n' roll concert which attracted 22,000 people in two shows.

> Teenagers in leather jackets, bright red shirts, vivid greenish-blue sweaters and white sport coats jived in the bleachers with girls, stamped their feet, clapped and counted throughout both shows.[52]

In spite of these descriptions of the clearly ecstatic reception accorded this 'Negro rock'n'roll exponent' as the *Newcastle Morning Herald* called him, the only thing about Little Richard's tour that remains in Australia's cultural memory is that he was converted after seeing the Russian satellite, Sputnik, gave away rock'n'roll and threw his jewellery off the Sydney Harbour Bridge. In Creswell and Fabinyi's *The Real Thing*, for example, Little Richard is described as 'the wacko Little Richard [who] saw the Russian Sputnik and decided the end of the world was nigh'.[53] In actuality it was the Hunter River at Newcastle into which Richard threw his jewellery but, as an Australian urban myth, Sydney Harbour and the Bridge plays better.[54]

Likewise, the visit of Chuck Berry two years later in 1959 is not remembered, nor the visit of LaVerne Baker in 1957 when she played on a bill including Big Joe Turner and the Platters as well as Freddie Bell and the Bellboys, and Bill Haley and the Comets; nor is the visit of Lloyd Price in 1959.[55] All these artists were brought out by the Australia-resident American impresario Lee Gordon. All of them, as we can see in the 1957 concert line-up, played on mixed race bills. There is a story that Chuck Berry's 'Back in the USA,' recorded in 1959, was in part written, 'after a less-than-pleasant tour of Australia, which Chuck described as "*really* a drag—I never even found a hot dog"'.[56] A more politically explicit version of this story has it that the song reflects Berry's shock and horror at Australia's treatment of Aborigines.

It was within these 'forgotten' contexts that Johnny O'Keefe acquired his knowledge of African-American music. Noting the overlaps and connections between early jazz and rhythm and blues, Evans reminds readers that O'Keefe's father was a danceband leader. Evans goes on to list the Black influences on O'Keefe:

> Little Richard, with whom O'Keefe toured in 1958, Clyde McPhatter, Sam Cooke and Jackie Wilson, were all major influences. Also influential was the visceral New Orleans sound of Lloyd Price, Fats Domino, Huey 'Piano' Smith, The Showmen, Earl King, Professor Longhair and Jesse Hill, and Champion Jack Dupree moulded his vocal style.[57]

O'Keefe, then, did not come from nowhere. He came out of a grouping in Australian society that had had a knowledgeable interest in African-American musical forms since as early as the Second World War.

We should pause for a moment and ask why it might be that Little Richard and Chuck Berry should have been such important influences in the founding of Australian rock'n'roll. The first part of the answer lies in the lack of segregation of artists and musical forms in Australia, because of the lack of presence of Black musicians, already mentioned. Music by African-American artists was often described as rock'n'roll, just as was music by white American artists. The second part of the answer lies in the kind of music Little Richard and Berry played. In his article on rhythm and blues for the Encarta On-Line Encyclopedia, Rob Bowman writes that:

> The crucial innovation of black rock and roll was in the expression of rhythm. Berry and Little Richard subdivided the basic quarter beat into two eighth notes, rather than following the three-eighth-note, or triplet, shuffle subdivision that had been the hallmark of the earlier rhythm-and-blues styles. With this innovation, an exciting, high-energy groove could be achieved. Both artists also substantially increased the tempo of their performances, giving their music a frantic style that appealed to American teenagers.[58]

Little Richard's and Berry's music could be heard as speeded-up, and more exciting, versions of white American rock'n'roll. As Bowman's description of their music as 'black rock and roll'—rather than the more conventional American description of it as rhythm and blues—signals, for people more interested in the music than the race of the performers, their music would be understood and categorised as rock'n'roll. Alternatively, unlike in the United States, where the presence of African-Americans went along with an ongoing preoccupation with segregation, in Australia where the White Australia Policy meant that there were almost no African-originated people and no African-derived culture, there was no felt need to distinguish between an African-American version of a form of music and a white version. Thus, the Australian jazz pianist Dick Hughes is quoted in a 1955 article in the Sydney *Sun-Herald* saying that: 'Rock'n'Roll is only another name for ... Rhythm and Blues ... both are derivatives of a lusty jazz style played in the Chicago Black

Belt.'[59] Hence the importance of Little Richard and Berry in Australia where the key distinction was not in the first place race but who played music with a shuffle rhythm and who used a simpler but more pounding rhythm, the rhythm identified as that of rock'n'roll.

The influence of African-American music did not stop with the rock'n'roll era. Rather, those bands, like Ray Hoff and the Offbeats, whose most important influences were Black rhythm and blues artists, fed into a new generation of Australian artists who connected with the English blues band tradition epitomised in the Rolling Stones. I shall explore this further in Chapter One; for now, though, we can take Philip Ennis's point that, during the early 1960s:

> there was an increased pace in the R&B tours to the United Kingdom, including Big Bill Broonzy, Sonny Terry and Brownie McGhee, and Muddy Waters, implanting there a crop of young bands enamoured with the purity of the blues and its modern offshoots.[60]

Thus, while mainstream Australia was listening to the Beatles, a minority was listening to rhythm and blues through the filter of the Stones, the Animals, the Yardbirds and other English bands like the Small Faces. Showing how these generational connections worked, having started playing in the late 1950s, Ray Hoff's sole album, titled as *Ray Hoff and the Offbeats—Let's Go!*, was recorded and released in 1966, two years after the first Rolling Stones album was released. This album, too, has been 'forgotten' in Australian popular music history. A great slab of driving rhythm and blues, the album primarily contains cover versions of songs like 'I've Got My Mojo Working', 'In The Midnight Hour', 'Mercy Mercy' and 'Sweet Little Rock'n'Roller'. In addition to this Chuck Berry original the band also cover a Little Richard classic, 'Bama Lama Bama Loo', signalling, again, how influential these two artists were to Australian popular music.

In Sydney, the Missing Links, formed in 1964, were a part of this new generation. Peter Anson, one of the founding members, used to listen to 'his collection of Benny Goodman, Brownie McGhee and Leadbelly albums'[61], showing the persistence of the connections mentioned earlier between jazz and blues in Australia. Signalling the continuity of an Australian rhythm and blues tradition, Anson has also commented that: 'Most of all I liked an Australian guy called Ray Hoff. For me, he was the Sinatra of the

blues in this country, and I could get to see him regularly; he was one of the guys I used to talk to.'[62] As the Missing Links came together in early 1964 they 'developed a repertoire of Chuck Berry, Fats Domino and early Beatles numbers'.[63] It was after this that, we are told, they found the first Rolling Stones EP. Clearly, it was not the English rhythm and blues bands that brought this form of music to Australia though, as this narrative implies, bands like the Stones helped Australians to think about how this African-American music could be interpreted. The Missing Links's first single came out in March 1965 and their first album in December 1965.

In 1969 Chain grew out of the Perth band, the Beaten Tracks, and, having moved to Melbourne, became the keystone of Australian blues-rock through the early 1970s. In the liner booklet for the 30th Anniversary Edition of Chain's important second album *Toward the Blues* (originally released in 1971, this edition 2001) Ed Nimmervol writes that:

> Brisbane-raised Matt Taylor [singer and harmonica player] remembers that the first album he bought was the Beatles's *Please Please Me*, the second a Rolling Stones album, the third by Chuck Berry and the fourth by Muddy Waters. That final step was the hardest. First person contact with the originators of the blues was hard to come by. Your corner record shop did not stock their albums.[64]

The rise of import shops selling blues and other non-mainstream music will be discussed in Chapter Three. Here we should note the trajectory of Taylor's music-buying. Starting with the first album by English mainstream beat band, the Beatles, released in 1963, which includes the Arthur Alexander song 'Anna (Go To Him)' and the Little Richard-inspired 'I Saw Her Standing There', Taylor then buys an album by the still English and white but much more obviously blues/rhythm and blues-influenced Rolling Stones and then a Chuck Berry album. From there Taylor moves to the classic Chicago blues of Muddy Waters. Nimmervol implies that, while Chuck Berry albums were relatively available—as we have seen Berry was thought of within the genre of rock'n'roll in Australia—Muddy Waters's music was much more difficult to find. Blues, itself, was still thought of as Black music played by Black artists and was far from accepted in the spectrum of Australian popular music.

In Brisbane, also, the Purple Hearts formed in 1964, releasing their first single in 1965. Lobby Loyde, the guitarist with the band, went on to the Wild Cherries in 1967, subsequently becoming Australia's first blues-based guitar hero and releasing *Plays with George Guitar* in 1971. In a 1992 interview Mick Hadley, one of the Purple Hearts, outlines Loyde's influences:

> Lobby Loyde—well he came from a Shadows-type background, so he would have been influenced by Hank Marvin. People like Les Paul, Chet Atkins, but then as soon as he heard [Eric] Clapton, he sort of picked up a lot off Clapton. Blues Breakers, yeah and of course The Yardbirds. That was sort of like a bible—the John Mayall album where they're all reading 'Beano' on the cover [*Blues Breakers with Eric Clapton* (1966)] ... because everyone learnt every lick on that particular album and *Five Live Yardbirds* too, so there was a lot of their influences there.[65]

Here we have a story of a mediating influence (which is typical of the argument that I make in Chapter One). However in 1970 Loyde joined Billy Thorpe in a revamped Billy Thorpe and the Aztecs, helping to give the band a harder and bluesier sound. 'Gangster Of Love', on side one of the album from this collaboration, *The Hoax Is Over*, released in 1971, runs for twenty-four minutes thirty-five seconds. The song was originally written and recorded by Johnny Guitar Watson. African-American, Watson started recording blues and rhythm and blues in 1952. As does *Toward the Blues*, *The Hoax Is Over* shows the hard rock and blues basis for what would become Oz Rock, a genre which, as I discuss in Chapter Two, Thorpe helped to found.

What I have wanted to show briefly here, counter to what is implied in the dominant, taken-for-granted history of post–Second World War Australian popular music, is the long-running influence of African-American music in certain aspects of Australian popular music. As I have indicated, there are a number of problematic assertions in the established narrative. The total exclusion of African-American music is one. In this book, I will challenge some more of these.

This book focuses on Australian popular music from the 1960s to the 1980s, from the Australian Beat Boom bands to the Alternative Rock of the Scientists which, it is claimed, influenced the development of grunge in Seattle. I do not attempt a panoramic

view of this period. Rather, I identify particular themes associated with the idea of the particularity of Australian popular music at that time and develop these themes through the chapters. The first half of the book is concerned with aspects of the specificity of Australian popular music during this period. Billy Thorpe and the Aztecs, and the Easybeats, are obvious choices, in that these bands were the most popular Australian bands of their time. The same is true of Skyhooks and Cold Chisel at later times. All these bands help to illuminate general arguments about Australian popular music. For this book, their importance lies in their representativeness—the assumption that their popularity is precisely an expression of their central position in Australian popular music.

The second half of the book is concerned with Perth and Perth artists. Of course, one reason for choosing Perth is that I have lived in this city for the last fifteen years and have, I hope, come to understand some of its idiosyncrasies. However, the greater importance of Perth lies in its differences from the other Australian capital cities, and in certain similarities it has with Brisbane. Many of Perth's differences have to do with migration patterns—both in the groups that migrated to Perth and in the timing of Perth's increases in population. Some have to do with Perth being the only major city on the west coast of Australia and with it being the capital city of a state whose wealth is still built on primary industries. The similarities with Brisbane are, among other things, to do with being peripheral cities to the Sydney–Melbourne core and with the historical tendencies in both Western Australia and Queensland to elect state governments that have been more authoritarian than in New South Wales and Victoria. The chapters on Perth, then, are concerned with how particular cultural elements of Perth life have contributed to what—in the period under discussion, the 1970s and 1980s—could be described as the 'Perth sound'. The artists that I have chosen to discuss: Dave Warner, the Scientists and the Triffids, all in one way or another help to illuminate issues around that particularity of Perth's music scene.

Chapter One is an account of the Beat Boom bands in Australia, looking at the development of an Australian sound and the reasons for this. The second part of this chapter is a consideration of the reasons why the Easybeats, so successful in Australia, only managed one hit in England. Chapter Two focuses on Oz Rock and examines its connections with the Australian ballad tradition. In this way it

highlights one important cultural determinant in the Australian popular musical sensibility. Chapter Three ranges over the development of the tripartite musical system that dominated Australian popular music from the mid-1970s to some time in the early 1990s, considering the institutional factors that underpinned this structure and the ways the three strands of music contributed to a greater sense of Australia as having a cultural identity.

Chapter Four takes the idea of a local musical sensibility down to the level of a city and considers what was specific in the Perth music scene of that time, looking especially at the work of Dave Warner. Chapter Five considers the claim, made by Kim Salmon, founder of the Scientists, and acknowledged by Mark Arm of Mudhoney, that the Scientists' music was important in the evolution of grunge in Seattle. Using the work of Arjun Appadurai on global flows I construct a history of how the Scientists' music moved from Australia to Seattle. This, in turn, allows me to think about the importance of technologies, such as the cassette, as a way of establishing what I call global counter-flows, that is cultural flows which move across the global periphery and from the periphery to the core rather than the other way round. Chapter Six examines the work of the Triffids in light of their Western Australian background. The Triffids moved from Perth to Sydney and then to London but, I argue, retained a Western Australian worldview.

I am only too aware of what is not in this book. These include a more general discussion of Australian popular music history, questions about the role of women in Australian popular music and the ways that Indigenous musicians related to Australian popular music through this period. I could also have included a more direct discussion of how the experience of living in a settler society has affected the kinds of popular music being produced and consumed in Australia. This book is simply a first attempt at thinking about some aspects of the specificity of Australian popular music.

I
THE NATIONAL

1

Whiter Rock:

The 'Australian Sound' and

the Beat Boom

Many reasons are given as to why the Easybeats only had one hit in England, 'Friday On My Mind', and why bands like the Twilights and Masters Apprentices failed miserably outside of Australia. This general failure is put down to a lack of professionalism, lack of skills as compared to English and American bands, bad management, lack of contacts and so on. While several of these may have played a part, I want to suggest the importance of a cultural argument. I think there is an Australian sound, a sound which has developed since as early as the time of Billy Thorpe and the Aztecs's early hits and which continues through the Oz Rock bands of the 1980s, such as Cold Chisel and the Angels, is to be found in Midnight Oil, and can still be recognised in bands as varied as Regurgitator and Grinspoon.[1] This sound has evolved in and through Australian culture. It is demonstrated in the unquestionable popularity of these bands in Australia and their limited success, with the honourable exception of AC/DC, outside Australia.[2]

What I will argue is that, sonically, these bands 'make sense' to Australian audiences, that their music works within a repertoire of sounds which articulate with the dominant musical sensibility in Australian culture. To put it simply, where the Beat Boom in England was greatly influenced by African-American music, in

Australia the local beat bands were influenced more by English groups. While there obviously was cultural influence, nothing is gained in the understanding of Australian popular music by talking simply in terms of derivation and imitation. We need to clarify how beat music was transformed to make sense within the Australian popular music sensibility. Through the formative years of Australian rock's development, let us say from 1963, when Billy Thorpe and the Aztecs came together, to Cold Chisel's success in the late 1970s and early 1980s, African-American music, its rhythms and vocal patterns, was little heard in Australia outside of particular subcultural groups—those that gave rise to, and supported, Lobby Loyde's music, for example. African-American music certainly had much less presence in the Australian music charts than in the British charts.

During the Second World War both Black and white American troops were stationed in Australia.[3] Between them they helped to popularise to Australian audiences a more emotionally intense music—swing—and dance—the jitterbug—both derived from African-American origins.[4] However, after the war there was pressure to return to what were thought of as the more respectable forms of music and dance of the prewar period. For example, in most venues swing jazz was replaced by slower rhythms more suitable for ballroom dancing. There was even a quite successful attempt to popularise square dancing.[5] These shifts can be read as part of the reassertion of a middle-class value system which privileged reason over emotion and associated emotional excess with working class, and Black, immorality. Stella Lees has described the Australian context into which rock'n'roll was introduced:

> With the advent of rock'n'roll, the custodians of youth stepped up the campaign against the new influences. Morality as well as cultural values were at stake ... More than other pop music, rock'n'roll was criticised for appealing to that most basic drive, sex. Although companies had stripped away much of the sexual and violent images of the original black music from which rock'n'roll came, observers still felt that sex was too evident.[6]

What was relatively acceptable for a white audience in the United States was not acceptable in an Australia which, as far as possible, continued to look to middle-class England for its culture. The consequence is that the Australian rock tradition has been sonically much more closely allied to white, English popular music; to put it

another way, the influence of African, in particular African-American musical aesthetics has been much less than in the United States and less than in England. Even the American rockers who became popular in Australia in the late 1950s tended to come from the whiter, more country end of the American rock'n'roll spectrum. However the importance of the English popular music tradition in Australia does not mean that Australian rock should be popular in England. The Britpop tradition is essentially inward-looking and works off, among other things, a very culturally English repertoire of sensibilities, including sentimentality, tits'n'bums humour, and a nostalgic assertion of an English working-class life-style, (think, for example, of The Kinks's 'Waterloo Sunset', 'Lola' and 'Dead End Street'), all operating in a lineage that stretches back to early twentieth-century music hall. The melodic form of much of this music, with its emphasis on anthemic structure (Queen's 'We Will Rock You', Oasis's 'Wonderwall') and sing-a-long choruses (the Beatles's 'Maxwell's Silver Hammer'), also derives from this source.

The Cultural Cringe and the Ideology of Imitation

All of the above needs a lot of unpacking and I want to start by discussing briefly the ideas of derivation and imitation. As a white settler colony, Australians have always had a sense of their cultural inferiority to British, in particular English, culture. This assumption of inferiority has been played out most obviously in the idea of the cultural cringe, that Australian culture is a pale imitation of English culture and that an Australian artist's worth must be measured by their success in England, or more recently the United States, rather than in Australia.[7] As we have seen in Brabazon's argument, discussed in the Introduction, this colonialist ideology is still central to discussions of Australian popular music. Craig McGregor, in his contribution to *From Pop to Punk to Postmodernism*, is very up-front in his use of the derivation trope. After all, as a successful ideology, its hegemonic force lies in its apparently obvious truth. Writing about Australian rock music of the late 1950s and early 1960s, McGregor states that:

> that whole early Australian rock scene seemed out of place. Displaced. Everyone knew they were just imitating the American rock'n'roll stars ... Looking back, I see it as a time of inevitable imitation. The local singers and musicians paid homage to their

mentors with the sincerest form of flattery. They wrote some songs of their own but the local content/reference was minimal; it was 'international' material bereft of much Australian content.[8]

McGregor goes on to mention the Easybeats, Billy Thorpe and the Aztecs and others and then remarks that, 'in terms of *activity* Australia had developed its own rock culture but it was, like so much other Australian culture, highly derivative'.[9] Here we find the argument in its full form: Australian culture is derivative and Australian rock music, being an aspect of a derivative culture is, itself, nothing but derivative. Such a claim not only diminishes the work of, in this case, Australian popular musicians, but ignores the productivity and specificity of Australian culture, its ability to appropriate and re-work elements from elsewhere within the Australian cultural order. Whereas in English work on popular music, from Simon Frith's *Sound Effects* through Iain Chambers's *Urban Rhythms* to Nabeel Zuberi's *Sounds English*, there is an unquestioned recognition of the specificity of the English rock tradition, while acknowledging the importance of American origins and influences, in Australia discussion of Australian popular music has been asphyxiated by the dominance of a colonialist ideology that diminishes the worth of the settler culture.

We must, then, appreciate the ideological difference between using terms such as derivation and imitation, and those such as influence. We must also recognise that there is an Australian sound born out of the particularity of Australian culture—however we wish to define that discursive construct 'Australia'—and that there was a popular music tradition of significant complexity in Australia before the outside influences of rock'n'roll and its associated musical forms. Rock'n'roll, and subsequent importations, such as the beat sound and rap, have been incorporated into Australian culture through the sensibility expressed in Australian popular music.

Graeme Smith has argued that the establishment in 1955 of the Victorian Folklore Society, by Wendy Lowenstein and Ian Turner[10], marked the beginning of a reconceptualisation and a new acknowledgement of the Australian bush ballad tradition.[11] Furthermore, as Smith writes elsewhere:

> Australian country music emerged in the 1930s and 1940s as Australian singers produced local versions of American performers like Jimmie Rodgers, the Carter family, and the singing cowboys

Hank Snow and Wilf Carter. It was the first Australian popular music genre to use a localised, national form of address to a mass-mediated audience, and as such sees itself as having a particularly strong claim to be Australia's authentic music.[12]

Clinton Walker accurately remarks that at a time 'when Jim Reeves, Hank Williams, and Patsy Cline were redefining hillbilly music as a pop form, [in] Australia Buddy Williams and Slim Dusty led a similar charge for the bush ballad'.[13] In the urban context, swing jazz was popularised through the American presence during the Second World War. In 1954 Lee Gordon was already arranging tours by American musicians including one with Artie Shaw, Ella Fitzgerald and Buddy Rich.[14] This whitened jazz was in competition with other musics for ballroom dancing and with the musical tradition that came out of Australian vaudeville with its mixed influences from English music hall and American vaudeville.[15]

This is not the place to go into any of this in any more detail. The point is that rock'n'roll, and later musical influences in Australia, did not impact on a country lacking in music. Rather, these new musical forms became incorporated and re-worked in relation to the established 'white', and predominantly European and in particular English and Irish, musical traditions (most obviously the ballad) which lay at the heart of Australian culture and which had overlapped, merged and in other ways been transformed into a localised Australian musical practice.

Beat, and Rhythm and Blues in England

When thinking about the so-called Beat Boom, in order to understand what happened in Australia we have first to understand what took place in England, where the reconstitution of popular music occurred. Dave Laing offers this description of beat music:

> the chord playing of the rhythm guitar ... [compared to American rock'n'roll] ... was broken up into a series of separate strokes, often one to the bar, with the regular plodding of the bass guitar and crisp drumming behind it. This gave a very different effect from the monolithic character of rock, in that the beat was given not by a duplication of one instrument in the rhythm section by another but by an interplay between all three. This flexibility also meant that beat music could cope with a greater range of time signatures and song shapes than rock and roll had been able to.[16]

This instrumental organisation grew out of the need for bands in England to be able to play everything from rock'n'roll, through some rhythm and blues, to Tin Pan Alley songs, music hall songs and even the 'Hokie Cokie'. At bottom, what the English bands achieved was an integration of the evolving African-American popular music, which was itself much influenced by white American pop, into the sonics of white Anglo-American popular music. Chambers writes that:

> The new music was neither an anonymous dance rhythm nor simply the copy of black sounds. Between the imperatives of the former and the example of the latter, a novel musical synthesis, recognisably British in tone, was produced.[17]

He is here thinking specifically of the Beatles, a significant point to which we shall return. Lifting off from Chambers's work, Dick Bradley has described the development of this synthesis as 'codal fusion'.[18]

Chambers goes on to identify the ways African-American popular music was integrated into white pop. This is an important description which I shall draw on considerably in my discussion of Australian beat music so I shall quote it at length. In this new musical hybrid:

> European classical harmony, however simplified, still remained at the centre of white commercial popular music. It drew attention to linear musical development: a recognisable tune, an attractive melody. Black music concentrated its sonorial powers elsewhere, in the vertical interiors of the song: varying the tone, pitch, pulse and rhythm. As a bridge between these two musical continents, beat music displayed, with varying emphases, tendencies taken from both traditions. So, guitar sounds were frequently 'full' (often underlined by the use of an organ) and employed highly 'coloured' chords that pointed to the previously unsuspected levels and timbres of a song.[19]

In the Beatles's music, as in that of the other Mersey-sound bands, the African-American musical influence was contained, limited and placed within a European musical frame of reference which privileged melody and linearity.

At the same time there had been evolving in England what Chambers describes as 'a subterranean blues record culture fed by US servicemen and students, seamen and specialist record shops,

largely nurtured around art schools'.[20] Another influence was the skiffle of Lonnie Donegan. The English disc jockey, John Peel, writes in his autobiography about how Donegan's music inspired him 'to take an interest in the blues'.[21] In Charlie Gillett's words:

> Rhythm and blues, which was virtually unknown in Britain in 1956, was by 1962 dominant in a subculture which was located in basement clubs throughout the country, whose audience included students at school, college, and university, and an unusual cross section of young working people.[22]

In the early 1960s there developed a youth culture, mods, whose choice of music was black, in the main African-American:

> The hard-core Soho mod of 1964, inscrutable behind his shades and 'stingy brim' only deigned to tap his feet (encased in 'basket weaves' or Raoul's originals) to the more esoteric soul imports (Tony Clarke's '(I'm the) Entertainer', James Brown's 'Papa's Got a Brand New Bag', Dobie Gray's '(I'm in with) the In Crowd' or Jamaican ska (Prince Buster's 'Madness').[23]

A number of white bands took African-American music, blues, soul and, especially, rhythm and blues, as their main, if not only, influence. Rhythm and blues had evolved in the early 1950s. Nelson George relates its evolution to the invention of the electric bass which, he writes, 'had a punchy, dynamic range that would become identified with rhythm & blues'.[24] George quotes Quincy Jones, who worked as an arranger, saying that:

> Before the electric bass and the electric guitar, the rhythm section was the support section, backing up the horns and piano. But when they were introduced, everything upstairs had to take a back seat. The rhythm section became the stars.[25]

An important characteristic of rhythm and blues, and soul, was that these musical genres moved away from the twelve bar blues structure towards a more melodic base, tending towards a 'whiter' verse and chorus form. At the same time the productions in these genres retained the African-American aesthetic which emphasised rhythm, and its relation to the beat, and utilised the voice as an instrument equivalent to the guitar as a vehicle for emotional expression rather than lyrical enunciation. Originating in the bands centred around people like John Mayall, Alexis Korner, Graham

Bond and Long John Baldry, bands like the Yardbirds, the Small
Faces, the Pretty Things, the Rolling Stones and the Animals became
increasingly popular. These bands recorded versions of rhythm and
blues, and soul, songs but out of a 'whiter' musical sensibility no
matter how much they tried to re-create the style of the original.
Later, these bands recorded their own songs written on the model
of the African-American tracks.[26] While there was some inevitable
overlapping between these two Anglo generic styles, the Beat Boom
and white rhythm and blues, they remained significantly distinct
until the late 1960s and early 1970s when the fruit of their merging
and reformulation was the aesthetic, and commercial, distinction
between pop and rock.

One more element needs to be added here, an historical
development impossible in Australia in the post–Second World War
era. The first West Indian migrants to Britain arrived in the *Empire
Windrush* in June 1948. By the end of 1957 there were around
100,000 people born in the West Indies in England. This figure had
increased to 172,000 by 1961. The great majority of these people
were from Jamaica. In 1956, 17,000 Jamaicans migrated to England.
This number increased steadily so that, by 1961, the number of
Jamaican migrants that year had risen to 39,000. After the Second
World War, Jamaicans listened to big bands modelled on African-
American jazz bands playing jazz and swing.[27] In the 1950s these
bands were replaced at dances by sound systems which 'played what
their urban patrons wanted to hear: the hot African-American
rhythm and blues then reigning in the United States, with special
preference shown for the New Orleans sound'.[28] In England, and
Britain more generally, one effect of the West Indian migration was
to reinforce the presence of popular African-American music as
well as introducing English white working-class young people in the
urban areas where West Indians settled to the latest Jamaican ska
and rocksteady sounds. Ska evolved in the early 1960s as a fusion of
the Jamaican mento rhythm with American rhythm and blues.[29]
Rocksteady developed out of ska in the later 1960s.

The generalised knowledge, and acceptance, of African-
American popular music, especially Tamla Motown, is well
illustrated in the numbers of hits achieved by African-American
artists in Britain. The Motown sound was an integration of gospel,
with some rhythm and blues, and white American pop. Suzanne
Smith remarks that: 'Never before had a black-owned company

been able to create and produce the artistry of its own community, and then sell it across racial boundaries.'[30] In Britain, the Supremes had eighteen records in the top fifty between 1964 and 1969, Martha Reeves and the Vandellas had five between 1965 and 1969, and Stevie Wonder had eleven between 1966 and 1969. Chuck Berry himself entered the top fifty eight times between 1963 and 1965 and even a soul act such as Otis Redding could have thirteen entries between 1965 and 1969, including covers of the Rolling Stones's 'Satisfaction' (1966)—we will return to this below—and the Beatles's 'Day Tripper' (1967).[31]

Given this awareness and limited acceptance of the 'whiter' end of Black American popular music it is no wonder that the Beatles so rapidly became a part of English entertainment. As Chambers puts it, '"beat" was quickly accepted as a speeded up version of popular show business'[32] and 'with their royal premieres and MBEs, the Beatles had seemingly been absorbed into the cushioned category of "family entertainment"'.[33]

However, within England we can discern two lines of musical development:

> Where the Beatles had begun experimenting in the popular song tradition, and offered a deprecating humour in their music and films that still left room for sentimentality ('Michelle', 'Yesterday', 'Eleanor Rigby'), the Stones, in the best blues tradition, mumbled disturbing lyrics over neurotic rhythms and a jarring sound that promised no compromise with earlier pop music.[34]

The Beatles's influences were pretty much at the white pop end of the African-American music spectrum, Tamla Motown, Chuck Berry's rhythm and blues/rock'n'roll cross-over songs and Arthur Alexander's soft soul with country and western references ('Anna'). The Rolling Stones, the most popular of the rhythm and blues bands, covered the same area. They recorded Chuck Berry songs and Arthur Alexander's 'You Better Move On', but moved much further along the spectrum into both classic blues—Muddy Waters, Howlin' Wolf—and more contemporary rhythm and blues with songs written by Jerry Ragovoy ('Time Is On My Side' which was a rhythm and blues hit in the United States for Irma Thomas in 1964) and Bobby and Shirley Womack ('It's All Over Now', a rhythm and blues hit for the Valentinos in 1963).

It needs to be said that the Stones interpreted this music. In blues and soul, in the Black tradition generally, as demonstrated in its relationship to gospel singing, the instrumentation works to embellish the vocal, and the voice is more intent on expressing emotion than carrying a melody and enunciating the lyrics clearly. In contrast, in that white, Anglo-American popular song tradition, within which the Beatles worked, emotion was expressed through the lyrics not through vocal intonation—that is, the singing itself was little coloured by expression. Chambers tells us that: 'Singers like Ray Charles ('I Gotta Woman', 1955; 'What'd I Say', 1959) and James Brown ('Please, Please, Please', 1956; 'Try Me', 1958), introduced the screams, shouts, sobs and grunts of the preaching and testifying singer'.[35] Bradley describes Little Richard as being 'notable for his "frantic" singing, full of shouts and whoops, and often using minimal or even apparently meaningless lyrics ("Tutti frutti, Hey rootie" or "Awop bop a loo bop a lop bam boom")'.[36] In contrast, on studio recordings, at least, John Lennon's tendency to shout, to exclaim nonsense syllables driven by emotional expression, was reined in. In addition to the myth that it reproduces the speech pattern of amphetamine users, we can think of Roger Daltrey's stuttering on the Who's 'My Generation', as a white, perhaps English, form of the vocal excess found in Black American music. What for Black artists was integral to their musical aesthetic, was transgressive to the white, melodic, popular music tradition, which emphasised the clarity of expression of lyrics—the establishment attacks on the Rolling Stones were due, in part, to their more faithful exploration of the Black aesthetic, which was itself considered morally questionable.

In Britain in the 1960s the distinction between the two strands of the Beat Boom was not expressed in terms of their relationship to the dominant aesthetic of African-American music but, much more socially, in the acceptability or not of the bands, their music, and their behaviour. In Australia the Beat Boom was read as a single phenomenon: some bands played music that was relatively comprehensible, others didn't.

Australia and the Beat Boom

When discussing the impact of the new beat music on Australian popular music it is usual to begin by noting the large number of

musicians in Australia who had arrived as British migrants in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Here, for example, is what the important Australian television series, which presents a history of Australian rock music, *Long Way to the Top*, says:

> They called it beat music ... black music for white teenagers. A lot of them were 'ten quid tourists' and many settled in Adelaide. After being billeted for a while with their families in hostels, they moved out to brand new suburbs like Elizabeth, built from nothing on reclaimed salt marsh.
>
> A quarter of a million British born migrants came to Australia in the late fifties and early sixties. They would introduce a musical tradition that would influence three decades of Australian pop music: Jim Keyes [Keays], The Masters Apprentices, the Easybeats, Johnny Young, Dinah Lee, Michael Chugg ... the list goes on.[37]

Elizabeth was a new suburb, built in the 1950s seventeen miles north of Adelaide.[38] The 1966 census shows that, at that time, 48 per cent of the population had been born in the British Isles.[39] In his important article on the role of British immigrants in the reception of the Beatles in Australia, Lawrence Zion writes that these 'new arrivals were highly active in the process of the diffusion of pop music styles from Britain in ways that operated independently from the influence of the mass media in Australia'.[40] As the location of the biggest concentration of British migrants, Elizabeth became home to numbers of Australian beat bands, the most successful of which were the Twilights and Masters Apprentices. The impact continued into the next generation: the families of Doc Neeson, from pub rock band the Angels, and Jimmy Barnes, of Cold Chisel, had also migrated to Elizabeth.

What these migrants had in common, including those who had migrated before the advent of the Beatles, the Stones and the general reformation of popular music, was a British musical sensibility in which the rock beat had become much more accepted than in Australia. In Britain, as we have seen, there was an established underground subculture involved in Black American music. Starting in 1948, through the 1950s this was reinforced by the migration of West Indians to Britain. As Dick Hebdige has written: 'By the early 60s ... sizeable immigrant communities had been established in Britain's working-class areas, and some kind of rapport between blacks and neighbouring white groups had become

possible'.[41] In Australia, where the White Australia policy was not phased out until the late 1960s and early 1970s, there was no significant non-indigenous Black presence.[42] Moreover, as we have already seen, the cultural effects of the presence of African-American servicemen during the Second World War, which had had a great influence on the development of the bodgie and widgie subculture in the immediate postwar period[43], had been rolled back under the withering pressure of white middle-class Anglo-Australian conservatism.

This context makes the success of Australia's great 1950s rocker, Johnny O'Keefe, even more extraordinary. His version of the Isley Brothers's 'Shout,' released as a single in 1959, especially in live performance, utilised a degree of vocal excess unheard of in Australia at that time. However, his early recordings swung from Bill Haley's white countryish '(You Hit The Wrong Note) Billy Goat' to Lloyd Price's rhythm and blues 'Lawdy Miss Clawdy' to Pat Boone's pop balladic 'There's A Goldmine In The Sky'. O'Keefe's failure in the United States shows, above all, how much he continued to perform with an Australian white popular music sensibility as his reference point, making his rock too white for white American audiences. These audiences simply failed to distinguish anything particularly special about him.[44] Selling him as an Australian only made O'Keefe a novelty act.

I have already shown how the presence of African-Americans and West Indians coupled with a longstanding postwar interest among a minority in Britain had impacted on the English musical sensibility, as demonstrated in the number of African-American performers who made the British charts, and the number of times they did so, albeit mostly from the 'whiter' end of the musical spectrum. In Australia, where the African-American influence was much more stoutly resisted, the chart figures ably show the comparatively minor influence of African-American music on the Australian musical sensibility. Starting with Motown groups, between 1963 and 1968 the Supremes had six hits in Australia, with only one ('The Happening') reaching the top ten; Stevie Wonder had one hit, a cover of Dylan's 'Blowin' In The Wind' which only reached number thirty-five; Martha Reeves and the Vandellas didn't get into the Australian charts at all, nor did the Temptations. Outside of Motown, Chuck Berry had two hits during this period, the highest placed being the countryish 'You Never Can Tell' which

got to number eighteen. Otis Redding made the charts once with '(Sitting On The) Dock Of The Bay'.[45]

The Beatles had the two top selling singles in Australia in 1963, 'She Loves You' followed by 'I Want To Hold Your Hand'. The only other English beat band to be in the year's best sellers was Brian Poole and the Tremeloes—'Do You Love Me?' came in at number thirteen. Cliff Richard and the Shadows, an outfit from the pre-Beat Boom era, made number 20 with their tuneful sing-a-long, 'Summer Holiday'.

Billy Thorpe had been born in Manchester, England, and migrated to Brisbane with his family when he was a child. In 1963 he moved to Sydney and joined up with a band called the Aztecs.[46] Billy Thorpe and the Aztecs had their first hit in 1964 with a version of 'Poison Ivy'. In Australia that year the Beatles had six of the eight top selling singles. This list included two female pop ballad singers, Julie Rogers at number five with 'The Wedding' and Cilla Black at number six with 'You're My World'. Billy Thorpe and the Aztecs's 'Poison Ivy' was the ninth highest seller and their version of 'Sick And Tired' was the seventeenth.

Now, the Billy Thorpe version of 'Poison Ivy' came from the Rolling Stones's version on their first EP (Extended Player). The Stones did not have a best selling single in any of the Australian yearly charts for 1963, 1964 or 1965. Indeed, the Stones only had one number one in Australia in the 1960s, a cover of the Drifters's 'Under The Boardwalk' in 1965. Not even 'Satisfaction', perhaps their most well-known track, which reached number one in both Britain and the United States, sold enough copies to top the charts in Australia. On that first EP, along with 'Poison Ivy', were versions of Chuck Berry's 'Bye Bye Johnny', 'Money', a rhythm and blues hit for Barrett Strong, and a version of Arthur Alexander's 'You Better Move On'. Of all these American-originated songs only 'Poison Ivy' was written by non-Blacks, Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller, who were Jewish-Americans who specialised in writing pop-oriented, melodic soft-soul numbers and novelty songs for Black vocal groups like the Drifters and the Coasters. 'Under The Boardwalk' was also one of their compositions.

In choosing 'Poison Ivy' then, Billy Thorpe and the Aztecs had taken the 'whitest' sounding of the tracks on the Stones's EP and produced a whitened cover of the Stones's already whitened cover. Listening to Billy Thorpe and the Aztecs's version what you hear is

a tuneful song sung by a solo singer with a backing instrumental band. The lyrics are clearly enunciated, emotion is not expressed, the band plays to a regular beat. I want to emphasise that my object is not to denigrate Billy Thorpe and the Aztecs's achievement. Quite the reverse. They made a Black(ish) pop song accessible to a young white Australian audience. Billy Thorpe and the Aztecs's second successful single was 'Mashed Potato'. This has a white rock'n'roll sound to it, more or less an instrumental with Thorpe singing with echo, 'Mashed potato, yeah, yeah, yeah'. In an interview in 1994, Thorpe identifies it as a Rufus Thomas original.[47] Certainly there is a version on Thomas's 1964 album *Walking the Dog* but the original version of this song, with the title 'Mashed Potatoes' in the plural, was by Nat Kendrick and the Swans. This was released in 1959. The band was actually James Brown and the JBs but the single was released under a different name for contract reasons. It reached number 8 on the American rhythm and blues chart. It is likely, though, that Thorpe found the song on a live double album by the Searchers, recorded in Hamburg and released in 1963, titled *Live at the Star Club*. While Thorpe's version is quite similar to the Searchers's whitened and relatively staid version, the band moved it closer to the style of instrumental surf music made popular in Australia by groups like the Atlantics. This single did not make the top twenty single sales for 1964, perhaps because it sounded too much like a throwback to an audience now looking for a regular, insistent beat.

With their third successful single, Billy Thorpe and the Aztecs continued the practice of covering a white version of a Black song. In this case, 'Sick And Tired' was a Fats Domino original also covered by the Searchers on their live album. As before, Thorpe gives a performance that concentrates on the melody while the band provides an instrumental backing. Once again this whitening of a white version of a Black song was successful. It was the seventeenth biggest selling Australian single in 1964. The B-side of 'Sick And Tired' was 'About Love', a version of 'Sho' Know A Lot About Love' which, while originally released by the Hollywood Argyles in 1960, also appears on the live Searchers album.[48] As it happens, the Hollywood Argyles was the white American Gary Paxton. The not-yet-legendary Kim Fowley co-produced the track. As signalled by the African-American phonetic of 'sho', the song was in the doo-wop style that was part of the African-American tradition but was

white enough to cross over into pop. The Searchers gave it a tuneful Beat Band sound.

That Billy Thorpe and his audience understood him to be working out of a white popular music heritage is clear from his subsequent singles. In *Sex and Thugs and Rock'n'Roll*, his autobiography of the period, Thorpe writes that:

> We'd asked the crowd at Surf City [where they had a residency] what songs they'd like us to record and the overwhelming consensus was 'Poison Ivy', 'Zip-a-Dee-Doo-Dah', 'Sick and Tired', a song of Tony's [an English migrant band member, Tony Barber], 'That I Love', and a ballad I'd sung since I was a child originally recorded by Judy Garland, 'Over the Rainbow'. The response to these songs had been phenomenal and it was obvious that we would sell thousands of copies to just the Surf City crowds, which would guarantee us at least charting in Sydney.[49]

Here we can see that Thorpe and the Aztecs's set contained white popular music standards as well as white, beat versions of Black music. The Beatles who, as we have seen, worked in the same white, popular music tradition, can be found on the *Live! At the Star-Club In Hamburg, Germany; 1962* album, taped before the band's grooming for success in Britain, singing Marlene Dietrich's ballad 'Falling In Love Again' and also 'Red Sails In The Sunset', which was written for the 1935 musical *Provincetown Follies*. Billy Thorpe and the Aztecs's version of 'Somewhere Over The Rainbow', complete with strings, was released in late 1964. It gave them their biggest hit to date.[50] Their follow-up was another pop ballad, 'I Told The Brook', written, and previously recorded, by the American country and western singer Marty Robbins. Thorpe and the Aztecs worked within a musical tradition that ensured their music was whiter than that of the Beatles.

The Beatles toured Australia in June 1964. The visit was a watershed in Australian culture. The crowds were huge, usually said to have been the biggest anywhere. In Adelaide the crowds were the biggest of all. Glenn A Baker, in his history of the tour, *The Beatles Down Under*, writes that: 'Police estimates of the motorcade route [from the airport to the city] crowd was 200,000 plus'.[51] On the Easybeats section of the Milesago website, the anonymous author writes that: 'On their Adelaide visit, it was estimated that at least 300,000 people—virtually half the population of the city at that

time—turned out to see [the Beatles]'.[52] Zion argues that one cause of this was the very large number of British migrants in Adelaide: 'Between 1954 and 1966 almost a quarter of a million British born migrants arrived in Australia … Over a quarter of them settled in South Australia, which almost doubled their proportion of the population of that state to over 11 per cent, which far exceeded the national figure of less than 8 per cent'.[53] In Britain the four lovable mop-tops with their zany sense of humour were already incorporated as family fun. They had appeared on the Royal Variety Show in 1963 and, in 1965, would be given MBEs. In 1964 their film *A Hard Day's Night* had a royal premiere.[54] In Australia, however, the Beatles were positioned quite differently. Their music was at the outer edge of young people's ability to accommodate and comprehend the African-American influence in white popular music.

Where the Beatles toured to massive crowds—in Melbourne there were around 5,000 at the airport, 30,000 packing the motorcade route to the city and 20,000 outside their hotel[55]—when the Rolling Stones came a year later they would be on a bill headlined by Roy Orbison with the Newbeats and Australian bands the Twilights and Max Merritt (who was originally from New Zealand).[56] The Stones's sets included Howlin' Wolf's 'Little Red Rooster', Chuck Berry's 'Around And Around', Rufus Thomas's 'Walking The Dog' and their own composition 'Heart Of Stone', at a time when blues-based music was virtually unknown in Australia. They played the Manufacturers Auditorium in the Agricultural Hall in Sydney, and the Palais Theatre in St Kilda. Where the Stones were comparatively ignored, Derek Taylor wrote in the *Los Angeles Times* in May 1967:

> It was clear that many of the 11 million people in Australia viewed The Beatles in a messianic light. They were invited to lay their hands on cripples, to pose on balconies before almost the entire population of many large cities, to watch ethnic dance displays and to attend mayoral receptions like visiting heads of state.[57]

The Stones's music simply did not make sense to the majority of Australian young people. While the Stones did develop a following it was relatively small and, we might say, very subcultural—an audience who prided themselves on their knowledge and liking for African-American influenced music. For Australians it was the

Beatles, the understandable and nostalgic evokers of the white colonial Home, who also provided the music of youthful fun and rebellion.

Billy Thorpe and the Aztecs were being highly successful doing covers of covers, whitening the material into the white melodic popular music tradition. The Beatles were further out. They were the English real thing, performing sweetened covers and their own melodic beat songs. Here, too, we find the ideology of derivation at work. While they were themselves, in one sense, derivative, in the colonial context the Beatles, coming from the motherland, were constructed as authentic, where authenticity was assumed to reside in an English origin. In addition, for all those British migrants, the Beatles satisfied a nostalgia for England and its everyday life, impossible to obtain from the Rolling Stones with their self-conscious celebration of African-American popular music and their disregard for the niceties of English society.

Formed in 1964 during the high period of Australian Beatlemania, the Twilights epitomised many of the points I have been making. They came out of Elizabeth and, of the six band members, two—Terry Britten and Glenn Shorrock—were English migrants, while Clem 'Paddy' McCartney came from Belfast.[58] The anonymous author of the Twilights article on the *Howlspace: Music from Australia and NZ* website writes that the:

> Elizabeth connection ... via the English migrants and their relatives back home, gave The Twilights access to the latest records from the Old Country before they were released here. The Twilights' other advantage was their ability to reproduce those records almost perfectly on stage, with the Beatles their speciality.[59]

This is written from within the settler colony ideology of imitation discussed earlier. After all, the English bands of the Beat Boom reproduced, often very closely, the Black American material that they covered. The point to be made is a different one, that while the Twilights could 'rock out with wild abandon'[60], they did so while continuing to emphasise and privilege the musical bases of the white popular music tradition, most importantly melody, as a way of linearly organising the beat, and a vocal oriented towards singing on the beat, enunciating lyrics and singing notes with as little sliding around of the voice as possible. In this context it is important to

note that, in the first instance, it was the Beatles's music, rather than that of the rhythm and blues–influenced bands, that the Twilights focused on reproducing.

In playing Beatles songs—many of which were themselves whitened covers—note for note, the Twilights were operating within a Western classical music regime founded on the writing out of musical scores, even though the band may well have learnt the music from records. This tradition emphasises accuracy of reproduction and allows emotional expression in the form of the music itself and in the manner of playing the score.

In common with the majority of Australians, the Twilights seem not to have registered a difference in musical interests between the English beat bands and the rhythm and blues groups. All offered music for interpretation.[61] After two singles penned by members of the group, the Twilights covered the Animals's version of the traditional American blues-folk song 'Baby Let Me Take You Home' which that band had taken from Bob Dylan's eponymous first album, where the song was called 'Baby, Let Me Follow You Down'.[62] This was followed by a version of the Beatles's cover of the rhythm and blues singer Freddie Williams's 'Bad Boy'. The Twilights's Australian sales breakthrough came with their next single, a melodic cover of the Velvelettes's 'Needle In A Haystack', itself a typical Tamla Motown sweet soul/white pop crossover tune.

By the time the Twilights made their first album, released in 1966, they were in a position to record whitened versions of original material now being released by the English beat and rhythm and blues bands. Thus, *The Twilights* includes versions of songs by the Small Faces ('Sorry She's Mine'), the Who ('LaLaLa Lies'—a version which includes a reading of the hook in impeccable English as 'Lie Lie Lie Lies'), the Hollies ('Yes I Will'), the Moody Blues ('Let Me Go') and of the Yardbirds's version of Mose Allison's 'I'm Not Talking'. Most fascinating of all, from the point of view of the argument I am making here, is the album's closing track, a reading of the Rolling Stones's '(I Can't Get No) Satisfaction'.

The Stones's own version of 'Satisfaction', as I mentioned earlier, did not make number one in Australia and in general the Stones's music, like that of the other English rhythm and blues bands, was in their own versions, much too 'black' for Australians. The Stones's 'Satisfaction', like a lot of their work from this period, has an ambient echo quality to it. The track opens with Keith Richards's

guitar playing what Richie Unterberger, on the web site All Music Guide, calls a fuzz riff.[63] This menacing sound is followed by the entry of the rhythm section in a musical structure which emphasises the off-beat and drives the track with a pounding regularity. Against the deliberately muddy production, Jagger's vocal, which is mixed into the instruments far more than in the beat band sound, takes on a confessional quality until the almost-shouted chorus. Mick Farren, who used to be the lead singer of the notorious late-sixties English band the Deviants, and now writes for the English weekly music paper *New Musical Express*, has described the Stones's version as: 'The ultimate and classic master class rock song, and textbook blending of guitar hook and vocal shout'.[64] In this version, following the Black musical aesthetic, melodic clarity is secondary to emotional expression.

The Twilights produce a 'beat' version with a white-soul vocal. The lead guitar is pulled back into the instrumental ensemble, the echo and muddiness are taken away, and the beat is speeded up to give a faster, regular rhythm. The effect is much brighter and, needless to say, much whiter. The vocal, though, is particularly interesting as it is pulled forward in the mix, producing that conventional relation of singer and backing band. What the audience is offered is a soulful expression, the use of emotional charge in the vocal delivery. At the same time, the vocal works to carry the melody and express the lyrics. It is worth briefly comparing the Twilights's version with that of the classic soul singer, Otis Redding. Here, it is the voice that dominates the entire musical organisation. Redding embellishes the vocal line using gospel phrasing with his primary objective being to express emotion. To this end words are added, noises uttered; the song becomes a vocal performance of, perhaps, despair. The instruments carry the rhythm and the brass section complements the vocal development. In short, the two cover versions are intent on quite opposite readings of the song in spite of an apparent similarity. Redding's version invokes the African-American musical aesthetic while that of the Twilights places the song within the English beat tradition of white, popular music. In this way the Twilights made the song acceptable, and probably for the first time sonically readable, to large numbers of Australians.

In 1966 the Twilights won the national Hoadley's Battle of the Sounds competition and a free trip to England. There they failed. In

Australia their success declined after 1967 and in 1969 the band broke up. Glenn Shorrock, one of its two lead singers, later utilised his Australian popular music sensibility as singer in the Little River Band. Shorrock and other Australians musicians formed LRB in 1975. They became very popular among the white 'middle of the road' (MOR) audience in the United States. Since the 1970s the band has had nine top ten American singles.

Why the Easybeats Failed in England

In Australia the Easybeats[65] were by far the most popular group to come out of the Beat Boom of the mid-1960s. Formed during 1964, the band had fifteen top forty singles, including three number ones, between 1965 and 1970. The Easybeats broke up towards the end of 1969 after a final, lacklustre tour of Australia. Glenn A Baker describes these shows as 'all before relatively small crowds in the agonizing throes of terminal cool'.[66] Australian music had moved on.

However, in those five years the band had developed a phenomenal popularity which even outstripped that of the Beatles. The first single, 'For My Woman', moved rapidly into and out of the charts. The second single, 'She's So Fine', went to number one in Sydney within a couple of weeks and, a month later in June, was a hit in Melbourne. Baker writes that: 'A month after "She's So Fine" broke, The Easybeats [sic] were on their way to becoming the most frantically adored act Australia had ever seen.'[67] 'She's So Fine' was number 13 of the top singles in Australia for 1965. By 1966 the press had christened the frenzy 'Easyfever' and that year the band released an EP with that title. Baker writes that:

> It is not naïve to say that *no* incident of Beatlemania or Rolling Stone fever anywhere in the world ever surpassed the absolute peak of Easyfever. Airports, TV stations, theatres and hire cars were reduced to rubble, fans were hospitalised and general mayhem reigned wherever they turned up.[68]

On 10 July 1966 the band flew out of Sydney on their way to London. In October, 'Friday On My Mind' was released in England as the follow-up to 'Come And See Her', the Easybeats's first English release. By Christmas, 'Friday On My Mind' peaked in the English charts at number six, delivering the band their only English

top ten chart success. The track also made it into the American top twenty. From here on it was downhill for the Easybeats in England. The follow-up flopped and the band was unable to keep up the musical momentum.

The Easybeats story was incredibly different in England compared with Australia. Certainly there was, at first, an issue of professionalism. Baker quotes Harry Vanda recalling that after arriving in London, 'we did the rounds of the clubs and the first group we saw was The Move at The Marquee—they were so good we almost packed up and went home!'[69] Also, there were poor management decisions that saw the band concentrating on publicity stunts like gatecrashing a Buckingham Palace garden party rather than getting exposure as a performing band.

Then there was the problem of the follow-up to 'Friday On My Mind'. Baker writes that:

> It was here that Harry and George made one of the rare blunders of their illustrious careers. In George's own words: 'The next single became "Who'll Be The One", which was crap, but it seemed the thing to satisfy most people. It wasn't in the same league as "Friday On My Mind". It wasn't even on the same planet!'[70]

Unlike 'Friday', 'Who'll Be The One' had no insistent guitar riff. Instead, it was based around a repetitive pop melody and sung in high vocal harmonies. Certainly it is not as catchy as the most successful pop songs, however 'Who'll Be The One' would have been popular in England with a different audience to the one for 'Friday On My Mind'. The mistake, then, lay not so much in the quality of the single, though this would not have helped, but in the lack of understanding of the segmented nature of the English record-buying market at that time. This, I will be arguing, is a symptom of a far greater problem, that the Easybeats's music evolved within an Australian musical sensibility which was constituted differently to the English musical sensibility.

The success of the Easybeats came from the band's ability to work within, and express, the Australian popular music sensibility. This was compounded by the generally high quality of the original material written by the band. Unlike other Australian bands, for example the early work of Billy Thorpe and the Aztecs, and especially the Twilights, the Easybeats always wrote their own songs. Where, as we have seen, these other bands tended to produce

whitened versions of Black songs already whitened by white English artists, the Easybeats were able to reproduce the Australian popular music sensibility in their compositions. At first Stevie Wright and George Young were the main composers. About the time of 'Friday On My Mind', Harry Vanda took over from Wright as co-composer. I shall discuss the consequences of this change later. In general, in spite of a shift in emphasis occasioned by the change in co-composer, the band's very material, and not just the material's musical interpretation, made sense to its Australian audience.

The very thing that accounted for the Easybeats's success in Australia was what led to the band's failure in England. It never occurred to the band, its management, or its record company, that the English popular music sensibility was significantly different to Australia's. In both the music industry and academic work on popular music there tends to be an assumption, driven from claims about popular music and commodification, that popular music is a universal, or at least a common Western, phenomenon. In England one of the focal points for the melodic tradition in popular music was the music hall[71], and subsequently the songwriters of Wardour Street. In the United States one key site for the spread of the melodic tradition was Tin Pan Alley[72] and, later, the songs produced by the writers in the Brill Building.[73] However, there developed another aspect to English popular music which was not present in Australia.

In England the American producer Shel Talmy, who produced 'Friday On My Mind', was knowledgeable in both the white melody and harmony tradition in which the Beach Boys worked and the African-American blues tradition that privileged rhythm and treated the voice as an instrument. His most successful work with the Kinks and the Who gave a hard, but to an English audience accessible, edge to the Beat Boom generic form and helped provide the basis for the English rock, as opposed to pop, tradition.

In Australia and, as it happens, in continental Europe, little or no understanding and appreciation of African-American music forms lasted beyond the American presence in the Second World War. Consequently, the African-American influence in the Easybeats's material, and performance, could only by understood to the extent that it was offered in terms of the European-dominated musical style of the Beat Boom, more specifically of the Beatles. In the Easybeats's oeuvre there is a transition from the earlier, more

African-American influenced beat music of the Wright/Young compositions, to the increasing preoccupation with melody, tunefulness and harmony of the Vanda/Young compositions. While Vanda/Young songs were picked up by pop bands such as Amen Corner, Los Bravos, who released 'Bring A Little Lovin'' as a single in 1968, and Marmalade, who put 'Station On Third Avenue' on their debut album entitled *There's a Lot of It About* (1969)[74], the Easybeats lost their way as a beat band, losing their African-American elements. The crucial point here, though, is that coming out of the white musical sensibility of Australian popular music, these African-American elements were always filtered through the white re-working of the Beatles and the other beat groups.

Australia and the Easybeats

Perhaps understandably, given what I have been arguing about the Australian popular music sensibility, the beat band explosion in Australia was fuelled by migrants.[75] The Easybeats were a part of this pattern. However, not all the Easybeats were from Britain. Two were from the Netherlands. Dingeman Van der Sluys (Dick Diamonde) had come to Australia when he was four and Johannes Hendrickus Vandenberg (later to alter his name to Harry Vanda) arrived in 1964 when he was seventeen. Both came from a country similar to Australia in its lack of engagement with the African-American musical tradition, as compared to those segments of the English population that championed rhythm and blues, Motown, and later West Indian ska and reggae. Like Australia, the Netherlands lacked a significant migration of people heavily influenced by African-American music. Most Caribbean migration to the Netherlands took place after Suriname gained independence in 1975 and, in any case, African-American music was nowhere near as important there, or in the islands of the Netherlands Antilles, as in Jamaica.[76] In the Netherlands Vanda had been a member of the Starfighters. This band had formed in 1962 and played music by Cliff Richard, the Shadows, Buddy Holly and the Beatles.[77] Vanda was not a founding member of the Starfighters but the band seems to have reflected his musical interests—white, melodic with a regular beat.

Young had recently come from Glasgow. He was one of seven brothers, two others of whom later went on to form AC/DC. His

eldest brother had been a member of Emile Ford and the Checkmates and stayed in England when the rest of the family emigrated. Emile Ford was born in Nassau, in the Bahamas. His family arrived in England as part of the West Indian migration during the 1950s. His first record, and only number one, was a remake of the 1916 Tin Pan Alley standard 'What Do You Want To Make Those Eyes At Me For' released in late 1959.[78] While Ford's music was very 'white,' that is melody-based, his achievement was to make the Black presence in England visible in popular music. As Baker tells the Young family story, it was Margaret, the brothers' older sister, who first introduced them to rhythm and blues, and rock'n'roll.[79] She had found the music as early as 1955. Young and Vanda met in the Villawood migrant hostel.

Gordon 'Snowy' Fleet joined as the band's drummer. He was twenty-four, older than the others by six or seven years. Fleet had migrated with his wife from Liverpool. He had briefly been the drummer for the Liverpudlian band, the Mojos. The Mojos had, like the Beatles and the Searchers, played the Star Club in Hamburg, which opened in 1962, specialising in beat music. In 1964, after Fleet's time, they had a national hit in England with 'Everything's Alright'. The band's trajectory is summed up by Stu James, their vocalist:

> We made our name in Liverpool as blues specialists but later got persuaded to do all sorts of lightweight pop stuff. After our initial success, we just stumbled on in a fairly aimless way. If we got any acclaim it was for our live performances which remained loud and raucous.[80]

Aynsley Dunbar was the drummer for the band between 1964 and 1966 after which he joined John Mayall's Bluesbreakers.[81] It would seem that Fleet's connection with the band must have been during their blues phase.

While Vanda and Diamonde gave the Easybeats a whiter, poppier, melodic influence, Young and Fleet provided a whitened, African-American edge to the music. This was somewhat reinforced by Stevie Wright who had left Leeds in 1958. Wright had been lead singer with a vocal quartet called Chris Landon and the Langdells. This group seems to have sung in the harmonic style of a white, American barber-shop quartet. According to Baker, the Bee Gees— the Gibb family were Manx working-class migrants—turned Wright

on to the early Beatles material. Wright, who would have been ten when he left England, was probably unfamiliar with the African-American music that had influenced the Beatles, and which they had re-worked in the European harmonic style. At the same time, he came from an English background more open to the African-American music aesthetic than the Australian popular music sensibility. Leeds was one of the urban centres in which the West Indian migrants settled. In Australia, Wright's access to African-American music appears to have been through John Lennon rather than Chuck Berry (let alone James Brown or the blues masters).

The Easybeats wrote and performed their own material in an environment which did not distinguish two musical strands but rather lumped all the English bands into the one category of beat bands, just as the Americans thought in terms of the British Invasion. The consequence is that the Easybeats produced music which merged the two strands. The typical Easybeats song is highly melodic, very catchy and often with a strong choral hook, coupled to an insistent rhythm and blues-style off-beat marked by the drums with a guitar rhythm section that included rhythm and blues-oriented guitar solos from Harry Vanda. The author of the Easybeats's Milesago site describes the band this way:

> Their sound was tight, raw and aggressive, and what they may have lacked in polish they made up for with energy to burn. They were backed by the rock-solid (and hugely underrated) rhythm section of Dick, Snowy and George, and it must be said that in Harry Vanda they possessed one of the era's finest guitarists, providing exemplary lead breaks which were fluid, assured, inventive and concise. Stevie Wright was one of the truly great rock front men. Although perhaps not the greatest singer in technical terms, Stevie's strengths were his power, his sure delivery and his innate sense of musical drama and fun.[82]

It was Snowy Fleet and George Young who gave the Easybeats their rhythm and blues base. Wright was not a great singer in the technical terms of white popular music, rather he is best thought of as a white rhythm and blues singer rather like John Lennon. Wright's delivery combined white popular music's preoccupation with the clarity of lyrics and emphasis on melody with an African-American recognition that the role of the voice is to express emotion. Perhaps because he was not socialised into popular music in Australia,

Wright was happy to shout, scream, moan and utilise other extra-linguistic sounds which were anathema to traditional white popular music. A good example is the scream at the beginning of the Easybeats's second single, 'She's So Fine'. It is perhaps also not coincidental that this track was produced by the migrant English record producer, Roger Savage. In England he had engineered the Stones's first single, 'Come On', and worked with the legendary English blue-eyed soul singer, Dusty Springfield.[83] All this, then, is to explain that the Easybeats developed a distinctly Australian sound synthesising what in England were understood to be the two quite different strands of the Beat Boom, making music on the acceptable outer edge of most Australian youth's popular music comprehension.

In their early days the Easybeats, not aware of the generic distinction operating in England, must have identified musically as much with the Rolling Stones as with the Beatles. When they auditioned for Ted Albert of Albert Productions: 'They did some Rolling Stones songs, which were fun, but when they played "Say That You're Mine" … I almost broke my neck getting the contract written up.'[84] 'Say That You're Mine' was the first Vanda/Young composition and is described on the Milesago website for the Easybeats as 'Beatles-esque', an accurate description of its melodic basis and a sign of things to come.

Later, when the band started covering songs that had influenced them or which they liked, they covered the white rhythm and blues of Leiber and Stoller's 'Hound Dog', which they most likely knew from Elvis Presley's 1956 version, the Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons melodic croon of 'Can't Take My Eyes Off Of You', Ray Charles's soft, melodic rhythm and blues of 'Hit The Road Jack', and even a version of the Phil Spector Wall of Sound production of Ike and Tina Turner's 'River Deep, Mountain High', which was written by the white (also Jewish) American Brill Building songwriting couple of Jeff Barry and Ellie Greenwich. The Easybeats also covered Chuck Berry's 'Little Queenie', which the Beatles may have played on their 1964 tour as it appears on The Beatles's live album from the Star Club, Hamburg, recorded in December 1962 but not released until 1977. Except for 'Hit The Road Jack', written by Percy Mayfield, and 'Little Queenie', none of these songs were written by African-Americans, though 'Hound Dog' had been recorded by the African-American singer, Big Mama

Thornton, in a rhythm and blues style, three years before Presley's version, and Ike and Tina Turner had started their career as rhythm and blues singers. While 'Can't Take My Eyes Off Of You' is straight-out melodic pop, with the exception of 'Little Queenie' what these other songs have in common is their melodic emphasis in a rhythm and blues form.

I have mentioned that, in respect of the African-American music aesthetic, the continental European popular music sensibility was similar to Australia's. Baker writes that 'Friday On My Mind' 'had been number one in Holland, top ten in Germany and strong throughout Italy, France, Spain and numerous other Continental countries'.[85] On 29 March 1967 the Easybeats began a European tour with the Rolling Stones. This in itself is an interesting pairing. Clearly the promoters of this tour understood the Easybeats to have a musical style compatible with the Stones—which is to say that, following one assumes the evidence of 'Friday On My Mind', the Easybeats were read as more rock and rhythm and blues than Beat Boom pop. Baker further writes that:

> Europe soon became The Easybeats [sic] most profitable market and tours were regularly undertaken through France, Spain, Belgium, Holland, Germany ... European bands took a fierce liking to Vanda/Young songs and covered many. Major euro [sic] acts such as Los Bravos, The Tapes, The Dukes, The Rokes and a score of French and Italian crooners were solid enough domestic sellers to generate considerable royalties toward the skint Easybeat camp.[86]

All this was in the aftermath of 'Friday On My Mind' when the Easybeats were finding it impossible to sustain their popularity in Britain. Why were the Easybeats so popular in Europe? For one thing, the songs covered by European bands were the later, more melodic Vanda/Young compositions. More, it was not only bands who covered the Vanda/Young material but also what Baker calls crooners, actually European solo singers who specialised in big-production pop ballads. Vanda/Young were interested in melody and musically produced drama. The only other time the Easybeats made the British charts was with 'Hello, How Are You', which got to number 20 in 1968. This is a big, melodramatic ballad in the Italian tradition, coupled with a pop hook in the chorus. It would not have been bought by the same English audience that bought

'Friday On My Mind' but is generically similar to the failed follow-up, 'Who'll Be The One'. It has to be said that Wright's voice simply is not strong enough to carry the vocal.

This melodic aspect of the Easybeats's corpus was nothing new. The European singers were picking up on a trait in the Easybeats's music that had been there from the beginning. In early 1965 the band had recorded four demo tracks for Ted Albert. 'For My Woman', the first Wright/Young composition, was released as the first Easybeats single backed by 'Say That You're Mine'. One of the other tracks recorded that day was 'I Who Have Nothing'. Better known for their songs for the Coasters and the Drifters, Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller wrote the English lyrics for what was an Italian dramatic pop ballad entitled 'Uno Dei Tanti' ('One Out Of Many'.) Both Ben E King, in the United States, and Shirley Bassey, in Britain, had hits with the Leiber/Stoller version in 1963. One of the Easybeats's very first recordings, then, and very first cover version, was a highly melodic ballad. While the promoter for the Rolling Stones tour thought there was a similarity between the Rolling Stones and the Easybeats, European audiences could also hear in their music the melody and vocal enunciation of the European popular music tradition.

Shel Talmy and the Advent of Rock

As I have argued, the popular music sensibility in Britain was different from Australia. In Britain, the difference between the Beatles and the Stones articulates a founding distinction between pop and rock. The audience that enjoyed the Beatles's melodious white pop was not the same as the audience that appreciated the Stones and the Yardbirds. In England the Easybeats were caught between two distinct musical genres. Their one successful single was not an Australian production. As I have already mentioned, 'Friday On My Mind' was produced by Shel Talmy. Talmy was born and raised in Chicago where his musical appreciation was influenced by rhythm and blues. He then moved to Los Angeles. There he worked as a recording engineer. In England he claimed to have produced the Beach Boys's 'Surfin' Safari' and landed a job with Decca. What enabled him to be so successful in England was his ability to work

across the white, melodic tradition and the African-American rhythmic-centred tradition. In an interview about his time in England, Talmy says:

> I wanted a rock'n'roll band. I grew up with rock'n'roll, R&B. What I felt I could do over there was to give an American sound to a really good rock'n'roll band, and I was on the constant look out for rock'n'roll bands.[87]

What the British Beat Boom produced were white bands playing white, melodic music that reworked African-American rhythm and blues. Packaged in this way the music could be recycled by bands like the Beatles to the white, teenage record buyers of the United States. The Americans, like the Australians, made no generic differentiation between the Beatles and the Rolling Stones. With his white American music sensibility, and knowledge of African-American music, Talmy was able to work on the Beat Boom sound to give the bands he thought had potential a more rhythmic emphasis. In Laing's terms, this meant placing greater weight on the beat, often by giving the rhythm guitar a more pronounced role, and pulling the lead guitar forward in the mix to work with the vocal.

Talmy is often credited with originating the hard, rock guitar sound. As Alan di Perna writes: 'Modern, guitar-driven, "power chord" rock was born in the mid-sixties in the form of two hard-hitting singles: "You Really Got Me" by the Kinks and "Can't Explain" by the Who'.[88] Both were produced by Talmy. Highlighting the guitar was typical of Chicago blues. Talmy imported this Black style into the Beat Boom sound. The effect in English white beat music was transforming.[89] As di Perna writes about the Kinks's 'You Really Got Me' and 'All Day And All Of The Night', and the Who's 'I Can't Explain':

> In all three cases, the guitar riffs is [sic] the focal point of the track. The vocals follow the guitar, which is a significant departure from the Lennon/McCartney school of song craft, where inventive harmonic chord changes are fitted beneath a catchy vocal melody.[90]

On 'Friday On My Mind' Talmy uses the same technique, bringing Vanda's guitar forward in the mix and using it to chop up the melody, making the beat harder and the track more danceable, much like his early Kinks productions.

At the same time, Talmy also had a liking for white pop harmonies. In England one of his first assignments was to produce the Bachelors, an Irish vocal trio. He recorded the hit 'Charmaine' with them. Later he produced the close harmony group the Fortunes. He also produced the singer-songwriter, Roy Harper, and the folk-rock group, Pentangle. In 'Friday On My Mind' Wright's voice is raised and sweetened. While retaining its energy, Talmy gives it a whiter, more acceptable sound. Talmy's production positioned 'Friday On My Mind' within the English popular music sensibility at the harder edge but with a vocal that matched the song's poppy melody. He transformed what could have been a melodic pop song with a faint rhythm and blues feel to it into a rock song that showed an African-American influence in its form. In this way the song could appeal to the white, English mods who were also buying the Who, the Kinks, Manfred Mann, and the Animals. 'Friday On My Mind', three other tracks recorded in the same session, and then the rest of the tracks that made up the *Good Friday* album, released in May 1967 (released later in Australia in a slighter different form as *Friday on My Mind*), comprised all the work that the Easybeats did with Talmy. They never repeated the single success of 'Friday' in Britain.[91] Nor were *Good Friday* or later albums, *Vigil* and *Friends*, a success in that country. No Easybeats album made the top forty.

In late 1973, four years after the Easybeats broke up, Malcolm Young with his brother Angus formed AC/DC. George Young occasionally filled in on bass or drums. Over the next thirty years AC/DC became the biggest Australian rock band and the fifth highest selling band in American music history behind the Beatles, Led Zeppelin, Pink Floyd, and the Eagles. Vanda and Young produced AC/DC's first six albums starting with *High Voltage* in 1975. The author of the AC/DC page on the Milesago site suggests that whereas the Easybeats lost their way in England 'vainly experimenting with each new style or fad on each successive release', Vanda and Young helped AC/DC learn from the Easybeats's mistake and stay 'focussed on their rock'n'roll roots'.[92] This author emphases the similarities between the Easybeats and AC/DC, a band 'built around a powerful rock-solid rhythm section, highlighted by a red-hot lead guitarist and fronted by one of the most dynamic vocalists of the day'.[93]

AC/DC took off from the direction offered by Talmy's production of 'Friday On My Mind'. They are a hard rock band who

carry the developments pioneered by the Kinks and the Who into the next generation. The rock beat, carried by guitar and drums, and coupled with a strong, catchy guitar riff which organises the vocal phrasing, is at the heart of their songs. The verses lead into anthemic, melodic choruses, examples being 'It's A Long Way To The Top (If You Want To Rock'n'Roll)' and 'Highway To Hell', where the melody is simple and the vocal line keeps to the beat. Once again, it is the beat that is dominant. This is white rock'n'roll not African-American rhythm and blues. This is rock, not melodic pop. Here melody serves the beat. This is music which comes out of a white popular music sensibility, which has learnt about rhythm but keeps it harnessed to an overwhelming, regular beat, and learnt about emotional expression rather than relying on melody and enunciation.

Vanda and Young became central to the developing Australian hard rock tradition in the 1970s, producing the first album by the Angels, *The Angels* (1977), and the first four albums by Rose Tattoo, starting with *Rose Tattoo* in 1978. The Easybeats offered Britain a synthesis of beat musical form and rhythm and blues, and succeeded only once, with Talmy's help. Subsequently they transformed into a melodic pop band and failed to establish an audience.[94] AC/DC, with Vanda and Young, took the template established by Talmy, the Kinks and the Who, and forged a white, hard-rock band that was understandable not only in Australia but also in Britain and the United States.

Oz Rock and the Ballad Tradition in Australian Popular Music

'While we are sitting here, singing folksongs, in our folksong clubs, the folk are somewhere else, singing something different.'

quoted in Jeff Corfield, 'The Australian Style'[1]

Billy Thorpe and the Aztecs, the Twilights and the Easybeats, discussed in Chapter One, were manifestations of an Australian popular music sensibility which was fundamentally European-derived, white. It was a tradition that valued melody, musical linearity and lyrical clarity. These bands, in particular Billy Thorpe and the Aztecs and the Easybeats, laid the basis for the flowering of Australian rock in the 1970s and for Oz Rock groups such as Rose Tattoo, the Angels, Midnight Oil, Cold Chisel, Australian Crawl, and, in the 2000s, You Am I and Powderfinger, among others.[2] This tradition has continued to blend melody with strong guitar riffs and a big beat. Billy Thorpe's self-penned 'Most People I Know (Think That I'm Crazy)', released in 1972, with its melody, driving beat and anthemic chorus combined with an emphasis on the lyrics, provided a template for Australian rock, for a tradition of bands—those Oz Rock bands that I mentioned above—whose success in Australia has, in the main, continued to be far greater than what they have achieved overseas.[3] This tradition continues to privilege elements drawn from the white, European musical tradition, over influences from African-American and other Black musics. This hard rock development in Australia has another strand, the importance of the

traditional ballad and, along with this, the influence of American country music. The combination of these was most obvious in the work of Cold Chisel.

In Chapter One I argued that what set Australian popular music off from its British counterpart in the post–Second World War period was its lack of engagement with African-American music and, more abstractly, a consequent lack of comprehension of that music's aesthetic. The result was that Australian music of the beat boom tended to be 'whiter,' that is, more melodic, more concerned with harmony and with lyrics than with the conveying of emotion and with rhythm. Above, I referred to Thorpe's use of melody in 'Crazy', to the song's anthemic quality, the preoccupation with lyrical clarity, and its tuneful linearity, all underscored by a driving rock beat. Now I want to add to that list the song's first person narratorial voice, and the theme—the use of the first person not to offer the expression of an emotion, most usually love or loss in modern popular music, but to articulate from an individual perspective a feeling of alienation which the singer expects his audience to share.

'Crazy' marks the aural beginning of the musical element of Oz Rock. In *Long Way to the Top*, James Cockington describes Oz Rock, for which he uses the alternative term pub rock, as 'a distinctively Australian phenomenon'.[4] He writes that, while '[b]ands had always played in pubs ... during this period a unique atmosphere developed'.[5] He is thinking of roughly the mid-1970s to the mid-1980s. Cockington explains that:

> At its peak ... pub rock was a style of music found nowhere else. Bands from the UK and America were astonished when they saw these huge brick sheds with all the charm of a bus shelter, filled to the rafters with screaming shit-faced masses. Most were frightened.[6]

Here, Cockington conflates the form of the music itself with the environment in which it was played. More subtly he argues that the musical expression which characterises Oz Rock was deeply imbricated with the requirements of the audience. Cockington quotes Doc Neeson, lead singer with Oz Rock icon, The Angels:

> The phrase I hear at most gigs in Australia—you hear guys talking at the bar, and they're always saying they've come for a rage. They come to our gigs, or gigs generally I guess, to let something go, a sort of catharsis. We always feel that there's this implied

confrontation between band and audience. They're saying, 'Lay it on! Do it to us!', and it's like a veiled threat that if you don't, you'll get canned.[7]

Neeson is describing the dark side of the personal alienation that Thorpe celebrates in 'Crazy'.

As its venues suggest, the bulk of the Oz Rock audience was working class in their attitudes and cultural understanding of the world. The personal alienation can be understood as an expression of the oppression embodied in that class position. Neeson himself was a drama student from Flinders University in Adelaide. An Irish immigrant, his family settled in Elizabeth, the working-class Adelaide suburb which produced so many Australian musicians in the 1960s and 1970s, including the Scottish migrant Jimmy Barnes, lead singer of Cold Chisel.[8] Neeson is distantly related to Ned Kelly and had a fascination with the folklore of the American West (a characteristic to which this chapter will return).[9] He was ideally suited to write and perform rock music that fitted into an Australian musical sensibility, an important part of which was a ballad tradition drawn from Britain and Ireland.

This chapter argues that Oz Rock, the hard rock core of the modern Australian popular music tradition, is deeply influenced by the Australian ballad tradition. This tradition was brought to Australia from England and Ireland with white settlers. In England, more than Ireland, the ballad tradition died out. In Australia it never did. The ballad tradition has been a key component in the formation of an Australian popular music sensibility. The most popular of the Oz Rock bands, Cold Chisel, worked most closely within the ballad tradition. We can go on to suggest that this aspect of their music, which helped to make them so successful in Australia, was precisely what the British and Americans found incomprehensible in a rock band. Hence, it was one of the factors that led to the failure of Cold Chisel, and Jimmy Barnes as a solo artist, in those markets. Conversely, AC/DC, learning from the overseas failure of the Easybeats, something discussed in Chapter One, were able to adapt, dropping specifically Australian qualities, at least to the extent of making a rock sound that could be embraced by non-Australian audiences.

If the ballad tradition is so central to Australian rock music, to the Australian popular music sensibility, why hasn't it been

commented on before? There are two complementary reasons for this. The first has to do with the way the Australian ballad tradition has been studied.[10] As in Britain and the United States, the Australian orally-transmitted musical tradition became understood as 'folk song' as these songs started to be collected. Graeme Smith has explained that:

> Until the 1950s there was almost no awareness of any comparable [to the American] folk music or song traditions in Australia. Wendy Lowenstein has noted that when she and Ian Turner set up the Victorian Folklore Society in 1955 they knew exactly three Australian folk songs: 'Click Go the Shears', 'The Wild Colonial Boy' and 'Botany Bay'.[11]

Smith writes that the earliest collecting of Australian folk songs was by Dr Percy Jones in the mid-1940s. The 1950s saw the beginnings of the so-called folk revival which, as Smith describes, was 'inspired by ideals of cultural nationalism and radicalism'.[12] These historians and folklorists saw themselves as rescuing an oral tradition that was on the verge of complete extinction, killed by the mass media and commercial popular music.

Smith tells us that, by the 1960s, there had developed a canon of Australian folk songs which 'was being widely performed in the coffee lounges and folk clubs of the folk boom, generally by solo performers within the conventional singer-guitarist, folk singer format'.[13] It was out of this revivalist tradition that the bush bands evolved in the 1970s. Smith notes that: 'Bush bands began in the Oz Rock scene but acquired more general popularity through the staging of bush dances'.[14] This in itself would suggest that there was something more complicated going on than a revival but the preoccupation of the folklorists stopped with ballad production around the time of the First World War. Stopping then was based on the assumption that by this time ballad production was either in great decline or had finished.

The second reason the importance of the ballad to Australian rock music hasn't been commented on before has to do with the perception of Australian rock music as being more or less wholly derivative of American, and to some extent British, popular music. I have discussed this problematic assumption in this book's Introduction. Here, I shall just note how this claim gets played out in popular histories of rock music in Australia. To take the example

of Cockington's *Long Way to the Top*, from which I have already quoted, he writes:

> The Australian public's extraordinary response to the arrival of rock and roll is all the more understandable when you realise that it was merely the latest manifestation of an ongoing love affair with all things American.[15]

Cockington examines this response but never looks at how Australian culture, in particular the Australian musical sensibility, incorporated and developed rock music within the Australian musical tradition. This means that in his book, as well as in the admirable television series on the history of Australian rock music from which the book derives[16], a particular and quite narrow definition of rock music is implied, which excludes bands such as Redgum and Weddings, Parties, Anything, of which more later. Both of these bands, on the grounds of popularity alone, ought to have warranted a mention. For this series the particularity of Australian rock music is a consequence of the innovations of Australian composers and performers relating solely to the rock music tradition, defined still on Anglo-American terms.

This chapter argues that, far from dying out, the ballad, as an aspect of the Australian musical sensibility, which we can define more subtlely as the learnt cultural repertoire of assumptions through which Australians experience and appreciate music, has a living and continuous history. Unlike Britain, where the traditional, rural ballad had lost relevance as a part of everyday life by about 1800 and the urban, broadside ballad by the middle part of the nineteenth century, in Australia the ballad in rural areas was still an important element in everyday life in the first part of the twentieth century. From there it was incorporated into the Australian country music tradition as it evolved by way of, most importantly, Tex Morton and, in the next generation, Slim Dusty. However, unlike in the United States, country music in Australia has always occupied a central position in Australian popular music, acknowledging its heritage in the same bush song background as that of the revivalist bush bands.

Slim Dusty's continuing popularity reflects his ongoing centrality in popular music in Australia, rather than a minority interest or cult status. Because his career overlaps with the establishment of rock music in Australia Slim Dusty occupies a pivotal position in the

post-1950s rearticulation of the Australian musical sensibility. The importance of Slim Dusty's music to Australian popular music, and to Australian culture, was evidenced in his being chosen to be the final act at the closing ceremony of the Sydney 2000 Olympics. His relevance to the Oz Rock tradition is demonstrated in the rock bands, including Midnight Oil, Don Walker (who was the principal songwriter for the by-then defunct Cold Chisel) and the Screaming Jets, who contributed to the 1998 *Not So Dusty* Slim Dusty tribute album.

The Modern History of the Ballad

We need to begin by examining the ballad tradition more closely. J S Manifold, in a book published in 1964, which is possibly still the best work on Australian ballads, defines ballads as 'narrative folksongs or literary imitations thereof'.[17] Bruno Nettl, the well-known ethnomusicologist, writes that:

> As far as the words are concerned, the ballad tells a story involving one main event. In contrast to the ballads, the epic songs are long, complex, and involve several events tied together by a common theme.[18]

At its most fundamental, lyrically the ballad is distinguished by the use of narrative and the focus on a single event. Historically, Nettl tells that while narrative songs occur in other places, in Europe 'they occupy a position of pre-eminence'.[19]

By around 1800, that is, during the early settlement of Australia, the rural ballad was losing its importance in England. Edward Lee explains that, at that time:

> the decline in the traditional folk song had begun, and such musically talented people of the working class as could find any outlet at all, must have been drawn to the towns, where it was possible to have a life which was easier than that of a labourer and, as in the present day, offered richer rewards.[20]

To describe these people as working class promotes a misunderstanding. The loss of the popular song tradition, including the ballad, in the English countryside, was caused in large part by the massive disruptions occasioned by the introduction of industrial capitalism: urbanisation, enclosures, land clearances, the

construction of an urban industrial working class. All these developments, combined with the commercial reformation in farming practices, transformed the English rural environment.

Another ballad tradition, the printed broadside, existed in London. Starting in the early sixteenth century, this ballad form continued until well into the nineteenth. It was considered a very low form of popular culture. Writing about the eighteenth century, Alan Bold tells us that: 'While the broadside ballad existed as an inescapable part of urban life it had a disreputable name; the men who made the broadsides were regarded as culturally unspeakable and completely mercenary.'[21] Nevertheless, in the first half of the nineteenth century, Lee writes that selling ballads was 'a very lucrative business'.[22] One murder ballad in 1849 sold two and a half million copies.[23]

The murder ballad, the description of a murder, often told in the first person as if by the murderer on his way to the gallows, was one of the most popular genres. One well-known example, from 1828, is 'The Murder Of Maria Marten Or Confession And Execution Of William Corder, The Murderer Of Maria Marten'. It begins:

> If you'll meet me at the Red Barn
> As sure as I have life
> I will take you to Ipswich town
> And there make you my wife
>
> This lad went home and fetched his gun
> His pickaxe and his spade
> He went unto the Red Barn
> And there he dug her grave
>
> Come all you thoughtless young men
> A warning take by me
> To think upon my unhappy fate
> To be hanged upon a tree

Depending on the version, there are up to fourteen further stanzas describing the murder and its consequences. There is nothing exceptional about this ballad and it is important to remember that this was a common type of ballad in London during the convict settlement period in Australia. In other words, the concerns and affects of the murder ballad were a formative part of the Australian musical sensibility. It should not be surprising, then, to realise that

murder plays a significant role within Australian hard rock. One example is the track 'Jailbreak' off AC/DC's 1976 album, *Dirty Deeds Done Cheap*. 'Jailbreak' is about a man charged with murder who is killed trying to escape from prison. On the 1995 AC/DC tribute album, *Fusebox*, Yothu Yindi, the Aboriginal rock band, recorded a version in which the man commits suicide in prison, evoking the critical issue of Aboriginal deaths in custody.[24] We will consider the subversive strand in Australian rock later.

While not usually classified as Oz Rock, perhaps the most obvious, and most likely self-conscious evocation of the murder ballad genre is Nick Cave's 1996 album *Murder Ballads*. Cave's work has often been concerned with murder and retribution. There is, for example, 'The Mercy Seat' on *Tender Prey* (1988). This track describes a murderer's execution in the electric chair. We might also think of 'Red Right Hand' from *Let Love In* (1994) which seems to elevate murder to being the natural order of God's creation. *Murder Ballads* reached number one in the Australian charts (number eight in the British charts) and sold over 600,000 copies. The album, which includes nine songs describing murders and one, the final one, redemptively suggesting, as the title has it, that 'Death Is Not The End,' is the culmination of Cave's preoccupation.

While in the Australian ballad tradition that hails from the nineteenth century broadsheet ballads, *Murder Ballads* has the typically American reference points of late-twentieth century Australian rock. Seven of the tracks on the album were written by Cave. Two, 'Stagger Lee' and 'Henry Lee', are traditional American ballads ('Stagger Lee' became a rhythm and blues hit for Lloyd Price in 1959) and one, 'Death Is Not The End', was written by Bob Dylan.[25] Similarly, while the tracks are ballads in the sense of being narratives about a single event, they are not in any traditional metre or rhyme, nor do Cave and his band the Bad Seeds use traditional instrumentation. This is a rock album that comes out of the ballad aspect of the Australian musical sensibility.

Bold quotes Henry Mayhew, from his 1851 investigation into the lives of the London working class, *London Labour and the London Poor*, on the patterers who sold the broadside ballads:

> It is not possible to ascertain with any certitude what the patterers are so anxious to sell, for only a few leading words are audible. One of the cleverest of the running patterers repeated to me, in a

subdued tone, his announcements of murders. The words 'Murder', 'Horrible', 'Barbarous', 'Love', 'Mysterious', 'Former Crimes', and the like could only be caught by the ear, but there was no announcement of anything like 'particulars' ...[26]

Under the guise of spreading news, the nineteenth century murder ballad detailed the crime in such a way as to produce the reader's or auditor's voyeuristic pleasure by summoning horror and fear. For example, here are the two stanzas of 'Maria Marten' which describe the murder:

> With her heart so light she thought no harm
> To meet me she did go
> I murdered her all in the barn
> And laid her body down
>
> After my horrid deed was done
> She laid there in her gore
> Her bleeding mangled body
> Lay beneath the Red Barn floor

Here we have an early version of the detailed description of the crime that, in the later twentieth century, became normalised in horror films, television cop shows and the tabloid press, with the same affects. Cave's murder ballads continue this tradition. Moreover, Cave uses 'Maria Marten's traditional motif of the innocent victim murdered by her lover in his own murder ballad 'Where The Wild Roses Grow', his duet with Australian pop diva Kylie Minogue. In a mass mediated world saturated with images of violence Cave ups the confrontational quality of the imagery, for example retelling 'Stagger Lee' with a liberal sprinkling of swear-words and sexual explicitness.[27]

The broadside ballad's attempts to evoke horror and fear through a recounting of working-class crime is present in a reworked form in some of the Angels's most well-known songs. Here, for example, are the first and last verses from 'Take A Long Line', off their second album, *Face to Face*, released in 1978:

> He was selling postcards from a paper stand
> A whiskey bottle in his withered hand
> He put a finger on a photo from an old magazine
> And saw himself in the shadow of his dream
> ...

They put him a well wound whirlwind
Pulled out his teeth and told him to grin
He gave them a smile, pulled out a bottle of wine
And said 'I never existed, you've been wasting your time'
Take a long line, reel him in

This album stayed in the top forty for seventy weeks. In these lyrics there is a politics to the narrative that comes out of an aspect of the Australian ballad tradition which originates in the Irish influence. Manifold tells us that:

> After 1798 a large proportion of our Irish were in fact (though not in law) 'political' prisoners with an intense *esprit de corps* and a common repertory of insurgent songs.
>   Such songs were banned in Ireland; it was treason to sing them ... Accordingly, it had become a point of honour to preserve these songs in oral tradition and to sing them whenever possible.[28]

Writing about the nineteenth-century Australian bushranger ballads, Danny Spooner comments that:

> the anti-establishment sentiments the heroes represented and the ballads popularised reach deep into the furthest recesses of the class psyche. The power of the ballads as propaganda was well known to the establishment itself, as the many ordinances passed against the ballads, ballad-makers, and ballad singers testify.[29]

In 'Take A Long Line' the narrative describes a poor, lumpen working-class man persecuted by an unknown 'they'. The man's torture produces a defiant response. The song's atmosphere carries the menace and horror typical of the broadside ballad tradition. AC/DC's, but even more Yothu Yindi's, version of 'Jailbreak' comes from this same speaking position.

In the second half of the nineteenth century the urban street ballad went into a quite rapid decline in England. Lee quotes a writer in the *National Review* in 1861 commenting that: 'For several years the fact that the street ballad singer is disappearing from among us has been forcing itself more and more on the unwilling minds of ourselves and a few others.'[30] Lee suggests a number of contributory reasons for the urban broadside's disappearance: an increase in education accompanied by the arrival of cheap newspapers (thus making the topical ballad largely redundant); the music hall, which took over comic and amatory topics; the

introduction of penny songbooks, which clearly gave one more for one's money; and the opposition of the newly formed police.[31]

It is worth pausing for a moment and thinking about music halls. These began in London in the early part of the nineteenth century and increased rapidly after the *Theatre Act* of 1843 allowed places other than Drury Lane and Covent Garden to put on plays.[32] One of the earliest, and most well-known, of the working-class music halls was attached to The Canterbury Arms tavern on Lambeth Marshes. In 1848 its owner, Charles Morton, 'built a hall at the back of his property. After alterations it was reopened in 1851 to seat 1,500 people'.[33] Lee offers this description of the music hall:

> The music hall grew out of the drinking habits of a lower level of society. Many taverns found musical entertainments so popular, among both sexes, that they found it worthwhile to put on special performances in back rooms, with an entrance fee of sixpence or a shilling. The popularity of these was such that in some cases they became the main attraction of the house.[34]

Earlier, I quoted Cockington outlining the Oz Rock venue. Now we can see a continuity of form and intent between the English-originated music hall, which was subsequently brought to Australia[35], and the places where Oz Rock was, and continues to be, played. In fact, contrary to Cockington, pubs in England do still have bands performing—the now-defunct Hope and Anchor in Islington where many punk bands, including the seminal Australian punk band the Saints, played in the late 1970s, is one well-known example.[36] However, the tradition has continued with much greater force in Australia.

The Ballad from Ireland to Australia

In England the urban ballad had died out before the end of the nineteenth century, replaced by the relatively respectable jollity of the songs composed and performed in music halls.[37] In Australia, the end of the nineteenth century marked a transformation, rather than an ending, of the ballad tradition. Manifold argues that the earliest Australian songs, as opposed to those brought to the country from other places, date from the late 1820s and early 1830s.[38] He suggests that their background was Irish rather than English and writes that:

it is clear that colonial conditions, convict discipline, and the total lack of opportunity either for ballad-printer or ballad-hawker, would bear hard on those who were accustomed to buying ballads at any street corner; and the same conditions would correspondingly favour those who were already accustomed to clandestinity and concealment and to singing in a whisper behind the overseer's back.[39]

The Irish ballad tradition had remained rural and oral. Indeed, significantly for the continued life of the ballad in Australia, Irish traditional music never died out, finally being renewed in a commercial form by groups such as, and most importantly, the Chieftains, from the 1960s, and subsequently integrated with rock music by the pioneering band Horslips in the early 1970s.[40]

Under Bristish colonial government, Ireland did not industrialise except for Belfast. Moreover, in the period after 1840 the percentage of people engaged in manufacturing actually fell. In Cork City it declined from forty to twenty per cent between 1841 and 1901 and in Dublin from thirty-three to twenty per cent between 1841 and 1911.[41] At the same time the population remained predominantly rural and retained their traditional culture. As Theodore Hoppen puts it: 'Although ... a growing proportion of the post-Famine population began to live in towns—17 percent in 1851, 33 percent in 1911—this generated only the most marginal of effects upon the governing values of Irish society as a whole.'[42]

In Australia the flow of Irish began with the prisoners from the 1798 rebellion and continued through the nineteenth, and the twentieth, centuries. Patrick O'Farrell tells us that, in the nineteenth century, the greatest number arrived in the period after the famine. In 1841–50, the decade of the famine, 23,000 migrants arrived, in 1851–60 the number was 101,540, in 1861–70, it was 82,900 and in 1871–80 it was 61,946.[43] Moreover, at least in the earlier period, these people came mainly from poor, rural areas: Cork, Clare, Limerick and Tipperary. As O'Farrell writes 'the typical Irish emigrants to Australia in the late 1830s and 1840s tended to be semi-skilled farm workers forced off the land by the contraction of tillage in those areas'.[44] Niall Ó Ciosáin, in his discussion of the role of print in Irish popular culture between 1750 and 1850, comments that: 'The decades before the Famine were certainly a golden age for the cheapest collectively read (or sung) text, the single-sheet ballad.'[45] As can be seen from the figures given above, the peak of

Irish migration to Australia came in the decades after the famine, unlike that to the United States, and was related to the hope engendered by the Victorian gold rushes. In Australia these migrants reinforced the living tradition of Irish music and, specifically, the ballad tradition.

Smith has described well the importance of the post–Second World War Irish migration in the renewal of Irish music in Australia: 'They established employment networks, often operating out of particular pubs at an informal level, and associations such as Irish pipe bands, hurling and Gaelic football teams, country associations, all of which organised social dances.'[46] These migrants brought with them the *ceili* dance band which had evolved in Ireland in the 1930s. Smith tells us that the first Australian *ceili* band was formed in the early 1960s. He suggests that in Australia by the 1950s and 1960s, 'Irish music moved from being purely emblematic to being a part of functional popular entertainment.'[47] One element in this transformation was the Irish ballad revival driven by the music of the Clancy Brothers and the Dubliners.[48] In 1976 the Chieftains paid their first visit to Australia:

> Australia offered plenty of hectic diversion to dispel feelings of homesickness. As [Paddy Moloney] remembers, 'They went berserk, laying on pipe bands, dancers, and local musicians. Often we were greeted at the airports by TV crews to wind up on the evening news.'[49]

By this time there was a strong general foundation of interest in Irish music, partly driven by the folk revivalists.

The best comparison with the Chieftains's reception is that which was given to the Beatles on their 1964 tour. One of the reasons for the extraordinary welcome given to the Beatles was that they represented 'home', literally to the English migrants and metaphorically to many Australian-born.[50] A similar argument could be made for the Irish migrants and those of Irish origin where the Chieftains are concerned. The enthusiasm with which the Chieftains were greeted (they toured Australia ten times in the ensuing twenty years) suggests both the extent to which Irish music continued to be a living force in Australia and the recognition of its place in Australian popular music.

Writing about the ballad in nineteenth-century Australia, Manifold explains that 'in convict surroundings, the commercial

element disappears. Convict and bush-ranger ballads develop from street-ballad stock (chiefly Anglo-Irish) that has reverted to type'.[51] In other words, as compared to England especially, there was a shift back from print to oral transmission, though now based on the verse forms of the printed ballad, and also a movement from urban, city distribution and reproduction to rural, to the bush. Even though Australia grew into the most urbanised country in the world, it remained pre-industrial until after the Second World War and looked to the bush for its cultural identity.

In the 1880s, when the urban ballad tradition had died out in England, in Australia the ballad once more intersected with print and developed an urban following; here, though, with a more respectable and middle-class inflection. Adam Lindsay Gordon's *Bush Ballads and Galloping Rhymes*, which began that specifically Australian genre of the literary ballad, was published in 1870. In 1880 J F Archibald started publishing the *Bulletin*, celebrating the bush and criticising urban Australian society. Archibald published ballads both newly composed and from the oral tradition. For Graham Jenkin, the *Bulletin* 'effectively disseminated the Bush Ballad throughout the continent, and established it as the major form of Australian poetry for nearly thirty years'.[52] This is not the place to get caught up in the discussions of aesthetic judgments about and distinctions between oral ballads, literary ballads, newly composed ballads to be sung, ballads to be recited, and so forth. It is enough to note that from this period there was a complex interaction between oral transmission and print transmission, the bush and the city and the commodification, again, of the ballad as a musical form. Banjo Paterson's work moves across all these generic forms. He wrote literary ballads for recitation (such as 'The Man From Snowy River'), for singing (such as 'Waltzing Matilda') and put together a collection of bush ballads (*Old Bush Songs* published in 1905).

The complexity of the interactions between all these forms, and their currency into the era of commercial pop, is well-illustrated by Rolf Harris's 'Tie Me Kangaroo Down Sport' which was the highest selling Australian single in Australia in 1960, only outsold by Elvis Presley's 'It's Now Or Never'. Harris wrote 'Tie Me Kangaroo Down Sport' in 1957. On a webpage dedicated to Rolf Harris the claim is made that he was inspired by Harry Belafonte's calypsos.[53] However, this song-ballad is in a tradition that may have started with

a literary ballad written by Gordon entitled 'The Sick Stockrider.' Gordon's poem begins:

> Hold hard Ned! Lift me down once more, and lay me in the shade
> Old man, you've had your work cut out to guide
> Both horses, and to hold me in the saddle when I swayed,
> All through the hot, slow sleepy, silent ride

Fifteen years later Horace Flower wrote a ballad to be sung called 'The Dying Stockman' which was published in the *Portland Mirror* in 1885. It begins:

> A strapping young stockman lay dying,
> His saddle supported his head,
> His two mates around him were crying
> As he rose on his saddle and said ...

Harris's ballad uses the same motif:

> There's an old Australian stockman, lying, dying,
> And he gets himself up on one elbow,
> And he turns to his mates,
> Who are gathered round him and he says ...

The unusual scansion in the third and fourth lines of Harris's version is because this verse is spoken, leading into the song itself. The point here is to show that Harris was working with a traditional topic of the Australian ballad. Indeed, while in England 'Tie Me Kangaroo Down Sport' is heard as a comic song about the strange behaviour of Australians, for Australians Harris's song is more complex, working as a sympathetic parody within the ballad tradition. While his success in England, like that of Slim Dusty's 'A Pub With No Beer' two years earlier, had, most likely, more to do with novelty and colonial exoticism—in England, where he now lives, Harris is thought of as an all-round entertainer rather than a country singer—in Australia both songs indicate the Australian appreciation of the local ballad tradition. Slim Dusty recognises Harris's musical background. In 1980 Dusty had a hit with '(I Love To Have A Beer With) Duncan', a paean to mateship and drinking. In 1996 he recorded another version of 'Duncan' with Rolf Harris.[54]

Tex Morton; Slim Dusty; Redgum; Weddings, Parties, Anything

Historically, the figure who connected the ballad tradition with the commercial Australian popular music industry was Tex Morton. Morton was a New Zealander, born in Nelson in 1916. By the time he was sixteen he was singing hillbilly-style songs. In the 1920s in the United States Jimmie Rodgers was revamping hillbilly folk music into a commercially viable entity:

> When Rodgers first appeared on the scene, the music then becoming known as 'hillbilly' was mostly string-band instrumentals and maudlin old stage ballads. To this Rodgers added authentic blues lyrics from Afro-American folk song, jazzy dance-band accompaniments, and a cool, catchy, vibrant vocal style.[55]

Morton was picking up on the new style.[56] In 1932 he came to Australia where, for four years, he travelled around busking, doing odd-jobs including, he claims, working on the construction of the Sydney Harbour Bridge and, it is said, stints as a drover and shearer.[57] In 1935 he recorded eight tracks. Eric Watson tells us that:

> Of that historic first session, two songs were American cowboy ballads and two compositions were his own. One, a yodelling song about Switzerland and the other of indeterminate setting. Two more sessions of cowboy songs followed before the next Morton composition, 'The Wandering Stockman' and the first attempt anybody had made at recording an Australian folk song, 'Wrap Me Up in My Stockwhip and Blanket'.[58]

'Wrap Me Up In My Stockwhip And Blanket' is Flower's 'The Dying Stockman'. Jack O'Hagan, the Australian composer of popular music who wrote 'Along The Road To Gundagai', set it to music. As well as being a song about death—though not murder—it may well be the version on which Rolf Harris drew. In these recordings we see already the beginnings of the attempt to synthesise Australian and American folk/country/ballad musics. It seems that, while in Australia, Morton got Banjo Paterson's personal permission to record some of his ballads.[59] If we were looking for the precise moment of transition when the Australian ballad moved into commercial Australian popular music, this would be it. It is also the moment when the Australian ballad tradition begins to be influenced by American commercial recordings. Watson discusses a

song composed by Morton at this time about the depression years entitled 'Yodelling Bagman'. He describes it as, 'a strange mixture of the Australian reality and the American stereotype'.[60] Morton returned to New Zealand broke.

With radio exposure, Morton's records rapidly became popular. In 1937 he played to 50,000 people in Brisbane. His records sold around 32,000 a month making him the top-selling artist in Australasia in the 1930s, outselling even Bing Crosby and Gracie Fields. Clearly, his synthesis of Australian and American musical styles appealed to Australian audiences. Morton imitated an American accent in his earlier recordings. Later his accent, and his topics, became more trans-Tasman. Morton's popularity suggests that the Australian ballad was still musically acceptable within the Australian musical sensibility, though now given a white folkish American inflection. Morton can be thought of as the connection that leads not only to Cold Chisel and Paul Kelly but to Nick Cave's *Murder Ballads*.

Today, one of Morton's more well-known ballads is 'Sergeant Small.' Set in 1931, the song tells of a Queensland policeman who tracked down train-fare evaders during the depression. The chorus has Small's victim wishing he were sixteen stone and seven feet tall so that he could go back and beat up the sergeant. In typical Australian ballad style, the song is narrated in the first person by one of Small's victims. Morton released the track in 1938. Marking its link with the colonial, bushranger treason ballads, the record was banned in Australia because of its inflammatory content. In an acknowledgement of his place in the politically populist, Australian popular music tradition, Weddings, Parties, Anything recorded 'Sergeant Small' on their second album, *Roaring Days*, released in 1988. On the same album, Mick Thomas, the founder and main composer for the band, has a tribute to Morton called 'Morton (Song For Tex)'.

In 1949 Morton left for the United States. As with other performers whose work expressed so well the Australian (and perhaps New Zealand) musical sensibility, Johnny O'Keefe, the Easybeats, the Angels, Cold Chisel, Morton failed as a singer outside Australia and New Zealand. He shifted careers and became The Great Morton, a hypnotist and sharpshooter.

In the 1960s Morton had a hit in Australia with the traditional ballad 'Click Go The Shears.' His last successful single was 'The

Goondiwindi Grey', about the champion racehorse, Gunsynd, in 1973. Here, as is typical of the Australian ballad tradition, Morton was not only singing about a current event of great meaning to, in particular, working-class Australians and betting people generally, he was also singing about one of the traditional topics of Australian ballads: horses. Now, though, unlike the rural horse ballads of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Morton was singing about urban concerns, a winning racehorse. Morton died in 1983.

Eleven years younger than Morton, Slim Dusty was in a better position to synthesise the new, beat-based American country music with the Australian ballad tradition, both in its established musical styles and its subject matter. In his autobiography he writes about his name:

> I wanted another name. I knew that all cowboy singers had American names like Buddy, Gene and Tex, but I wanted one that sounded like an Australian cowboy. One day it clicked in my mind. Slim—a good cowboy name. Dusty—something as Australian as the blowfly.[61]

Here we can see the same concern to synthesise traditions that appears in his songs. Like Morton, Slim Dusty's early influence was Jimmie Rodgers. He tells us how his farming family's neighbours used to get together for small parties:

> But one night I heard something different [from Billy Kyle's fiddle playing traditional music] that made a lasting impression. An Aboriginal from the Bellbrook Mission, who was working on one of the farms, pulled out a home-made acoustic guitar and sang 'The Drunkard's Child,' a sad song made famous by Jimmie Rodgers, the father of country music ... It was a wistful, clinging sound that I had never heard before and I was entranced by it.[62]

He was about ten at the time. Slim Dusty's early songwriting was heavily influenced by the new American country style. However, having written the American-influenced 'The Way Tthe Cowboy Dies', by the time he made his first, self-funded, recordings in 1942, he was singing 'Song For The Aussies'. Slim Dusty's first commercial recording was his own composition, 'When The Rain Tumbles Down In July', written in ballad form. In his autobiography, he writes somewhat oddly that, 'some people, when they looked back at the history of Australian country music, would

identify it as the first song of a genre called the Bush Ballad'.[63] Perhaps he means the first commercial recording of a newly composed bush ballad. The point here is that it is a ballad in both form and narrative content, that Slim Dusty's Australian synthesising of American and Australian musical forms was a traditionally constructed ballad.

'A Pub With No Beer' was Slim Dusty's breakthrough hit. In 1958 it was the top selling Australian single by any artist, followed by the Everly Brothers's country-tinged 'Bird Dog.' The second and third top-selling singles by an Australian artist that year were by Johnny O'Keefe, 'So Tough' and 'The Wild One'. 'Pub' is a typical event ballad describing the terrible consequences when a bush pub runs out of beer. While the music has a certain American swing to it, Slim Dusty sings in a clear Australian accent.

The lyrics of 'Pub' are themselves embedded in Australian history. Slim Dusty's words come from another country singer, Gordon Parsons. While Parsons has the credit for writing the song, it is a re-working of a poem published in 1944 by Dan Sheahan, an Irish migrant. Parsons tells how he was given the unattributed words on a scrap of paper while he was working in the bush.[64] The occasion for the poem was Sheahan's visit to the Day Dawn Hotel in Ingham, Far North Queensland, immediately after the Battle of the Coral Sea in 1942. The pub had been drunk dry by celebrating American service personnel. Sheahan's literary ballad begins:

> It is lonely away from your kindred and all
> In the bushland at night where the warrigals call
> It is sad by the sea where the wild breakers boom
> Or to look on a grave and contemplate doom.
> But there's nothing on earth half as lonely and drear
> As to stand in the bar of a pub with no beer

The Parsons/Slim Dusty version cuts the number of lines per verse to four, turning it into a more conventional ballad form:

> Its lonesome away from your kindred and all
> By the camp fire at night where the wild dingoes call,
> But there's nothing so lonesome, so morbid or drear
> Than to stand in a bar of a pub with no beer.

Danny Spooner has discussed what he calls the 'Come all ye' ballad form which, he writes, was one of the last broadside forms to

conventional rock music. Redgum's first album, *If You Don't Fight You Lose*, was released in 1978. The title signals the band's left-wing politics—they had Maoist connections—and, as in the ballad tradition, many of their songs deal with current events. The band's instrumentation, including flute, tin whistle, and fiddle reflects the Irish influence. The original line-up was Verity Truman, John Schumann, Michael Atkinson and Chris Timms. Timms left after the band's third album in 1981. Later members of the band had played in AC/DC, the Honeydrippers, the Captain Matchbox Whoopee Band and the Bushwackers, suggesting the diversity of the musical references the band embraced and their centrality within the Australian musical sensibility.

Redgum's biggest hit was 'I Was Only 19 (A Walk In The Light Green)', which was sung in the first person as a narration of an Australian Vietnam War veteran's experiences and their traumatic consequences. The track reached number 1 in April 1983 and stayed in the top forty for fifteen weeks. I would argue that its success was not just due to the topic—there was still a silence in Australian culture at that time about the problems of veterans—but because the topic was addressed using ballad techniques, most obviously, strong story-line and a first-person narration from the point of view of the oppressed—in this case the veteran—and, indeed, traditional ballad versification in four line stanzas rhyming, mostly, ABCB. Tex Morton had himself written an anti-Vietnam War song using ballad techniques called 'Twenty-First Birthday'. Watson quotes these lyrics:

> He borrowed my razor then, just like a man,
> Said 'If I must go, I'll do all I can.'
> (Oh, they'd brainwashed him well.) 'It's gotta be done,
> We'll have a good party when I'm 21'
> ...
> Oh, we have a nice letter, 'He died not in vain ...'
> A medal, a picture, and our hearts full of pain.[71]

Reflecting his age when he wrote it, Morton's song is written from a father's point of view. Schumann's is a first person narrative. Nevertheless, again, we can perceive the traditional influence—one in which Schumann's song may or may not have been directly inspired by Morton's. After all, even the titles are similar. In any case, what we have here is a ballad sensibility. Even more than Morton's,

Schumann's song fits into the treason song tradition to the extent that it spoke about a subject that the government wished to ignore and seemed to want kept silent in the public arena.[72]

Mick Thomas came out of a bush band and folk background and played in Melbourne pub bands in the early 1980s.[73] Weddings, Parties, Anything's name is 'from a throwaway line during the fade out on The Clash's "Revolution Rock"'.[74] The reference to The Clash suggests both the rock influence and the band's left-wing politics. While the reference is from England, the political position is a part of the Australian popular musical tradition. Redgum, starting before punk had a general acceptance, and with their assertively Australian name, more clearly situated themselves within the Australian radical nationalism of the union, and folk revival, tradition.

While having a pub/punk rock background Weddings, Parties, Anything's instrumentation included an accordion and later a violin—once again suggesting an Irish influence (though their accordionist had been playing in a Scottish club band). The best comparison for Weddings, Parties, Anything is the Irish diaspora band the Pogues, fronted by Shane McGowan. Formed in London in 1982, the band were originally called Pogue Mahone, Gaelic for 'kiss my arse'. Their first album, *Red Roses for Me*, was released in 1984. The band synthesised traditional Irish musical and punk sensibilities. Both bands form part of the ongoing engagement of Irish music with rock music.

Coming out of pub rock did not stop Weddings, Parties, Anything self-consciously positioning themselves, as I have already explained, within the ballad tradition, through their references to Tex Morton, and also to Henry Lawson, whose 1889 poem, 'Roaring Days', is used as the title for the second album, and whose image is on the cover.[75] As with Redgum, Weddings, Parties, Anything's breakthrough hit in 1992 was a track with a traditional ballad sensibility. 'Father's Day', narrated in the first person, told the story of a separated father's agony over his limited visiting rights. Once again, also, this was an issue which was little talked about, the accepted liberal position being to emphasise the rights of the mother.

Through the re-working of the Australian bush tradition in the form of country music, influenced by the American musical tradition, the ballad has continued to be an important component of

the Australian musical sensibility.[76] The difference between Nick Cave, Tex Perkins's band the Beasts of Bourbon[77], the Johnnys, Redgum and Weddings, Parties, Anything, is primarily where they source their ballad influence. Cave, the Beasts of Bourbon and the Johnnys all look to the American tradition, synthesising American country and ballad concerns with an Australian sensibility, most obviously in the ironic humour involved in songs like the Perkins–Jones composition 'The Day Marty Robbins Died'[78], and in their overwhelming preoccupation with murder and death generally. Redgum and Weddings, Parties, Anything emphasise more the Irish and Irish-Australian ballad tradition. However, all these bands integrate ballad stylings into rock music as part of a distinctive Australian musical tradition. All were working within the Australian popular music sensibility.

Cold Chisel and the Ballad Tradition

When asked what he wanted to do with Weddings, Parties, Anything, in an interview in Canada in 1990, Thomas's reference point was not Redgum but Cold Chisel:

> Cold Chisel—they probably provided the revelation for me. They had a song called Khe Sanh, and it was about a Vietnam vet. I'll never forget, it hit me like a bolt from the blue ... The thing that struck me about it was that I had always thought that to sing about Australia, you had to do it in a folky way ... They come on with this country rock song about this guy getting back from Vietnam, and the chorus is
>
>> The last plane out of Sydney's almost gone
>> Only seven flying hours and I'll be landing in Hong Kong
>
> It's about this guy who can never settle down, and it's just become this anthem in Australia. Cold Chisel's been broken up for ten years, but this really weird thing happens in a lot of suburban discos in Australia. A band like us will play, and then they'll have a disco for an hour after the band. And at the end of the night, they play Khe Sanh. Everyone stops dancing and all these guys [he stands up, clasps an imaginary rum and coke to chest and intones]: 'last plane out of Sydney's almost gone'—it's like this anthem. I'll never forget seeing that and thinking: *you can do it*, it's possible to sing about history and about Australia and even political things, without affectation.[79]

Australian men don't just sing 'Khe Sanh' at discos. At weddings or
barbecues, after a few beers and even without the aid of Chisel's
version, a group of men, not usually women, will often find
themselves singing 'Khe Sanh'. It is more correctly not so much an
anthem as a ballad. Certainly that it is how it is experienced in the
Australian popular music sensibility.

'Khe Sanh' is on the first, self-titled, Cold Chisel album released
in 1978.[80] As a single it got no higher than number 43 in the charts.
Their second album, *Breakfast at Sweethearts* (1979), reached the top
five and went platinum. Chisel's mass popularity came with their
third album, *East* (1980), which reached number two on the album
charts and stayed in the top ten albums for twenty-six weeks, selling
over a quarter of a million copies.

Like 'I Was Only 19', 'Khe Sanh' has some of the key
characteristics of the Australian ballad: it is a first person narrative
about an event told from a subordinate point of view. Structurally,
the balladic strength of the song lies in its rhythmic regularity and
its use of detail:

> I left my heart to the sappers round Khe Sanh
> And my soul was sold with my cigarettes to the black-market men
> I've had the Vietnam cold turkey
> From the ocean to the Silver City
> And it's only other vets could understand

In addition, as with the nineteenth-century urban ballads, the lyrics
urge identification even when they are claiming exclusivity. The key
difference from those ballads is that it is set to a rock beat—and it
is worth remembering that Thomas describes 'Khe Sanh' as
country-rock. However, this does not stop the song having a ballad
feel to it. We should also note how what was perhaps the most
socially divisive event in late twentieth century Australia called forth
a typically 'folk' response, in the form of ballads narrated from the
point-of-view of those forced to fight. Here we can see well the
strength in Australia of the tradition of balladic criticism that runs
from the convict ballads of the early nineteenth century.[81]

Don Walker, who wrote this song and was the main composer
for Cold Chisel, comes from Ayr, on the North Queensland coast,
though he spent many of his formative years in the central inland
New South Wales town of Grafton. On the Slim Dusty tribute
album, where he sings Slim Dusty's 'Highway Fever', he reminisces:

> I can remember me and my brother rowing across a river and riding eight miles into town to the Show, which for us meant sideshow alley, the boxing tent one end, and the Octopus the other and Slim halfway along opposite the Maoris.

Here, Walker lays explicit claim to Slim Dusty's heritage. However, as I have been at pains to explain, it is not these empirical connections that are important but, rather, the cultural reproduction of the Australian popular music sensibility.

Many of Walker's songs, though not in the traditional ballad structure, and sung to Anglo-American rock, nevertheless express Australian ballad concerns using techniques typical of the ballad tradition. Given the post-1950s importance of rock music in the Australian popular music sensibility it should not come as a surprise to find that Walker not only contributed to the Slim Dusty tribute album but also to the AC/DC tribute album where he covered 'There's Gonna Be Some Rockin'. At times Walker self-consciously references the ballad tradition. For example, on *Circus Animals* (1982) Walker has a track entitled 'Wild Colonial Boy'. It begins:

> I am a wild colonial boy
> My name you'll never see
> My land is ruled by Anglophiles
> And forces foreign to me

This wild colonial boy is a member of the urban working class who finds his country run by people who are leaching it and sending the profits back to England. It is a song that supports unionism and Australian nationalism, political positions typical of the urban folk revival. The song's reference point is the early Australian ballad of the same name. That ballad celebrates a bushranger, Jack Doolan, in the lyrics. Walker's song is an Oz Rock urbanisation of the earlier rural ballad. By referencing that ballad Walker places his song in that tradition. Further, the reference suggests that the unionised working class are the inheritors of the legitimate rebellion of the bushrangers. On the same album Walker acknowledges the American musical influence with a track called 'Houndog' which echoes the Elvis Presley hit of the Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller composed song 'Hound Dog'. The concerns of the two songs are quite different, Leiber and Soller's song is implicitly about sex and

Walker's about travelling. 'Hound Dog' has a blues-derived structure and Walker's song refers to the 'highway blues'. The American influence is present but it is very much appropriated and re-used.

East contains another of Chisel's most renowned songs, 'Star Hotel'. This was inspired by the demolition of the Star Hotel in Newcastle. The pub was a favourite resort for working-class young people and on the night that it closed for the last time, on 19 September 1979, there was a riot. The lyrical concerns of Oz Rock tended to reflect those of their audience. We can note here that where Alternative Rock appealed to the inner city, more cosmopolitan middle class, Oz Rock's audience tended more to the working class and the conservative, suburban middle class.

Walker's lyrics narrate the story of the end of the Star Hotel in the first person plural and they comment:

(Here lies a local culture
Most nights were good, some were bad
Between school and a shifting future
It was most of all we had)

Once again we have a ballad based on a current event. Such is the lyrical identification with that event that ex-Chisel members are constantly reiterating that the band never played the Star Hotel.

Because the ballad sensibility is so central to Walker's writing there are very many examples in Chisel's corpus. One more will suffice. 'Flame Trees' is a song, again in the first person, which tells the story of a man revisiting his old town and remembering his lost love. However, this is not the usual popular music rendering of love through a description of affect. Rather, what we have is a narrative filled with detail. Unlike 'Khe Sanh' and 'Star Hotel' it is about a personal experience; we do not know if it was inspired by an actual event. Toby Creswell, Jimmy Barnes's biographer, writes that 'Flame Trees' 'was written about Grafton where Don spent most of his formative years. The song was inspired by a girl whom Don had known in his youth and who "doesn't live there anymore"'.[82] 'Flame Trees' is not a political but a love song. It is suffused with loss and nostalgia. It uses ballad techniques to evoke atmosphere and, again, identification. While some might describe its sentimentality as verging on the maudlin, it is typical of the urban ballad and, of course, present in much twentieth-century commercial popular music.

Even more than the Angels, Chisel have an iconic status in Oz Rock. They were, and are, without doubt the highest selling Australian rock band within Australia. The Warner Music Australasia webpage for Chisel describes their success in this way:

> Cold Chisel are unique within Australian rock. In 1983 their series of Last Stand concerts set attendance records that still stand. They have sold more records since break-up than while they were performing … As a matter of fact Cold Chisel is Warner Music Australia's No 1 bestselling catalogue band delivering Platinum sales each year!
>
> Cold Chisel's constituency has endured and regenerated throughout a 20 year hiatus. It stretches from teenagers to original fans now 50+. It encompasses working, middle, professional and academic classes, male and female.[83]

At the same time, the band notoriously failed miserably in its attempt to crack the American market, as did Jimmy Barnes when he tried as a solo artist.

The balladic emphasis on narrative detail and a politics from the subordinate point of view did not end with the generation of Cold Chisel and Midnight Oil. In the late 1990s these lyrical concerns were taken up by the Brisbane band Powderfinger. While Bernard Fanning, the band's main writer, doesn't work with the same emphasis on narrative as Walker, he is preoccupied with detail. Fanning's song 'The Day You Come', on the album *Internationalist* (1998), evidences a certain ambivalence in its criticism of the populist politician Pauline Hanson's conservative politics, which can be understood as a consequence of the ballad tradition's championing of the oppressed.

Cold Chisel were not the only Oz Rock band to fail outside of Australia; the same lack of success greeted the Angels and Australian Crawl, and for that matter Paul Kelly (who is increasingly described as a 'singer-songwriter,' very likely as a consequence of the attempt to position him within the American popular music discourse). All these bands, but most obviously, as I have been describing, Cold Chisel, were deeply imbued with the Australian musical sensibility which continues to experience the ballad as a living force. What made Chisel and the other bands so successful in Australia is also what contributed to their failure in Britain and the United States. While mostly middle-class folk singers and bush

bands were reviving historical ballads, in the mistaken belief that the ballad tradition was as dead in Australia as it was in England, and to a large extent in the United States, the folk were in the pubs singing 'Khe Sanh', either along with Cold Chisel, or to a record on the juke box, or a cappella. Today, the folk are singing ballad-inflected songs along with Powderfinger and You Am I[84] at rock festivals like the Big Day Out and even at some of the same Oz Rock venues at which the Angels and Cold Chisel used to play.

Nation-Building and Australian Popular Music in the 1970s and 1980s

As we saw in Chapter One, the most significant popular music development in Australia in the 1960s was the appropriation and re-working of the English Beat Boom music in terms of the Australian musical sensibility. In this regard it is not surprising that very many of the major Australian artists of that era, including, as we have seen, Billy Thorpe and all of the Easybeats, were northern European migrants.[1] That is, in Australian terms, they were not only considered to be white but to have a culture that was fundamentally similar to the British culture on which Australian culture was primarily based. Australian popular music in the 1970s and 1980s—I am thinking of the decade that runs from 1975 to 1985—while being influenced by English and American developments, was deeply involved in the production of an Australian cultural identity. In the Australian film industry this was fostered deliberately by governments, but it happened more organically in Australian popular music.

Symptomatic of this new interest in Australian cultural identity, by the late 1970s and early 1980s there were a number of popular songs from quite different musical genres and artists, celebrating and critiquing Australia. These ranged from the song written to promote Australian nationalism in the first World Series Cricket competition of 1977–78, 'Come On Aussie, Come On', to Peter Allen's 'I Still Call Australia Home', released as a single in 1980 and

used in Qantas advertising campaigns in 1997 and 1999, to Men at Work's '(Land) Down Under' in 1981, which was used as the unofficial anthem for Australia's 1983 America's Cup challenge, and Goanna's critique of the treatment of Indigenous Australians in their 1982 single, 'Solid Rock'. This category must also include Icehouse's 'Great Southern Land' (1982) and GANGgajang's 'Sounds Of Then (This Is Australia)' (1985), which was used as a station ID by Channel 9 in 1996, and possibly, because it is associated with the sugarcane farms of northern Queensland, the Go-Betweens's 'Cattle and Cane' (1983). Then there was also much of the corpus of Midnight Oil from their third album onwards. *Place without a Postcard*, released in 1981, included both 'If Ned Kelly Was King,' about the mining industry and the treatment of Aborigines, and 'Lucky Country,' the title of which echoes the irony in Donald Horne's well-known book title *The Lucky Country* (1964).

This chapter identifies three strands of popular music which developed in Australia during the 1970s and considers how they relate to the nation-building project, which was grounded in the claim that Australia has a distinctive Australian culture. It is important to emphasise here that I am writing about nation-building not nationalism. Nation-building signals a concern with the production of an understanding among a group of people that they are a nation. In the period that I am writing about here, this happened in Australia through a claim to a shared, lived culture. As Graeme Turner writes in his important study of nationalism and popular culture in Australia:

> Since the 1960s, Australia has been particularly deliberate [compared to other settler societies] in its official project of nation formation. From that time on the official construction of cultural identity has been progressively required to confirm but not exclusively delimit the available definitions of our national character.[2]

At another, earlier time, nation-building in Australia took place by reference to a claim to a shared racial identity. Nation-building, then, is not the same as nationalism. Nationalism, in the sense of a celebration of the nation, and even its assertion against and over other nations, is connected with nation-building but is something different.[3]

In regards to the music that I will be discussing, 'Come On Aussie, Come On' can be regarded as nationalistic while the rest of the tracks, to a greater or lesser extent, express a degree of awareness of Australia as a single entity with a shared culture. However, in the appropriations of these songs, perhaps most especially the use of 'Down Under' for the America's Cup challenge, it is possible to see a shift from nation-building to nationalism. It is in relation to the idea of nation-building that we can appreciate the relevance of Benedict Anderson's definition of a nation as an imagined community, imagined because, 'the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion'.[4] The songs I am concerned with here, then, are an element in the construction of the shared Australian national, cultural, communion, that evolved during the 1970s and 1980s.

In his discussion of Australian popular music in the 1950s and early 1960s, Lawrence Zion has suggested both how fragmented and localised the popular music scenes were at that time and the importance of television in developing a national popular music:

> [Television s]hows such as *Six O'Clock Rock* were ... significant because they gave performers the opportunity to build interstate audiences at a time when local followings were not easily converted into national success ... Intensely parochial djs and the infrequency of national tours made things worse. Each city had its distinctive pop scene, with its own local stars and its own particular taste in pop music styles.[5]

The late 1960s and 1970s saw this parochialism steadily overtaken by a sense of national identity. In part, this was a consequence of new technologies, but it was also an effect of the new cultural nationalism.

Following Shane Homan, I shall call the first of the three strands that I shall be discussing 'Pop-Rock'. Homan identifies, '[h]ighly influential Pop-Rock groups such as Sherbet, Jo-Jo Zep and the Falcons, The Sports and others', distinguishing them from Australian punk bands of the same era.[6] Pop-rock evolved in tandem with, and to a significant extent as a consequence of, the ABC television program *Countdown*. The second strand has become known as Oz Rock and is epitomised in bands such as the Angels and Cold Chisel. Chapter Five of Homan's book *The Mayor's a*

Square (2003), 'Suburban Sounds,' provides an institutional background for Oz Rock. In my usage of the terms Pop-Rock and Oz Rock I am following Homan's important work. The third strand is what is now called Alternative Rock, a musical form that developed in Australia and the United States through the mid-1970s, at the same time as the spread of punk, and slightly later in England. Alternative Rock is sometimes called post-punk for its emphasis as a genre on the music that evolved in the wake of the punk explosion, but as it sometimes includes the Australian bands that were influenced by English punk, this gets confusing.

Where Pop-Rock was unequivocally a national development that matured through the national reach of ABC television, and where Oz Rock bands gained a national following primarily because of their unrelenting touring (though we should also acknowledge their occasional appearances on *Countdown* and on local radio stations), Alternative Rock developed locally, evolving in each of the major cities with bands often, in the first instance, being unaware of the existence of similar bands in other cities. Thus, for example, the Saints were, first of all, a Brisbane band, Radio Birdman were a Sydney band, the Boys Next Door were a Melbourne band, and Dave Warner's From the Suburbs, and the Victims, were Perth bands. Similarities between some of these bands, say the Saints and Radio Birdman, were not an effect of them evolving in the same cultural milieu but, rather, because they drew on many of the same influences—American groups such as the Velvet Underground, Iggy and the Stooges, MC5, and the garage bands sampled in the legendary double-album collection, *Nuggets*, put together by Lenny Kaye and released in 1972.

What I will be arguing, then, is that Pop-Rock became a national musical form with features that distinguished it from pop in Britain or the United States, though it must be said it had many common features as well. The lyrical content of Pop-Rock subscribed pretty closely to the dominant norms of the pop genre as it had become standardised across Britain and the United States—love in all its (acceptable) permutations. Politically, then, we could say that Pop-Rock was conservative, its content tacitly reinforcing the status quo.

Tara Brabazon approaches Oz Rock from the point of view of what is distinctively Australian about it. She argues that: 'Oz Rock needs the national narratives of a hostile landscape to access other ideologies of masculinity, work, class and alcohol. This formation

made Oz Rock integral to popular culture, but politically conservative.' Citing Cold Chisel, she goes on to explain that Oz Rock functions in terms of a politics of exclusion and that it 'serves to reveal the gritty and awkward remnants of settler ideologies, which mobilise in the pop cultural present.'[7] From this point of view we can see the conservative politics of Oz Rock, perhaps most importantly the tendency to exclude women and Indigenous people, and to place men, and masculinity, at the centre of attention.

Oz Rock, as we saw in the previous chapter, has a history in both musical form and content in the Australian ballad tradition. While Oz Rock was very much a form of rock music, bands such as Weddings, Parties, Anything, and Redgum, made clear the music's debt to earlier singers such as Tex Morton. Similarly, when Oz Rock music had a political content, for example, Cold Chisel's 'Khe Sanh', the lyrics reflected the populist tactics of the ballads, being often in the first person and narrating a story to make the political point. At the same time, bearing in mind Brabazon's point, Oz Rock's contribution to nation-building must be thought of as conservative and backward-looking.

As I have remarked, Alternative Rock was, in the first place, a local form of music, evolving in the inner cities as these areas become home to the bohemians and cosmopolitans who were rejecting what they felt were the constrictions of Australian suburbia. This rejection would seem to be one reason why so many of these bands looked to the distaff tradition in American rock music, the garage and punk bands—the characteristics of these genres overlap—who, themselves, often came out of and appeared to be rejecting the conformity of the American suburbia that had spread during the 1950s and 1960s. These inner city Australian Alternative Rock bands celebrated the local. Rather than having a cultural cringe about Australia, they often made songs which naturalistically included places in the cities in which the band members lived. Thus, for example, the first Go-Betweens single 'Karen', released in 1978, about the singer's fascination with a librarian, included a reference to one of the main streets in Brisbane, Queen Street.[8] Unlike the Oz Rock bands, the politics of the Alternative Rock bands, broadly speaking humanist and left-wing (a reflection of the politics of the kinds of people making the inner cities their home), was expressed in an asserted and confrontational

way.[9] These political songs were not first-person narratives but were objectified political statements.

In their different ways, each of the musical strands that I have identified contributed to Australian cultural nation-building. By the early 1980s 'Australia' became the local place which was being included in songs. And many of these songs were being sung by bands that had taken influences from two or even all three of the musical strands I have identified. These strands were, even early on, by no means clearly separated. For example, Skyhooks started out as what would subsequently be called an Alternative Rock band before becoming an anchor for *Countdown*'s Pop-Rock. Midnight Oil made political statements of a type and in a way that put them into the political vanguard of Alternative Rock, yet their musical style owed more to the Oz Rock tradition. Homan signals the complex generic positioning of Midnight Oil when he writes,

> Midnight Oil initially shared the disorientation experienced by punks' occasional forays into the suburbs. The band's political tactics involved a more conventional policy of change from within.[10]

Midnight Oil played the suburbs while practising the politics of the inner city. The overt, and often critical, representation of Australia declined by the mid-1980s as Australian bands, like Australians generally, became more comfortable and accepting of Australia as a cultural entity.

Cultural Nation-Building in the 1970s

In *Race Daze* I argue that:

> It was Gough Whitlam, and the Australian Labor Party, who first responded, in the political sphere, to the new culturalist understanding of the nation in Australia. It was this preoccupation, coupled with a concern over national identity, that was put into circulation particularly through the period 1972–73 and that underlay what came to be called the 'New Nationalism'.[11]

The 1970s saw the beginning of a shift in importance away from state identities to a sense of Australia as having an over-determining, single Australian cultural identity which might be inflected differently in the various states. The expression of the claim that

Australia had a single culture was played out most obviously, and to some extent deliberately, in Australian films. In Turner's words, and quoting John Frow and Meaghan Morris, Australian governments

> have made assiduous use of 'state-funded image production' as a deliberate strategy of nation formation at home and promotion abroad. The film industry is the most obvious instance of this.[12]

Tom O'Regan writes more specifically that: 'The agitators for Australian cinema in the 1960s and early 1970s sought national political support for Australian cinema as a national cultural institution concerned with identity and self-expression—"dreaming our own dreams, telling our own stories".'[13] These films may have been set in particular places, increasingly Sydney and Melbourne when not a small town in the bush, but the cultural assumptions were presumed to be applicable and understandable across all of Australia. Building on initiatives by Harold Holt and John Gorton, Whitlam set up the Australian Film Commission in 1975 with an annual grant which started at between five and six million dollars.[14] It is interesting to note that both the Go-Betweens's 'Cattle And Cane' and GANGgajang's 'Sounds Of Then (This Is Australia)' are steeped in a nostalgia that has an equivalence in the nostalgia of the costume dramas, the so-called period films, supported by the Australian Film Commission during the late 1970s and early 1980s, such as *Picnic at Hanging Rock* (1975), *Caddie* (1976) and *My Brilliant Career* (1979).

However, the film industry was only one element in the reproduction of this new sense of an integrated Australian identity. Another was the establishment of ABC television, broadcasting the same programs across, in the first instance, the Australian capital cities and, subsequently, across all of Australia. Later, there was the development of the Australian commercial television networks. ABC Television began in Sydney and Melbourne in 1956, Brisbane in 1959, and Adelaide, Perth, and Hobart in 1960. There were no relay facilities at this time so programs were recorded, copied and flown to each city for broadcast, a practice made easier when videotape facilities were put into all ABC stations in 1962. In 1961 the ABC acquired the technical expertise to broadcast live between Sydney and Melbourne and, through the mid-1960s, it became possible to connect most of the major cities by microwave links. In other words, by around the early 1970s developments in

communication technologies had enabled ABC television to fulfil its mandate by becoming an integrated national broadcaster. This integration was reinforced by the ABC's access to the AUSSAT satellite communication system, the first two satellites of which were launched in August and November 1985. The ABC's technological integration by the early 1970s was the platform for *Countdown*'s national reach.

The same technologies provided the basis for the increasing integration of commercial television stations through this period. The first commercial stations went to air in Sydney and Melbourne in 1956. In spite of laws designed to deny the possibility of television monopolies developing, the city-based commercial television stations across Australia gradually organised themselves into network structures dominated by the largest markets, those in Sydney and Melbourne. Channel 10 was the last network to evolve, coming into existence in 1979 when Rupert Murdoch acquired ATV-0 in Melbourne along with TEN-10 in Sydney.

As Keith Windschuttle noted in 1984, 'the networks have operated primarily as programme-buying and distribution organisations'.[15] Windschuttle also argues that, during the period of Malcolm Fraser's prime ministership, from 1975 to 1983, 'the Fraser government actively furthered the growth of strong national networks'.[16] Thus a combination of technical communication developments and a capitalistic desire to reduce costs resulted in increasing standardisation of commercial television programming across Australian capital cities, in the first instance, through the 1970s and early 1980s. Even though much of the programming was American, the standardisation had the effect of producing in Australians an increasing sense of belonging to a single cultural area, what Anderson calls an imagined community.

This experience was reinforced in other ways, most obviously in the development of nationwide sports competitions. The first and for a long time the only national sport competition was cricket's Sheffield Shield. It began in the 1892/93 season with Victoria, New South Wales and South Australia; Queensland joined in the 1926/27 season; Western Australia got full status in the competition in 1956/57; and Tasmania was included in 1982/83. The Sheffield Shield, now the Pura Cup, remains the only major national sporting club competition based at state level. In other words, this competition emphasises states and serves to integrate them into a

national whole. In this sense, as its age testifies, the competition is anachronistic when, in the post-1970s era, national competitions are between clubs that happen to be based in particular large population centres, bypassing the states altogether.

Such a definition also covers soccer, basketball and Rugby League. The National Soccer League was founded in 1977 and has been through a number of transformations since then, including David Hill's attempt, as chairman of Soccer Australia, to make the clubs non-ethnically based.[17] The National Basketball League began in 1979 and the New South Wales Rugby League began expanding out of the state in 1982. Around 1992 the NSWRL changed its name to Australian Rugby League. These dates do not even signal the complexities that accompanied these developments, the seemingly continual crises in Australian soccer, the advent of the rugby Super League in 1997 and the subsequent resolution into a National Rugby League, for example, but the dates of the national expansion of these codes do suggest the relationship between sport and a developing sense of national cultural identity in Australia.

Similarly, and perhaps most importantly, because of the status of the code, in 1982 the Sydney Swans joined the Australian Rules competition by virtue of South Melbourne's relocation to Sydney. In 1987 the Victorian Football League included two new teams, the Brisbane Bears and the West Coast Eagles, who are based in Perth. In 1990, to the chagrin of many Victorians, the VFL changed its name to the Australian Football League. The Adelaide Crows joined the competition in 1991, the Fremantle Dockers in 1995 and Port Adelaide in 1997. While the nationalising of Australian Rules took place relatively late, because of entrenched Victorian antipathy to the transformation of tradition, it has on most measures been highly successful.

There are other examples that could be used to demonstrate the emphasis on cultural nation-building in Australia from the 1970s onwards, that over-rode the previous privileging of state allegiances. However, film, television and sport have, for different reasons, been the most important. We should also mention *The Australian*, still the only national newspaper, started by Rupert Murdoch in July 1964.

We now need to place popular music alongside these. One nationalising development that is directly relevant to popular music was the beginning of national charts for singles and for albums. From the late 1950s charts were produced by radio stations in each

of the capital cities. These were based partly on sales figures and partly on other factors decided by the stations. In the late 1960s and early 1970s the teen music magazine *Go-Set* ran a national chart but the first attempt at a commercially accurate chart came from the work of David Kent in the early 1970s. Kent launched the *Kent Music Report* in July 1974, providing what he intended to be an objective chart for both singles and albums.[18]

Countdown and the Construction and Nationalising of Pop-Rock

It was the Pop-Rock strand that was most clearly imbricated in the newly developing Australian national cultural order. Not, though, because of any sonic or lyrical identification with Australia but, rather, because of its structural relationship to television by way of, most importantly, *Countdown*, during this period when television itself was profoundly implicated in the cultural nationalising project. If *Countdown* and Molly Meldrum, its compere and talent coordinator, didn't create the musical category of Pop-Rock, they legitimated Pop-Rock and gave it an audience. Meldrum is quoted as saying: '*Countdown* had one purpose. It never purported to be anything but a top 40 show.'[19] However, in the 1975–85 decade it was *Countdown* that constructed the mainstream of Australian popular music and became *the* driver for songs that got into the top forty; and this, we should remember, just a year after the beginning of the national charts in the *Kent Music Report*.

Countdown was by no means the first Australian popular music show on television. As Graeme Turner rightly notes: 'There has been an almost unbroken line of teen-pop shows from *Six O'Clock Rock* to the recently defunct *Countdown Revolution*, exercising a profound influence over the marketing of Australian music through TV.'[20] Nevertheless, when ex-Skyhooks member Red Symons can write in the Foreword to Peter Wilmoth's book about the *Countdown* phenomenon that:

> Before the advent of *Countdown* there was no truly national TV program to create interest in a band outside its own home town. It was highly improbable, for example, that a Melbourne band would attract an audience in Sydney …[21]

what he is really identifying is *Countdown*'s place in the formation of an indigenous national popular music culture.

Sally Stockbridge tells us in her quite extensive discussion of the program:

> *Countdown* occupied prime child viewing time and rated well enough to be repeated the same week. Significantly, it qualified as both Australian and children's content or programming. The position it occupied in relation to record companies and by extension to other music programs allowed it, and Molly Meldrum, the power to determine and alter the standards and conventions of this kind of programming.[22]

As Wilmoth writes:

> *Countdown*'s influence was extraordinary, inordinate. At its peak it had an audience of three million. Because of this enormous constituency it became literally a monopoly whereby bands would be frozen out if they dared give their film clip to another show.[23]

Three million was roughly one-fifth of Australia's entire population around 1980. However the target audience, as Stockbridge implies, was early-teenage girls. Wilmoth tells us that '*Countdown*'s target audience was 13 to 17 year olds, which meant most of the studio audience were children'.[24] Peter Cox and Louise Douglas write that

> [*Countdown*] developed the capacity to create stars and hits, particularly with the young teens whose significance was made visible by their arm-waving and screaming in the studio at each weekly broadcast.[25]

Kris Noble, one of *Countdown*'s directors, describing Iggy Pop's rather out-of-control performance and interview, talks of a studio audience of '200 kids aged 11 to 18 years old'.[26] Pop, who had performed with the American proto-punk band the Stooges in the late 1960s and early 1970s, was used to an older and more knowledgeable audience. He remembers: '*Countdown*? That's the show where they line up eight-year-olds and point at 'em and say, "Applaud now!"'.[27] Pop was not typical of the artists who performed on *Countdown*.

Countdown began in November 1974 as a half-hour show in black and white. However, it was re-launched by the ABC in early 1975 as a one hour show in the new television medium of colour, with a

new presentation format of a guest star host for whom Meldrum would act as a foil. *Countdown*'s inception was not a planned promotion of cultural nation-building but the effect of the program's national reach was to develop over the time of the show's existence the sense of Australia as having a nationally identifiable popular music tradition. *Countdown*'s preferred bands had a televisual and teen appeal. The show moved almost seamlessly from the English Glam Rock of the early 1970s to the English New Romanticism of the early 1980s as its points of reference. Here, we could argue that Pop-Rock reinforced the British, Anglo-Celtic hegemony in Australia through the references to the English pop tradition. From this point of view *Countdown* had a conservative impact. Alternative Rock, taking its influences from the white garage and punk music of the United States, could be understood as in part a product of the spreading hegemony of American culture in the post–Second World War era. Oz Rock, punk and Australia's Alternative Rock scene, that developed in concert with punk, hardly got a look in on *Countdown*. Indeed, as I have already suggested, these musical forms came to be defined against the commercialism and preoccupation with image which was understood to characterise Pop-Rock. *Countdown* started out putting on bands like Skyhooks, Hush and Sherbet and then promoted the likes of Pseudo Echo, Dear Enemy and the Uncanny X-Men.

More or less excluded from *Countdown*, the national success of the Oz Rock bands came from constant touring. Such touring across Australia was becoming increasingly common before 1975 and the advent of *Countdown*. Les Gock of the Glam Rock influenced band Hush, recalls:

> We were a very successful touring band. Along with Sherbet we pioneered the touring thing. Between Sherbet and us there would be no country town that hadn't seen us. And most hadn't seen an act go through since Col Joye in the sixties.[28]

Gock goes on to point out that, before *Countdown*, Hush had already released three albums which had gone gold because of the band's 'hard slogging round country towns'. After being taken up by *Countdown*, the band's popularity was assured through their televisual appeal to *Countdown*'s huge audiences.

Demonstrating the very large amount of touring that many bands engaged in, Marc Hunter, the lead singer of Dragon, the New

Zealand rock band who had re-located to Australia, remembers that in 1979:

> I got fired and was told to piss off ... I vaguely remember coming back to sanity after a very intense five years. I think the work load broke up the original band. In those days you'd do two or three gigs a night and we did that for five years. I was kicking up about the constant touring, the fact that we were still travelling around two to a room even though we were taking in an enormous amount of money.[29]

These bands, and others like Midnight Oil who never performed on *Countdown*, were successful with little or no help from television and little support from a radio industry focused on American and British artists.

Gock's suggestion in the quotation above that most country towns hadn't seen a rock act go through since Col Joye is very important. First, it points to Gock's awareness of the gap between the Australian Beat Boom artists of the mid-sixties, though Col Joye's heyday was actually earlier than this, and the generation of the early 1970s. Second, it is very unlikely that Joye, or any others artists of that time, came anywhere near to doing as much touring as the bands of the 1970s. The reason for this is simple. In the 1960s there was a lack of sealed roads and cheap reliable transport, as well as reliable, powerful and relatively portable amplification systems, which could make such touring possible. Homan is referring to the impact of better sound systems when he writes that: 'Where the amplification of acoustic instruments enabled 1950s performers to challenge the orthodoxies of the town hall jazz and dance bands, 1970s bands seized on opportunities to make sheer volume an integrated part of the performance.'[30]

In 1960 Australia had a little over 187,000 miles of sealed road. In 1969 this figure had increased to just under 247,000 miles of sealed road. By 1975/76 this figure had increased again to over 434,000 kilometres (269,675 miles).[31] Touring Australia by road remained arduous but it was becoming feasible. It was not until 1986 that the final section of Highway One, the road which more or less follows Australia's coastline, was sealed in the Kimberley region of northern Western Australia.

Oz Rock groups developed a following across the country by constant national touring coupled with a limited television exposure

and some radio airplay. Underpinning these developments were new communication developments such as colour television and new technological abilities to broadcast nationally, along with better roads, more reliable transport and more transportable amplification systems.

In different ways, then, both Pop-Rock and Oz Rock participated in the production of a national popular music in Australia. Pop-rock may have had few overt Australian identifying features but it was embedded in the Australian musical sensibility. The rock edge to its poppiness has a history that can be traced to the Australian lack of differentiation between the English Beat Boom groups and the blues-based groups of the 1960s. Pop-Rock evolved through the national reach of the ABC, replacing the previously dominant state- . capital-based system where a group would be broken in either Sydney or Melbourne and then would move to the other city to try to break there also.

Go-Set was started in 1966 by Monash University students who had worked on the student publication *Lot's Wife*. David M Kent describes *Go-Set* as 'the first Australian weekly newspaper which focused on Australian teenage popular music, culture and fashion'.[32] We have already noted that it carried the first national chart. The newspaper was the sign of things to come. It began in Melbourne but, by the end of 1966, it had a local version in Sydney. Much of the paper was the same but a certain number of pages carried stories on groups and information specific to that city. *Go-Set* lasted until 1974 and, in its combination of national and local emphases, remains the most innovative of Australian music papers. The next fully Australian music (as opposed to teen-oriented) paper, *RAM*, was launched in 1975 as a national magazine. Its full title, *Rock Australia Magazine*, signals this (as opposed to teen-oriented magazines such as *Everybody's*). Following *Go-Set*, but focusing even more on music, *RAM* always had an uncertain musical focus. Aiming, one supposes, for the largest possible audience, it attempted to cover bands and singers in all the popular music genres and in a style that would not be to alienating to either young girls wanting to know Daryl Braithwaite's favourite colour to men in their twenties interested in the evolution of punk. Describing this period, Clinton Walker writes that: 'There were storm clouds gathering on the horizon. You wouldn't know it to read *RAM*.'[33] As Walker implies, *RAM* never fully recognised the musical importance of the

development heralded in Sydney by the inner city success of Radio Birdman or, indeed, what was going on in the other inner cities. *RAM* was preceded by the Australian edition of *Rolling Stone*. Having begun as an insert in *Revolution*, the teen mag follow-up to *Go-Set*, the full-scale Australian edition started in 1972. The first Australian band to make its cover was Skyhooks in 1976.[34] With all their problems of audience focus, and their Sydney/Melbourne-centredness, these two initiatives also helped to form the basis for an understanding of popular music as a national project.

Alternative Rock and Localism

If Pop-Rock was international in its orientation but national in its formation, and Oz Rock developed as music that characterised, and often referred to, Australian themes, but was identified with by a mostly suburban segment of Australian youth, Alternative Rock evolved as a localised, city-based music. This is ironic, given its origins in the bohemian and cosmopolitan culture of the inner city. Graeme Smith writes that:

> What became known as 'alternative' music, both in Australia and worldwide, tended to emphasise localism, and the identification of a local scene became important not only for the local audience of peers but as a marker of authenticity to wider audiences.[35]

From this general perspective, Alternative Rock has a surprising amount in common with the Australian Beat Boom bands: that is, its impetus came from overseas and it evolved in each major city before a few bands, most importantly Billy Thorpe and the Aztecs and the Easybeats, became nationally known. There were crucial differences, though. Whereas the mainstream English Beat Boom sound was often imported into Australia by British, Irish, and sometimes European migrants, as I have already indicated, the Alternative Rock sound evolved as an Australian take on predominantly American non-mainstream music.

In 1977, in Perth, Dave Warner, parochially asserting the values of Perth suburban rock, inveighed in song against the 'second-rate Eastern Staters'. He lists the *Countdown* bands, Hush, Sherbet, and its singer Daryl Braithwaite, as well as the Little River Band, but singled out most in Warner's attack is 'that band with their painted faces', Skyhooks. The track, 'The Monster's Back', is not only a

defence of place, of the local, but also an attack on a pop music that
Warner feels has lost touch with the people and therefore its force
as a means of expressing the emotions and experiences of everyday
life.[36] Warner's criticism comes out of a defence of the suburbs.

The critical alternative to Oz Rock's assertion of issues in
Australian life and Pop-Rock's apolitical (inter)nationalism was a
music whose reference points, at least in the eastern cities (Perth as
we shall see has a different history), were the Detroit and New York
punk bands, in the first instance the Velvet Underground, the
Stooges, the MC5, and the New York Dolls.[37] One of the founders
of Radio Birdman, Deniz Tek, was, in fact, from Michigan, and had
seen both the Stooges (who were really from Ann Arbor) and the
MC5. In his 1992 essay on 'Australian popular music and its
contexts', already referred to, Turner describes well the division
between the inner city and suburban audiences:

> There was a point in the mid-1980s when there was a particularly
> sharp division between those alternative rock music fans who lived
> in the inner city suburbs in Sydney—Glebe, Paddington, Balmain,
> Darlinghurst—and those who lived in the west—Liverpool,
> Parramatta, Bankstown. The inner city fans dressed in black,
> adopting an internationalised urban style that referred for its
> signifiers of cool to the centres of Europe, or at worst New York;
> the Westies looked like surfers, in pastel T-shirts and blue jeans,
> styles purpose-built for the mythic Australian beach.[38]

Turner writes about Sydney but the same division came about
during the 1970s in all the major Australian cities.

Making a similar point in his extensive discussion of the
institutional organisation of Australian popular music in the 1970s
and 1980s, Homan writes of an 'ideological "brick wall" between
suburban and inner city performances'.[39] He goes on to write that:

> The divide between inner city experimentalism and suburban
> homogeneity is an assumption that fits neatly within broader
> cultural divisions. Criticism of the Oz Rock form can be seen as an
> extension of the view of the suburbs as a creative wasteland within
> Australian literary and architectural debates from the 1920s.[40]

While criticism of Australian suburbia goes back a long way, the rise
of the Australian inner city can be dated to the mid-1960s at the

earliest, with the consolidation of suburbia via an increased public and private reliance on the automobile. In *The Lucky Country*, published in 1964, Donald Horne wrote that:

> There is no Australian city that is yet really an urban city with a varied and lively centre in which many people live and to which others congregate. Sydney's King's Cross, with its 100,000 people, is the most densely populated area of any 'Western' city in the world but Sydney does not yet possess a really sophisticated city life, although it is beginning to imitate one.[41]

Ten years later most Australian cities were developing a cosmopolitan and bohemian inner-city life.

Through the 1960s an increasingly large fraction of the Anglo-Celtic middle class combined its critique of suburban values and lifestyle with a cosmopolitan way of life influenced by the southern European migrants who had been allowed into Australia after the Second World War. Many of these migrants had moved into cheap housing close to the city centres. Renate Howe writes that:

> By 1961, for example, almost a quarter of the houses in Paddington were owned by non-English-speaking background migrants, mostly Italians, while a similar proportion of mostly Greek migrants owned houses in Redfern. In Melbourne around a third of Fitzroy's houses were owned by ethnic groups, especially Macedonians and Italians.[42]

During the second half of the 1960s many of these migrants were replaced in this housing by 'young middle-class Australians wanting to combine residence and work in the inner city'.[43] This is, of course, a description of gentrification but it is also the context for an expansion of an inner city bohemianism where both groups meet in a community of left-leaning cosmopolitanism.

Here we have the basis for the Australian Alternative Rock tradition, a tradition which evolves quite differently in each of the inner cities of Australia. This is a very important point. While, particularly in the eastern cities where there was less of an English migrant history, many of the key influences were American and were shared, the musical development took place in a local environment. Bands often did not get to play outside of their own inner city and opportunities for the music to be heard in other inner cities were limited. Thus, while *Countdown* was transforming

Skyhooks from an early inner-city Melbourne Alternative Rock band to a national Pop-Rock icon, the Saints and the Riptides remained Brisbane bands, Radio Birdman were a Sydney band and the Boys Next Door were a Melbourne band. Dave Warner, with his valuing of the suburban and his mixture of American with some English influences, was very distinctively a Perth product.

The combination of common influences and inner-city isolation in the formation of Alternative Rock is brought out well by Clinton Walker in his history of Alternative Rock, *Stranded.* In the early 1970s Walker lived in Brisbane where he went to school with the boys who founded the Saints in 1973.[44] As Walker points out, this makes them contemporaneous with the New York Dolls.[45] Just as important a point, though, is the Saints's contemporaneity with Radio Birdman and the fact that they did not know that band. Walker writes:

> we were intrigued when we got wind of a band in Sydney called Radio Birdman. They'd won the so-called Sydney Punk Band Thriller that *RAM* had run over Christmas, 1975 and then in March 1976, scored a full-page story in *Rolling Stone.*[46]

Walker goes on: 'We couldn't believe it up in Brisbane. There was actually another band in Australia on to this stuff'.[47] Indeed, Radio Birdman had taken their name from a line in the Stooges song, '1970', off their second album, 1970's *Fun House.*[48]

When we talk about the development of the Alternative Rock tradition we are identifying a community, a group of people open to a variety of influences and who have access to those influences, and people who work off those influences, producing music within their own inner city environment. The new, cosmopolitan inner city, with its bohemian population, provided the context. In Brisbane, for example, which, being a smaller city built later than Sydney and Melbourne, had a much, much smaller inner-city environment and therefore many fewer venues, the Saints played at 'Club 76', which was actually the house Ivor Hay, their bassist, rented in Petrie Terrace.[49]

There were four institutional elements that helped this subaltern music scene to develop: local recording and pressing facilities, with independent labels; American and English, and as we have already seen Australian, music papers; access to buying the American, and

to a minor extent English, records, that were read about in the music papers; and local public radio.

In Brisbane, the Saints's first single, '(I'm) Stranded', was recorded at Windows Studio, a studio more usually used for making jingles. The band had 500 copies, the minimum number, pressed, and distributed them themselves on their own Fatal Records label. The Go-Betweens's first single, 'Lee Remick' b/w 'Karen', was also recorded at Windows and was issued on their own Able Label.[50] In Melbourne, Ollie Olsen of Whirlywirld took their independently recorded three-track single to Keith Glass who had started the Missing Link record label in 1977 out of the jointly owned Archie 'n' Jugheads record shop as a vehicle for re-releasing sixties material. The name, Missing Link, came from the Sydney sixties band the Missing Links. Whirlywirld's single became the fledgling independent label's first punk release in 1978. Shortly after, the store's name was changed to Missing Link. Missing Link went on to release many of Melbourne's punk and post-punk bands including the Boys Next Door and the Laughing Clowns. Discussing the history of independent labels in the United States, Rick Kennedy and Randy McNutt explain that: 'Many labels were extensions of record stores.'[51] The same has been true in Australia.

Fanzines evolved to serve the needs of Alternative Rock in the inner cities as *RAM* served the needs of the national genres, Pop-Rock and Oz Rock. Locally produced in each inner city, Australian fanzines developed along the lines of the English ones that sprouted in the wake of the punk explosion in the mid-1970s. Fanzines filled some of the gap left by *RAM*'s lack of coverage of the local, inner city scenes. Cox and Douglas write that:

> For a short time around 1977, inner-city punk and new wave looked like becoming a cottage industry which defined itself in opposition to the establishment, even down to an 'anti-design' design style. Crudely produced on typewriters and photocopiers, punk fanzines were an initiative from enthusiastic audience members that documented a genuine street movement.[52]

Walker describes how, in Brisbane, he and Andrew McMillan, *RAM*'s Brisbane stringer, began a fanzine together called *Suicide Alley* in April 1977.[53] In the main these small-run magazines, with no formal distribution, served the cities where the 'zine was produced. In this way they reinforced each Alternative Rock

community as an isolated entity. As a national magazine *RAM* reported on bands that were popular nationally. They had neither the resources nor the inclination to report on what the paper saw, before the recognition of Alternative Rock as a generic form, as idiosyncratic local bands.

Concentrating on the Pop-Rock and Oz Rock bands primarily, *RAM* largely ignored the burgeoning local Alternative Rock scenes. The incipient Alternative Rock movement remained isolated in each inner city, its members getting most of their information about musical development from imported British and American magazines. For example, Walker describes how in the early 1970s he read the American magazine *Rock Scene*, as he puts it, 'a small-circulation American title which somehow found its way into my neighbourhood newsagent'.[54] From this source Walker found out about the doings of the New York punk scene: Lou Reed, New York Dolls, Patti Smith, among others.[55] A little earlier, in Perth in the late 1960s, Alan Howard tells us that Dave Warner was reading American magazines like *Hullabaloo*, *Crawdaddy* and *Teen-beat!*[56] In 1975, again in Perth, Kim Salmon writes in the liner-notes for the reissue of the Scientists's first album, *Pissed on Another Planet*, that he found out about the New York punk scene from an article by Charles Shaar Murray in the English music weekly, *New Musical Express*. The article, 'Are You Alive to the Jive in '75?' sent Salmon searching for albums by the artists about whom Murray was writing.

If the bohemians and cosmopolitans who composed the Alternative Rock community were reading imported music magazines then the next question is, where were they buying them—and the music about which the journalists wrote? The answer to this lies in the development of import record stores. 78 Records in Perth was one of the first specialist import record shops in Australia. Its origins lay not in the punk, Alternative Rock development but in the earlier blues musical subculture. On its website 78s tells us that it opened on 19 June 1971. The site goes on:

> Tired of reading about a wealth of great music that was inaccessible via the regular outlets, three friends and avid music fans, Geoff 'Hud' Hudson, John Hood, and John 'Scruff' McGregor decided that the only way to enjoy the benefits of a good record store was to start one themselves.[57]

It is worth noting here that, as this quotation shows, the import shops did not begin the importation of English and American music magazines. Indeed, to some extent the development of the new record shops was a consequence of readers wanting access to the music discussed in these magazines that was not available in Australia. However, what the stores did do was import these magazines by airmail, thus significantly decreasing the time it took for people to be able to read about what was happening in the United States and Britain.

Like the import records stores that serviced the other Australian inner cities, 78 Records was not set up, in the first place, as a money-making enterprise. It was opened by fans of non-mainstream popular music who wanted access to the music themselves and to make this available for others with similar interests. For the founders of 78s this music was the specialist blues records that underpinned the Australian blues movement of the mid-1960s onwards. To quote the website again:

> In its infancy, 78 Records boasted almost 300 titles, all on vinyl and mainly imports, with a strong leaning towards blues but also encompassing as extensive a range of other genres as two small rooms could physically accommodate. It was the three owners' love of blues and the desire to create an image that would prove to stand the test of time that inspired the store's logo, which is the only photographic representation of Blind Lemon Jefferson in existence, and then the name 78 Records—the format on which his original recordings were released.[58]

The import shops that served what was becoming the Alternative Rock clientele replaced the specialist shops serving the blues clientele.

Indeed, across Australia there had been a significant interest in the blues since the mid-1960s, fuelled by the English blues, and rhythm and blues, revivalists, discussed in Chapter One. Homan argues that the Australian blues acts were a founding influence on the Oz Rock tradition:

> The initial acts to benefit from a national suburban pub network were those from the Melbourne blues scene, with an emphasis upon the rock basics: lengthy guitar solos, solid and loud bass/drum foundations, and a minimalist approach to stage theatrics: Lobby Lloyde [sic], Blackfeather, Fraternity, Chain and

Carson. Billy Thorpe ... had relocated to Melbourne and managed the transition to 'serious' blues guitarist with a revamped Aztecs. Within the Australian rock tradition, the attitudes, and equally, the sound of Thorpe and others established the heavily mythologised links between venue, performer and audience.[59]

The bands Homan identifies, especially Thorpe and his new Aztecs, took blues from a minority interest and, reconstructed, turned it into the hard rock basis on which Oz Rock was built. Meanwhile, the inner city bohemians of the next generation looked to the white American punk artists for their inspiration. 78 Records was a part of the blues history. It survived into the Alternative Rock era by changing its imports to suit its new clientele.

Archie 'n' Jughead's American Records, later the already mentioned Missing Link, in Melbourne, began at almost exactly the same time as 78s, opening on 31 March 1971. This shop has a different history, one more bound up with the re-valuation of popular music that had been going on since the mid-1960s and which is connected with the development of the Underground music scene in the United States and Britain. David Pepperell writes that:

> I decided that what Melbourne needed was a rock'n'roll record shop, something that was definitely lacking; that is, a shop with no Mantovani, Kamahl or James Last—just solid rock and maybe a lotta soul.[60]

Peppperell, who co-owned the shop with Keith Glass, has provided this account:

> [Keith] came up with the idea of stocking only imports from the U.S. He knew this crazy American ex-serviceman called George in Sydney who was willing to get the records from the U.S. for us. I thought we would get a bit of static from the local record companies (that was an understatement!), but I decided that I didn't care. Imports were better, I'd always said, so why not sell the best? Besides, there were so many great records that were never released in Australia.[61]

While the music background of Glass and Pepperell was different from that of the owners of 78s, the motivation of the lack of availability of many American records and the lack of quality of local pressings when American music was available, was the same.

In Sydney the first import store, Anthem, opened around 1973. In 1974 the owners opened a second shop called Ripple Records. Jules Normington worked there. Normington went on to work at a new import store called Phantom in 1978, of which he became manager the following year, turning it into the most important import shop in Sydney.[62] In 1978 Normington had managed Radio Birdman on their European tour. Walker, who, as we have seen, was a friend of the Saints, was a music journalist by the later 1970s and subsequently also a tour promoter. The connections between the different elements of the bohemian Alternative Rock enterprise were very close. One consequence was that, in addition to import stores stocking the local releases by the inner city bands in their city, Phantom, to take perhaps the best example, in 1979 started its own label, Phantom Records, to release local, which really meant Sydney, bands.

Warwick Vere, who went from Sydney to Brisbane and founded the Brisbane import store Rocking Horse Records in May 1975, had also hung out with the band that became Radio Birdman. In a personal communication Vere talked about the failings of the major record companies in the late 1960s and 1970s: the large number of non-mainstream records that were not released in Australia; the tendency to release records here without the gatefold covers or inserts available overseas. Vere also talked about the strength of the Australian dollar at the time and, consequently, the ability to sell imported albums at prices very similar to local releases.

Vere remarked that there had been an import shop in Brisbane prior to Rocking Horse but Wizards, he said, hadn't been on the ball. What this means is that Wizards, possibly like Anthem in Sydney, had not picked up on the new cultural changes that were associating the cosmopolitan inner city with punk and its avant-garde, post-punk fall-out. In Perth, the survival of 78s was a testament to the owners' ability to change and expand their stock as the inner city sound developed. Nevertheless, in 1975 Dada's, a second import shop, opened in Perth, catering for this particular community.

Meanwhile in 1975 the radio universe changed. As Homan describes it:

> With a desire to democratise arts and media, the Federal Labor Whitlam government established twelve public radio licences in 1975 as alternatives to the more formulaic commercial stations.

4ZZZ in Brisbane, 2XX in Canberra, 5MMM in Adelaide and 3RRR in Melbourne constructed an ethos of localised parochialism combined with a desire to air alternative local musics.[63]

In the same year 2JJ, the ABCs youth radio station, started broadcasting in Sydney. It would not become a national station until 1989. Signalling its youth-oriented rebelliousness, the first song 2JJ played was Skyhooks's 'You Just Like Me 'Cos I'm Good In Bed'. This was one of the tracks off *Living in the '70s* that the ABC had banned. With the addition of two public broadcasting licences in Perth, 6UVS, which later became RTR and 6NR, non-mainstream music, including Alternative Rock, now had a limited and local outlet in each inner city. The most radical of the new stations was 4ZZZ. Andrew Stafford writes of it that: '4ZZZ/TripleZ ... would explore the boundaries of public broadcasting'.[64] 4ZZZ linked Alternative Rock with political opposition to the right-wing authoritarian Queensland government of Joh Bjelke-Petersen. The effect of these local public broadcasting stations was to reinforce the individualised development of each inner city scene. Inevitably, when tracks by these inner city bands were played on these stations, priority tended to be given to the bands from the city in which the band lived and played.

Singing about Australia

Homan rightly argues that during the 1970s there was a very significant increase in material detailing Australian experiences. He writes of the 626 per cent increase in sales revenue for local record manufactures between 1968 and 1978 that:

> This extraordinary growth was partly a result of an increasingly local content *within* Australian performances. Australian musicians—Skyhooks, Cold Chisel, Australian Crawl, The Angels, Midnight Oil, The Sports, Richard Clapton, Paul Kelly, Dave Warner—documented Australian experiences within their songs, and found their audiences within expanded hotel circuits.[65]

We need to refine this point. First of all, there was not an equal concern with Australian topics across all three genres of music. The newly developing national Pop-Rock sound championed by *Countdown* had little Australian-specific content, subscribing more to Anglo-American popular music lyrical norms. Second, we need to

distinguish between a lyrical concern with Australian experiences, often linked to particular Australian places, and a concern, sometimes nationalistic in tone, with Australia. Thus, for example, in the folk-rock of Richard Clapton and Paul Kelly, Australian places often get mentioned as an element in a song more concerned with an experience. Kelly's 'From St Kilda To Kings Cross' (1985) is a good example here. This song celebrates Kelly's preference for St Kilda over Kings Cross by way of his yearning for St Kilda while travelling by bus to Kings Cross.

Broadly speaking, Oz Rock, expressing its populist, suburban values, tended to have political positions evolve out of lyrics dealing, in the first instance, with affect and experience—or out of the first-person narrative so typical of the ballad tradition. The political critiques of Alternative Rock, located in the inner cities from which the bands came, tended to be more objectified, more clearly political in the modern sense of the word. Thus, for example, in Perth the Victims had a song called 'Perth Is A Culture Shock', the chorus of which ran 'Perth is a culture shock/And I was born there.'[66] The Exterminators, whose members subsequently formed the core of the first version of Kim Salmon's band the Scientists, had a song about Perth called 'Asshole Of The Universe'.[67] In Brisbane, the Saints recorded 'Brisbane (Security City)' on their *Prehistoric Sounds* album and the Riptides used to play a song called 'Growing Up In Brisbane'. Even more obviously political were songs like the Parameters's 'Pig City' and Razar's 'Task Force (Undercover Cops)'.[68] These politically direct songs tend to refer more to Perth and Brisbane because in these cities the small, bohemian inner city communities were under greater pressure from more conservative state governments than the larger inner-city scenes in the more liberal cities of Sydney and Melbourne.

To offer another version of the distinction I am making between two kinds of political statement: where (as we saw in Chapter Two) Cold Chisel predominantly worked within a ballad-tradition style populism, with songs such as 'Star Hotel', as Midnight Oil became more and more outspokenly a political band, they did so using a modernist form of political address. That is, rather than narrativising a story with which the audience could identify, as Chisel and Weddings, Parties, Anything tended to do, Midnight Oil lyrics are more likely to describe situations in a general way and

affirm what should be done. Thus, for example, in 'Beds Are Burning', a song in favour of Aboriginal land rights, the Oils sing:

> The time has come
> To say fair's fair
> To pay the rent
> To pay our share

This is a much more directly political statement than the populist involvement asked for in Cold Chisel's song for Vietnam veterans that has become an Australian standard: 'Khe Sanh'. In this way, then, we can identify Midnight Oil as more of an Alternative Rock band than an Oz Rock band, although the Oils clearly wanted to reach out politically to the suburban audience that listened to Oz Rock.[69]

By the early 1980s these two quite distinct strands of Australian popular music, the one with a more localised institutional base but a fairly common set of influences, the other more national but focused in suburbia, were merging at the edges. The political concerns of each, and their forms of expression, were being re-worked in the context of Australian cultural nation-building. Perhaps the most typical of the songs about Australia in this period was '(Land) Down Under', which, as I mentioned at the start, became the unofficial theme tune for the successful America's Cup challenge in 1983. Homan has described Men at Work's success as 'tied to a particularly limiting sense of a national imaginary' and goes on to write that: 'Undoubtedly part of the band's success was founded upon the jingoistic uses found for their songs. *Down Under* promoted a simplistic nationalism at home, and served as a pseudo-tourist advertising tool internationally.'[70] While the song was certainly taken up in a nationalistic way, 'Down Under' is more complicated than this. Here we have a song whose melody is so poppy that it could easily be, and was, played on *Countdown*. However, as with so many of Skyhooks's songs on *Living in the '70s*, the catchy tune disguises more complex and critical lyrics. These lyrics function as a first person narrative, as in the Oz Rock tradition, here about an Australian travelling Europe 'in a fried-out combie'. The chorus, constructed as a response to the first person narrator, the traveller, operates in a form of a more-or-less didactic, critical, political statement:

Living in a land down under,
Where women glow and men plunder.
Can't you hear, Can't you hear the thunder?
You better run, you better take cover.

Colin Hay, the lyricist, has said that:

> The chorus is really about the selling of Australia in many ways, this overdevelopment of the country. It was a song about the loss of spirit in that country. It's really about the plundering of the country by greedy people. It is ultimately about celebrating the country, but not in a nationalistic way and not in a flag-waving sense. It's really more than that.[71]

By successfully combining elements from all three strands of popular music, Men at Work had a hit which reached number one and stayed in the charts for eighteen weeks. Released in October 1981, the album which contained the single, *Business As Usual*, went immediately to number one and sold in excess of 400,000 copies in Australia. 'Down Under' became a part of the cultural nation-building project. Its use as the unofficial anthem for Alan Bond's America's Cup challenge is ironic considering Bond's reputation as one of the high-flying entrepreneurs of the 1980s who subsequently was sent to prison for his dubious business practices. The mid-1980s decline in songs about Australia suggests that, in the experience of the general Australian population, it was no longer necessary to assert the cultural existence of a national Australia. Australia had been constructed nationally and was experienced locally, that is familiarly.

What I have wanted to track in this chapter is how the evolution of an Australian popular music scene with three fairly distinct strands formed a platform for the development of popular music that expressed the new sense of Australia as a single cultural entity. It is not that the songs I identified at the start, ranging from 'Come On Aussie, Come On' to GANGgajang's 'Sounds Of Then (This Is Australia)' were deliberately, and self-consciously, written to advance a sense of Australia as having a national culture, though, of course, songs such as 'Come On Aussie' clearly had the intention of promoting a nationalist, patriotic, fervour. Rather, the production of these songs out of a merging of the strands of music that I have identified, and their consumption across the broad range of the Australian population—something exemplified in the massive sales

of '(Land) Down Under' and *Business As Usual*—and, indeed, their frequent appropriation by businessmen such as Bond and Kerry Packer, to promote Australian nationalism, was a consequence and an active part of the developing sense of Australia as a national culture.

II
THE LOCAL

4

Pissed on Another Planet:
The Perth Sound of the
1970s and 1980s

In this chapter I want to discuss the specificity of the Perth sound as it developed in the 1970s and 1980s. In order to do this I need also to say something about the particularity of Perth as compared to other major Australian capital cities, most importantly Sydney and Melbourne. As I have discussed in Chapter Three, the development of the inner-city sound was dependent on the gradual formation in Australia, since around the mid-1960s, of a bohemian segment of the population, mostly middle class, that was outward-looking and cosmopolitan. Many of these people moved out of the suburbs and into the inner cities. Often this group was followed by a more conservative, but still cosmopolitan, element of the middle class, which gentrified the inner city.

Perth is frequently characterised as the most isolated state capital in Australia. Adelaide, which is smaller than Perth, is the closest city at 2,712 kilometres distant. Melbourne is 3,438 kilometres away and Sydney 4,127 kilometres. Perth is two hours behind Melbourne and Sydney which means that, even with a networked, standardised television system across much of Australia, a system not present in the 1970s, Perth still gets even many 'live' broadcasts pre-recorded. In the 1970s, before email and the internet, before satellite and cable technologies improved remote communication for television and

radio, before airbuses and wide-bodied jets brought down the cost
of air-travel, Perth was culturally a much more remote place than it
had become by the 1990s. Kim Salmon, who we shall meet again as
one of the pioneers of the Perth sound and founder of the
Scientists, writes in the booklet accompanying the re-release of the
Scientists's first album, known on release in 1981 as the *Pink Album*,
that:

> Perth, being the most isolated capital city in the world, does harbour
> some parochialism. My main memory of it features a huge
> inferiority complex about what was referred to as the 'Eastern
> States', i.e. not some hierarchy of levels of enlightenment but all
> that was to the east—in fact everywhere in Australia! Getting to the
> Eastern States meant a three day drive across the desert or forking
> out for an airfare comparable to an overseas flight—and that was
> just to get to Adelaide![1]

Salmon is describing the experience of living in the only major city
on the west coast of Australia in the 1970s.

Nevertheless, or perhaps because of this, Perth was home to a
clutch of major Australian bands in the 1970s and 1980s, bands
which made it out of the Perth scene and into the Australian scene,
and even internationally. There was Dave Warner's band, From the
Suburbs, whose album, *Mug's Game*, recorded in Melbourne in 1978
and released the same year, went gold within a month of release.
There was Kim Salmon's band, the Scientists, whose second
incarnation, after the band moved to inner city Sydney, released the
mini-album *Blood Red River* in 1983, helping to provide the
foundation for what, in the late 1980s, became known as grunge.
The Hoodoo Gurus, formed in Sydney on New Year's Eve 1981 by
Dave Faulkner and two other Perth musicians, James Baker and Rod
Radalj, both of whom had played in the first incarnation of the
Scientists, and Kimble Rendell, released their first album, *Stoneage
Romeos*, with a rather different line-up, in 1983. The band's first two
albums topped the American Alternative/College chart.
Internationally hugely successful, INXS's three Farris brothers grew
up in Perth. We need to include the Triffids in this list. Perhaps the
most idiosyncratic, or maybe most alternative, of the nationally, and
internationally, successful Perth bands of the era, the Triffids's first
album, *Treeless Plain*, was released in 1983.

The purpose of this chapter can be reduced to a question: what has been so particular about Dave Warner that his music has given him a huge cult following in Perth and yet, in histories of Alternative Rock in Australia, such as Clinton Walker's *Stranded: The Secret History of Australia's Independent Music 1977–1991*, he gets no mention? Warner comes over as an anomalous figure, the pioneer of Alternative Rock in Perth and yet at the same time the champion, albeit sometimes an ambivalent one, of the suburbs. More, Warner sees himself as a precursor of punk and the founder of punk in Perth. On his website Warner writes in the third person: 'In 1973 he formed Australia's first punk band, Pus.'[2] Yet, in the reminiscences of Perth punk pioneers such as Kim Salmon and Dave Faulkner, Warner doesn't get mentioned. The answer that I will be giving has two parts. One is the lack, in Perth, of an inner city in which Alternative Rock could develop—as we shall see in the next chapter, Kim Salmon felt he had to move to Sydney to find a congenial working environment for his deconstruction of the roots of rock music. The consequence of this lack was the production of an artist, Warner, who espoused the values of both Alternative Rock and suburbia. The other part of the answer is the much greater importance of the British, and especially English, cultural influence in Perth (as in Adelaide) as compared to the cities of the eastern states. This influence was very important where Warner, and also Salmon, was concerned even though Warner's stimulus for forming Pus was American.

Quoting from Sara Cohen's *Rock Culture in Liverpool*, John Connell and Chris Gibson argue that:

> Studies of local 'scenes' in Europe and North America have shown how musical forms and practices 'originate within, interact with, and are inevitably affected by, the physical, social, political and economic factors which surround them.'[3]

Focusing principally on Dave Warner and to a limited extent on the first incarnation of the Scientists, it will be argued in this chapter that a combination of influences and circumstances in Perth formed the basis for what we could call the Perth sound, a sound that was hard-edged while having a lighter, poppier element than the Alternative Rock bands of the eastern inner cities. Central to this sound was an English influence, a sing-a-long pop tradition from

music hall to Ian Dury and, in the 1990s, Robbie Williams—Salmon describes the music of the Scientists mk I as 'like a collision between the Stooges and Herman's Hermits'.[4]

Thinking of Herman's Hermits, that quintessential English pop band of the 1960s, who had hits like 'I'm Into Something Good' (1965) and the revival of the 1911 music hall song 'I'm Henery The Eighth, I Am' (1965), we can remember Michael Bracewell's comment that 'suburbia is the spiritual home of English pop'.[5] Writing of the ideology of English suburbia, Bracewell describes:

> the basic conservatism of suburbia, and of suburbia's enduring reputation for xenophobia, small-mindedness and self-congratulatory moderation. In suburbia ... it is perceived that the local becomes the universal, returning the language of Life to a reduced vocabulary of domesticity and parish politics.[6]

Central to the development of the Perth sound was a musical form that challenged the apparent superficiality of those suburban values while, in the end, accepting the worth of the suburban and the values it embodies. I will talk about this ambivalence as the foundation for Dave Warner's work by way of its similarity to that of Ian Dury, and, more generally, I will discuss the influence of that quintessential English suburban punk band, the Troggs, on the development of the Perth sound.

Perth: The Most Suburban of Australian Cities

We need to begin by thinking about Perth, officially founded by Captain James Stirling in 1829. By 1853 Perth had a population of 1,940 and the nearby port of Fremantle a similar figure of 1,859.[7] By 1901, Reginald Appleyard tells us, '36 percent of Western Australia's 184,125 persons lived in the metropolitan area'[8], which suggests a figure of around 66,285 for Perth's population. The purpose of these figures here is to make a point about Perth's built environment. Renate Howe writes that:

> The period of prosperity [in Australia] 1870 to 1890 was a period of growth and suburban expansion and the cities echoed with the rhetoric of progress. Between 1881 and 1891, Melbourne almost doubled its population and Sydney grew almost as fast, while the population of Brisbane trebled. The areas of spectacular growth were in the suburbs opened up by the building or extension of public transport systems.[9]

This is the time, Howe explains, that a distinction arose between the 'villa suburbs' of the new suburbia and the 'inner suburbs'. Howe goes on: 'From the 1870s, parts of the inner areas of Sydney and Melbourne were increasingly identified as "slums".'[10] At the same time, while the beginning of the move to the new suburbs was taking place, Howe notes that, 'almost 60 per cent of the population increase in Sydney between 1871 and 1891 was in the city and the older suburbs with the continuing subdivision of areas like Newtown and Redfern'.[11] By 1901, the year of federation, Sydney had a population of 496,990 and Melbourne's population was 501,580. Brisbane's population was 120,650.[12] My point here is that, by the turn of the twentieth century, when the building of the new, detached suburbs was getting under way in earnest, and the old, comparatively cramped, working-class inner-city areas were already beginning to be described as slums, Perth's population was still so small, as compared even with Brisbane's, that the number of inner city suburbs, or, indeed more generally, the existence of an inhabited inner-city was almost negligible. Thus, by the 1960s and 1970s there was little movement towards a bohemianised or gentrified inner city because there was hardly any inner city to gentrify.

In her history of Perth since the Second World War, *City of Light*, Jenny Gregory identifies the 1920s as a time of major population expansion for Perth. She writes that in 1929 Perth had a population of just over 206,000 and that:

> Residential construction rose steadily after 1922 and peaked in early 1929. Perth's suburbs developed rapidly in the 1920s fed by immigration from Britain and natural population growth.[13]

Perth developed as a suburban city.[14] There were, perhaps, three inner city suburbs that can be identified, four if Leederville, split in two by the north–south freeway in the 1950s, is included. Subiaco was rapidly gentrified into one of Perth's more expensive and desirable suburbs[15], though 'rapid' here is a relative term and this gentrification was not finally completed until the mid-1980s, when it was no longer possible for people outside of the higher income brackets to find affordable accommodation to rent. East Perth remained an area inhabited by the lower-working class, indigent non-English-speaking migrants, the lumpenproletariat and Indigenous Australians until the 1980s. Stephen Kinnane writes that: 'My grandmother stayed in East Perth in the 1920s, as did

dozens of Aboriginal women who worked in the city or were in town for medical treatments.'[16] It was outside the Prohibited Area, the centre of Perth excluded to Indigenous Australians after dark until 1954. Gregory describes the area:

> The homeless, the down and out, derelict buildings, shattered windows, industrial wasteland—such was the image of East Perth in the early 1980s. It displayed all the characteristics of an urban ghetto, and many of its people had the characteristics of an urban underclass—chronically poor, dependent on welfare, dysfunctional, lawless and socially excluded.[17]

Most of the area was finally knocked down in a major urban renewal scheme during the 1990s.

The third suburb is the most interesting for my purposes here. Known now as Northbridge, it was only given this name in 1981. Previously, this area of the city was simply described as 'north of the railway' or, more usually, 'north of the line'. One feature of this area was the Governor Broome, a pub which, from around the mid-1960s to the late 1970s, was one of the most important Perth venues for Alternative Rock bands. Indeed along with the Shenton Park Hotel and Hernando's Hideaway, the Governor Broome was one of the few venues that could be described as inner city in Perth, offering performance space to Dave Warner's bands, both Pus, his first band, and From the Suburbs, and to the first incarnation of the Scientists as well as to the Victims, the three piece punk band that contained both James Baker and Dave Faulkner, and other alternative bands like the Manikins.

North of the line was an old working-class area which, in the time of post–Second World War European migration, became the home for numbers of non-English-speaking migrants. Gregory writes that:

> The area north of the line had been noted for early twentieth century housing stock that had seen better days and provided cheap rental accommodation. Wave after wave of immigrants had been housed there as they travelled the well-trodden route from the migrant camp to a cheap rented house on their way towards the great Australian dream—a home of their own in the suburbs.[18]

Most of the immigrants who found their way to north of the line were non-English speaking, predominantly Jews, Italians and Greeks. By the 1950s and 1960s the area 'was often referred to as "Little Italy"'.[19]

Gregory also tells us that Roe Street:

> had been the centre of prostitution since the World War 1, when, in order to prevent the spread of disease among the troops, the police initiated a containment policy, systematically removing brothels from other parts of Perth and using both the Police and Health Acts to regulate the industry'.[20]

By 1958 Roe Street, along the edge of the railway line with 'north of the line' to the north of it, had eleven brothels. These were tolerated as part of Western Australia's semi-official containment policy.[21] In August 1958 the brothels were closed and the prostitutes dispersed across the north of the line area, which also contained a number of unlicensed gambling clubs. North of the line, then, looked very much like inner city Sydney and Melbourne in the late 1960s, except for its size and the somewhat newer housing stock. Indeed, while the Victims 'all moved into a squalid fleapit of a house in East Perth,' Salmon lived 'in the "loft", [his] "apartment" in the part of Perth now gentrified and called as [sic] Northbridge'.[22] Salmon tells us that this was where the Scientists's 'first demo was recorded'.[23] His description suggests the relative difference between north of the line and East Perth.

What, then, happened to the north of the line, this area of non-respectable, working-class, non-English-speaking migrants and prostitutes and, increasingly, Perth's 'deviants' and bohemians? In 1975 there was a further purge of the area's brothels and clubs following the murder that June of brothel madam Shirley Finn. Finn owned a house in the highly respectable middle-class, riverside suburb of South Perth and her body was found in her Dodge Phoenix near the suburb's Royal Perth golf course.[24] As Torrance Mendez puts it:

> Speculation raced over the motive and identity of her killer. There was talk of a corrupt police and their connections to high public office. A disbelieving public was shocked by Perth's hard core of sex, secrets and sleaze.[25]

In short, north of the line was cleaned up, made respectable.
Gregory describes how, '[i]n the late sixties there were only about
thirty restaurants in the whole of [metropolitan] Perth'. She goes on
to write that: 'A decade later a survey showed that, as well as a
proliferation of restaurants in the city centre, there were thirty-five
restaurants north of the line.'[26] Rather than being gentrified the way
Subiaco was, north of the line shifted from being an inhabited,
increasingly bohemian inner-city suburb to being the city's
entertainment area for suburbia. For the middle-class traditionalists
the association of popular music with unruly bodies, energetic
dancing for example, marked it as a threat to law and order, as
something that needed to be contained or, if possible, eradicated. As
north of the line became Northbridge it lost its inner-city qualities.
The Governor Broome was knocked down.

Howe has described the way the slum abolition movement of the
1930s and 1940s, which sought to re-build the inner city areas, still
had force in the 1960s and 1970s. She writes about how, in
Melbourne for example, 'images of the inner city as an unruly,
unhealthy place gave power to the statutory authorities: the Housing
Commission, the Melbourne Metropolitan Board of Works and the
Country Roads Board'.[27] In Brisbane and Perth, strong right-wing
state governments set about reining in the transformations that were
taking place in the inner city.

The Attack on the Inner City

In Queensland, the conservative National–Liberal Party coalition,
led by the National Party, had been in power since 1957. Frank
Nicklin was succeeded by Jack Pizzey and when he died in office in
1968 Joh Bjelke-Petersen became Premier. Bjelke-Petersen was a
Christian fundamentalist farmer. His values were rooted in
conservative understandings of the church and the family. His
authoritarian government cracked down hard on what Bjelke-
Petersen saw as the new troublemakers, the left-leaning new urban,
middle-class bohemians and cosmopolitans—and their music. In
1977, for example, he banned all street marches by the simple
expedient of ordering the police to refuse all applications to march.
In 1982, during strikes as part of a union campaign for a thirty-eight

hour week, Bjelke-Petersen declared a State of Emergency, suspended 3,500 railway workers and moved to deregister eleven unions.

In his biography of the Go-Betweens, David Nichols suggests that: 'Unlike elsewhere in Australia … the Brisbane rock scene became inseparable from the local political scene from the late 1960s onwards.'[28] The Saints, influenced by the MC5, the Stooges and the New York Dolls, as Clinton Walker suggests in his liner booklet for the retrospective *Wild about You* compilation, began playing in 1974. The music—fast, loud, angry and on the edge of being out of control—epitomised many of the inner-city values that Bjelke-Petersen's government wanted to stamp out. As Nichols writes:

> To follow the kind of lifestyle that people in other Australian cities took for granted—going out for the night, hearing a few rock bands who played music relevant to your world, drinking—was infused, in Brisbane, with a special kind of danger. The police could arrest you at any time, and effectively they could do what they wanted with you.[29]

As Ed Kuepper, guitarist with the Saints, has remarked: 'In Brisbane, we didn't play until we started putting on shows of our own, and then the cops would break them up anyway, as they did any sort of gathering.'[30] Nichols sums up the situation well:

> to call oneself 'punk' in Brisbane was to be part of a small renegade movement. It was a choice fraught with greater risks than elsewhere in Australia—which is perhaps the main reason why Brisbane punk music always seemed to have that extra edge.[31]

Bjelke-Petersen's solution to the new, bohemian inner city was to attempt to destroy the culture by a combination of legislation and extreme policing. Brisbane's inner-city environment, encompassing areas such as Petrie Terrace and Fortitude Valley, was too large a built environment to eradicate.

The situation in Perth was remarkably similar, the solution different. The Liberal Party, under David Brand, came to power in Western Australia in 1959. It lost power to Labor for a mere four years between 1971 and 1974, when the Liberal Party under Charles Court was returned to power until 1983. Court's government championed conservative, suburban, white middle-class values. Like

Bjelke-Petersen, Court supported 'family' values and law and order. Court, too, saw himself in a war against disruptive left-wingers. In 1976, a year before Bjelke-Petersen, Court cracked down on the right to protest publicly. He instituted Section 54B of the Police Act which, like the law in Queensland, ordered that 'all public assemblies of more than three people who wished to gather to discuss a matter of public interest must first be approved by the Police Commissioner'.[32] This law was finally repealed in 1983 by Brian Burke's Labor government. In 1979, in the face of increasing numbers of strikes, Court's government passed the *Essential Foodstuffs and Commodities Act*, provoking a confrontation between the unions and the state government which almost led to a national strike. It is within this context that we need to understand the Northbridge transformation. At the same time, through the 1960s and into the 1970s the city itself was transformed. With no heritage legislation much of the city was knocked down to make way for new high-rise office blocks. As Gregory writes: 'The surge of investment in the sixties brought new money to the city and again it reinvented itself—this time in the image of modernism.'[33]

In Perth, Court's government took a different tack from Bjelke-Petersen's in dealing with the 'punk' manifestation of inner-city life. While it did closely police punk gigs, the government was in the position to more or less destroy what little inner-city Perth had under the guise of slum clearance and urban renewal, an extension of the rebuilding of Perth city. Post-1980s Northbridge is the result of this.

The British Influence

If Perth was distinctive in having a small and diminishing inner-city habitus, it was also distinctive among Australian capital cities for its high levels of British migration. Starting in the 1920s, until the 1980s Western Australia's population has consistently grown more rapidly than that of Australia as a whole. By 1947 the Western Australian population was 502,480. By 1971 it had doubled to 1,030,469 people. Between 1961 and 1966 Western Australia's population increased by 15.13 per cent and between 1966 and 1971 the population increased by 21.50 per cent as compared to an Australian increase of 9.97 per cent.[34] This was the decade of the mineral boom that transformed Perth's urbanscape.

Gregory tells that:

> In 1954 [Perth] was still largely a British place. Although the vast majority of the people of Perth had been born in Australia (75.6 per cent of the metropolitan population of 349,000) this percentage was slightly lower than in other Australian cities. Perth was notable for its markedly higher percentage of people born in the United Kingdom and Ireland—14.1 per cent—almost double the percentage of most other capital cities.[35]

Ghosh writes that:

> According to the Census of 1954, 88.8 per cent of Western Australia's population had their birthplace in Australia and the United Kingdom. This percentage actually increased to 89.15 per cent in 1966, but then slowly declined to 88.5 per cent in 1971, and further to 85.5 per cent in 1976.[36]

It is clear, then, that not only did Perth have a very significant British influence in the 1950s but that this was reinforced through a high rate of British migration through the 1960s and early 1970s when Western Australia had a much higher rate of population increase than Australia as a whole. We can say with certainty that Perth had a much greater British cultural influence, and indeed a cultural influence drawing not only on British culture of the 1950s and earlier, but also on British culture from the so-called 'Swinging Sixties'.

Given this background it is no wonder that the Perth sound of the 1970s and 1980s drew significantly on British, in particular English, cultural elements. Perhaps the artist who was most clearly a product of these two idiosyncratic features of Perth is Dave Warner. This may also go some way to explaining why Warner's very considerable popularity in Perth never fully translated into a national popularity across the other major capital cities. Indeed, in histories of Australian popular music in the 1970s and 1980s—I have already mentioned Walker's admittedly partially autobiographical *Stranded* (1996)—Warner doesn't rate a mention. In these histories Perth music begins with Kim Salmon, Dave Faulkner and their punk bands the Cheap Nasties and the Victims.

Dave Warner and the Suburbs

Writing from a cultural studies perspective, Graeme Turner acknowledges the importance of Warner as the voice of suburbia:

> What Warner offered was a new fantasy, one that allowed the fans to stay in suburbia, instead of projecting themselves into some mythologised subcultural location—the New York ghetto, the LA street gang, or even inner Sydney. But it was a fantasy that was perilously close to reality, which is perhaps why its moment was a brief one and why Warner soon went on to other things, other fantasies.[37]

Turner is referring here to the 'murder weekends' that Warner ran where people could pay to take part in the detection of an acted-out murder. After Turner's chapter was published Warner produced what may well have been the first detective novel set in Perth and Fremantle, titled, like Gregory's later book, *City of Light*, in 1995. This book won the West Australian Premier's award in 1996 for best fiction work.

Turner's point is a good one, that Warner's ambivalent celebration of suburbia and its way of life was, quite literally, a little too close to home for Warner's audience. However, as I have suggested, I think the reasons for Warner's lack of ongoing success outside of Perth lie elsewhere, and are connected to the lack of acknowledgement that Warner receives in histories of Australian popular music written by authors based in the eastern capitals. A part of the problem, as we shall see, is that Warner does not fit into the tripartite structure of Australian popular music in the seventies and eighties.

Warner was born in Bicton in 1953. Bicton is a suburb roughly mid-way between Perth and Fremantle, the two cities now forming one conurbation joined by the suburbs which envelop each of them. Warner's father was a butcher. He went to the Catholic Aquinas College and from there to the University of Western Australia, graduating with an honours degree in psychology—a background that suggests a certain degree of upward social mobility.

In 1981 Alan Howard published a book about Warner entitled *Dave Warner: Suburban Boy*. The narrative actually finishes in late 1976 as Warner returns from his first visit to London, and two years before the release of *Mug's Game*. It has only a Postscript referring to Warner's From the Suburbs. The book covers Warner's youth and

his early bands, especially Pus, the band he formed, according to his website, in 1973 (Howard says 1972). On that website, Warner refers to Pus as 'Australia's first punk band',[38] a problematic description because Warner's influences were not those characteristically associated with the music identified as punk in the mid-to-late 1970s, most importantly that of the Stooges and the MC5 (both of whom, as we have already noted, were important to the development of the Saints and for Sydney's Radio Birdman).[39]

Howard identifies the major influence on Warner and the inception of Pus as the Fugs's live album, *Golden Filth*.[40] Formed in 1964 in New York the Fugs came out of the Beat tradition, intending to mix poetry and rock music. *Golden Filth* was released in 1969. A part of the counterculture, the Fugs took their name from the novelist Norman Mailer's 'polite' corruption of 'fuck'. The group's members were peace activists and, in the way of the counterculture's rebellion against American puritanism, campaigners for a more direct appreciation of sex and desire. Howard describes how 'Warner listened and laughed as the Fugs's "Slum Goddess", the first song on *Golden Filth*, burst out of the speakers of his portable stereo and filled his ears with the most offensive, tasteless, witty and fantastic lyrics he had ever heard.'[41] Deciding to play these songs live, Warner felt his band needed a name change from Opus West. As Howard writes, the new name 'had to be offensive', and 'it had to be short and attention grabbing'.[42] Pus was the consequence. While the name fits the criteria identified by Howard, it doesn't have the humour or the sexual politics inherent in the Fugs name. Pus sounds more like suburban rebellion, an adolescent attack on suburban 'niceness' rather in the mould of the later English punk band Slaughter and the Dogs.

Similarly, to understand 'Slum Goddess' simply in terms of its sexual directness is to miss the referentiality in the protagonist being from the Lower East Side. As the Fugs sing:

Slum Goddess from the Lower East Side
Slum Goddess, gonna make her my bride

The Lower East Side had been the migrant area of Manhattan in the early part of the century. For a long time it was predominantly Jewish. However, by 1965, according to Christopher Mele:

> The popular media referred to the Lower East Side streets and avenues above Houston Street as the East Village. East Village applied to the area's hippie community and not to the older white ethnic and Puerto Rican residents.[43]

Assuming that she would not have been a member of the area's older community, the presence of the Slum Goddess would have been a consequence of the bohemianisation of this working-class, migrant neighbourhood. As it happens, an article about Suze Rotolo, who had been Dylan's girlfriend (they broke up in March 1964) and who worked in the East Village as an artist, appeared in Andy Warhol's one-off *The Plastic Exploding Inevitable* broadsheet, sold as a bonus with avant-garde magazine *Aspen* (number 3), in 1966. It was headlined 'Slum Goddess'.[44] This piece appears to have been previously published in *The East Village Other*. Either the Rotolo article was the inspiration for the Fugs song which was first available on the Fugs's first album, entitled *The Fugs First Album*, in 1965, or the article headline identifies Rotolo as the sort of person that the Fugs were singing about. The point here is that, while for Warner 'Slum Goddess' was a witty and transgressive song, speaking about sex in a respectable suburban context where it was supposed to take place only in the marriage bed, for the Fugs and their New York audience the song had this impact but also rather more, coming out of the city's avant-garde left and referring to the inner city bohemianisation that put people like Rotolo in what had been a slum environment. Ironically, of course, it was this very inner city milieu that was being eradicated in Perth.

Formed around two years earlier than the Saints, Pus's influences, according to its founder, Warner, were, in addition to the Fugs, Frank Zappa and the very English humorous rock group, the Bonzo Dog Doo-Dah Band. If we think of Australian Alternative Rock as founded in what Clinton Walker has called the 'Detroit Sound'[45], that is, the Stooges and the MC5, then little of this is present in Warner's music—though it should be said that after Warner returns from London and forms From the Suburbs, there is, on the live *Suburbs in the '70s* CD recorded in 1977, a quite remarkable version of the Velvet Underground's 'Sweet Jane'. Howard tells how Pus also used to play this song.[46] The Velvet Underground are commonly regarded as the founders of the punk tradition and one of the most important inspirations for the Detroit bands. As it

happens, both the Velvet Underground and the Fugs came from New York and were working during the same period in the mid-to-late 1960s. While the Velvets were influential in what became punk circles, because of their lyrical attention to 'deviant' issues like masochism and drug use, as well as their tendency to sonic aggression, the Fugs are now often regarded as punk for their celebration of sex and drugs. However, the Fugs invoked a folk and jug-band sonic history more than pop and rock and, therefore, as I have already indicated, were not a reference point for the punk renovation of rock in the mid-to-late 1970s. With this knowledge we can begin to understand how Warner, with his quite different influences from those usually cited, including his English inflection, is an anomaly for the conventional histories of Australian Alternative Rock. Indeed, while Warner was developing his music at roughly the same time as the Saints in Brisbane, his influences, with their San Francisco and 'hippie' inflections, give the impression that Warner is of a previous generation.[47]

We can now take a further step and think through Warner's attitude to suburbia. To start off, we need to understand that Warner's music is in no way categorisable as Oz Rock. It does not have the hard-edged blues/rock musical base of groups like the Angels or Cold Chisel nor the folk inflection of artists like Richard Clapton and Paul Kelly who have, at times, been linked with Oz Rock.[48] Musically, Warner's songs often have a rockabilly feel to them while working within a pop-style three minute format.

Lyrically, as Turner indicates, Warner's preoccupation with the ordinary in suburban life is also uncharacteristic of Oz Rock—though there are exceptions, especially in the work of the folk artists. Howard writes that, when Warner was in London in 1976:

> [he] noticed he was writing more and more songs about home and the little things he had taken for granted in Western Australia—beaches, Aussie Rules football, beer gardens, Rottnest Island and just plain old sunshine. England had given perspective to his song-writing and he came to the startling realization that all his songs seemed to relate back to one thing—the experience of growing up in the suburbs of Perth.[49]

In the most suburban city in Australia, a city to all intents and purposes without an inner city, it is understandable that the first Alternative Rock artist should come out of the suburbs, embedded

in conservative suburban values of family, localism and parochialism, and patriotism as expressed in and through the attitude towards the 'little things' Howard identifies.

In Pus, Warner had taken these values for granted. This doesn't mean that he was a political supporter of everything the Court government did. Howard relates how Warner used to perform a version of Country Joe and the Fish's song 'Superbird'.[50] Where the original was an attack on President Richard Nixon, Warner's version was about Premier Charles Court:

> Charlie Court would like to be
> The king of WA
> But I'm telling you people
> He's nothing but a kid at play.[51]

In 'Phantom', written, Warner says on his website, in 1976, after his return from England, Warner makes a more direct attack on Court's acceptance, if not encouragement, of the destruction and re-building of Perth, and on police corruption. Warner imagines suggesting to the Phantom, the comic book hero, that he comes to Perth:

> I know you'd just love Garden City
> Though Devil might have to stay outside
> Still Hero can become a police horse
> Provided you teach him how to take a bribe

Garden City is a large suburban shopping mall opened in 1972. At the same time however, 'Phantom' has a chorus which criticises both the political left and the right:

> The capitalists are ripping out our jungle
> The communists ripping out our brain …

The end of the song asserts that the Phantom is the only hope we have. With this solution Warner shows his disillusion with politics. Warner describes the song as, 'a plea for common sense in the wake of WA's "progress at all costs" philosophy'.[52] It sounds very much like an attempt to assert suburban reasonableness, a sensible and moderate middle way between two political extremes.

Warner's first clear expression of suburban life was a song he wrote in 1974 and performed first with Pus. 'Suburban Boy' describes the experience of being a teenage boy in suburbia being

moaned at by his mother, letting out his excess energy screaming at the football, drinking at the lunchtime 'Sunday Session' in the pub and failing to pick up girls. The song is a manifesto for the upper-working class and midde-class suburban life that Warner would go on to document in many of his songs in From the Suburbs. Along with 'Campus Days', another song from 1974, 'Suburban Boy' presages Warner's later ambivalent embracing of the suburbs. In 'Suburban Boy' the singer is *'just* a suburban boy' (my italics) as if being suburban is not enough. The suburban boy, it seems, is not a leader, not a success. The suburban emphasis on moderation is here reproduced in a sense of personal averageness. This idea is made more explicit in the chorus:

> I'm just a Suburban Boy, just a Suburban Boy
> And I know what it's like
> To be rejected every night
> And I'm sure that it must be
> Easier for boys from the city.

Suburban boys, here, never succeed with girls but, more, there is an envy of those presumably smoother and more worldly boys from the inner city who, the singer is sure, must have a more successful life, get more girls.

This simultaneous assertion of suburban life and negativity towards the experience of it is even more obvious in 'Mug's Game', the title track of the first album positioned as the album's final, climactic accounting of suburban life. Recorded live in Melbourne, this version of the song runs just over thirteen minutes because of a lengthy spoken section. The singer characterises himself as too ordinary, his parents never took him aside and told him that he had to learn to play the game. Consequently, because he's a straightforward (suburban) guy, who likes beer and Aussie rules, he's been mugged 'too many times in too many places', taken advantage of by girls and failed to get a root (in the song's vernacular). The singer asserts that, not having learnt to play the game, he fails to 'fit in,' his 'jeans weren't tight enough', he couldn't do the Disco Duck.

In the spoken section, the singer once more invokes the failure of suburban ordinariness by comparing it first to Zongo the surfer, clearly totally stupid, who lives only for surfing and getting out of his head, but, with his bleached blond hair and earring, is able to pull the girls. The singer then asks why he couldn't be more like Robert.

Robert lives in the gentrified, rather than the bohemian inner city, we are told Carlton for Melbourne, Paddington for Sydney, Subiaco for Perth. His father is an American consul and his mother a French novelist. Robert spends six months of the year in Bali getting his head together. Robert is denouncing capitalism yet buys expensive paintings and sells dope. Implicit in Warner's critical description is also a class component. It is, one suspects, these well-off, middle-class boys of the gentrified inner city who are the boys in 'Suburban Boy' that Warner thinks have an easier time pulling girls.

The third character invoked is Derek, the upwardly mobile sales rep who next year will be trading in his Toyota Celica for a BMW. We are given a description of Derek out at a nightclub picking up Sandra, who thinks he's a spunk, while dancing to the Little River Band. The climax, in a move structurally reminiscent of the long spoken section in the Doors's song 'The End', off their 1967 self-titled first album, is Derek and Sandra both imagining the expected sexual conclusion to the night back at Derek's bachelor apartment.[53] Given that in the Doors song the singer is describing murdering his father and having sex with his mother, the intertextual reference gives a very suburban bathos to this description for knowledgeable listeners.

As in 'Suburban Boy', the singer of 'Mug's Game' is both envious of the successful men he describes and dismissive of them because of their falseness. The song sets a real suburban life, where the singer fails to pull a girl (here a metonym again for the broader failure of suburban life), against the success of Zongo, Robert and Derek who are, nevertheless, dislikeable, because they rely on what the singer believes to be false images.

Dave Warner and Ian Dury

In his preoccupation with suburbia and his use of characters set in narratives, Warner bears a strong similarity to England's Ian Dury. This is not to say that Warner was influenced by Dury. Dury's first album, *Handsome*, as the singer for Kilburn and the High-Roads, came out in June 1975, but Dury didn't reach his full potential until the highly acclaimed *New Boots and Panties* album of 1977, when recording as Ian Dury and the Blockheads. Certainly it is possible that Warner saw Dury playing in the London pub rock venues when Warner was there in 1976, however, a consideration of the extent to

which there was any direct influence misses the point. Both Dury and Warner have a similar ambivalence towards suburbia, and suburban values, and both have a strong liking for the kind of character-based sing-a-long songs so common in English music hall, songs like 'Don't Dilly Dally (My Old Man Said Follow The Van)' (written by Charles Collins and Fred W Leigh in 1919).

It is worth noting here that Pus used to involve the audience by photocopying the lyrics to some of their songs. They started a '"Sing-a-long-a Pus Song" series'.[54] More, like the comedy acts in music hall, there was at the Governor Broome an

> Old guy [Les, whom the manager] Stevens had dressed up in a tuxedo and hired to serve drinks in the lounge while the band was playing. Les had become quite a fixture at the Broome on Saturdays, occasionally neglecting his duties to saunter up front to a microphone during one of the group's breaks to tell some corny joke.[55]

Howard writes that the audience would break into mock applause—again, very music hall. The point here is the extent to which the English cultural inflection in Perth influenced Warner, and for that matter, his audience.

Dury was born in the upper-middle-class north-London suburb of Harrow, though he liked everybody to think that he came from the Essex dormitory suburb of Upminster, a much more middle-class town and last stop on the District tube line. Dury certainly spent most of his formative years in Upminster. In the autobiographical 'Upminster Kid' on *Handsome*, Dury recounts with nostalgic pleasure dressing up in the style of Gene Vincent and going to the Romford Gaumont, having a rum and black at the Bell Hotel and throwing up in the park. Born in 1942, Dury was partially crippled by polio when he was seven. He went to the Royal College of Art and taught art for a while in Canterbury before deciding to focus on music.[56] To go with his upper-working-class/lower-middle-class persona, Dury cultivated a strong cockney accent.

Dury wrote many character songs. In 'Billericay Dickie', on *New Boots and Panties*, he describes an English version of Warner's Derek:

> Good evening, I'm from Essex
> In case you couldn't tell.
> My given name is Dickie, I come from Billericay
> And I'm doing very well.

Had a love affair with Nina
In the back of my Cortina
A seasoned up hyena could not have been more obscener.
She took me to the cleaners
And other misdemeanours
But I got right up between her
Rum and her Ribena.

Culturally speaking, Dickie's Ford Cortina has a similarity to Derek's Toyota Celica. While Dickie's Cortina can be read as solid, dependable and naff, a car for the suburban middling class, Derek's Celica can be read as the conservative compromise, the sports car that doesn't quite manage to be properly sporty and so, like the Cortina, is solid, dependable and naff.

Both Warner and Dury have songs which exhibit the patriotic nationalism that lies at the heart of suburban security, something that Barry Humphries has captured so well in his characterisations of Sandy Stone and Edna Everage.[57] In 'Convict Streak', also on *Mug's Game*, Warner sings that:

Maybe it's because of our Convict Streak
We wanna fight everyone we meet
Anzac Day is our day of the year
We march our march, we drink our beer.

He goes on to assert that 'We don't like Slopes, we don't like Yanks' and proceeds to denigrate the Poms, the French and the Germans. The tone of the song is highly ambivalent. It is clearly strongly patriotic and it is very hard to tell if there is irony in the catalogue of disliked groups (which now, a quarter of a century on, would be immediately criticised as racist), and if so how much. In a similar vein, Dury's 'England's Glory', sung in live shows for some years but only finally appearing on *Apples* in 1989, celebrates an England defined by a catalogue of English characters from Frankie Howerd and Noel Coward to Billy Bunter and Jane Austen, 'All', Dury sings, 'the jewels in the crown of England's glory'. However, unsettling this list are Jack the Ripper and Christine Keeler, both now remembered in England through a nostalgic glow but neither really adding to the lustre of England's glory. The point again though is the deep similarity in suburban worldview between Humphries, Dury and Warner.

The Troggs in Perth

We now need to discuss the Troggs. This English group were one of the most important influences on Perth music in the late 1970s and early 1980s—they had no impact on the Alternative Rock bands of the eastern states. To some extent the Troggs's importance in Perth is because of the profound significance the group's music had for James Baker. Baker drummed with the Victims, the first version of the Scientists and the Hoodoo Gurus in that order.[58] After his acrimonious split with the latter band he formed the James Baker Experience in 1985 and released a re-make of the Troggs's 1966 hit, 'I Can't Control Myself'. As Greg Brooker writes in a web-article on Kim Salmon, '"In My Heart, There's A Place Called Swampland": Songs That Kim Salmon Taught Us', James Baker was 'a huge Troggs fan'.[59] Baker is reputed to have seen the Ramones and the Heartbreakers as well as the Damned and the Sex Pistols. He was a man of considerable musical knowledge when it came to punk music so we need to tease out why he might have been so fascinated by the Troggs. Not only did Baker's predilection influence the music of the Scientists mk I—he co-wrote over half of their album, including the single 'Frantic Romantic'—but the very name of the band, a name Salmon was happy to keep in later incarnations, came from a play on the Troggs name. As Salmon writes:

> With a song under our belts we convened on the verandah of Victim Manor [where the members of the Victims lived] and brainstormed to find a moniker that would capture our caveman existence. 'The Troggs' was already taken so we opted for irony and came up with 'The Scientists'.[60]

Baker took his Troggs preoccupation into the Hoodoo Gurus. As the anonymous author of the Howlspace biography of that band notes: 'The music echoed all the cartoon rock from the Troggs through the Ramones to the Cramps'.[61]

However, we should not tie this influence to one man: Dave Warner also used to sing at least one Troggs song. On the live *Suburbs in the '70s* CD there is a version of the B-side of the Troggs's first, little-known single, a track written by Reg Ball, Presley's name before it was changed, called 'The Yella In Me'. Interestingly, in *City of Light*, Warner has the Farris Brothers band, prior to the formation of INXS, performing a version of 'Wild

Thing', the Troggs's second single and most famous hit, at a party in 1979.[62]

What was it about the Troggs that made Perth bands so receptive to them? The Troggs came from Andover in Hampshire, a county just outside of the London-related 'Home Counties'. The band was formed in 1964 and Larry Page, who had managed the Kinks, became their manager in 1966. It was Page who changed Ball's name to the more resonant Presley. 'Wild Thing', the Troggs's break-through hit, was written by the American country-rock composer Chip Taylor.[63] In the hands of the Troggs the song gained a heavy down-beat to go with the catchy riff and 'Wild Thing' became a cross between pop and proto-hard rock. 'Wild Thing' was followed by two mid-tempo pop-rock songs, 'With A Girl Like You' and 'I Can't Control Myself', also both hits in 1966. The lyrics of the latter song included lines like:

> I can't stand still 'cause you got me goin'
> Your slacks are low and your hips are showin'
> and
> I've got this feeling that's inside of me
> It makes me think of how things used to be
> It makes me feel alright
> When I'm with you at night
> And we love
> And we love

These got the track banned by the BBC in England, the ABC in Australia and many radio stations in the United States, for being too sexually suggestive.

Musically, in England, the Troggs were related neither to the pop tradition of Mersey Beat and the Beat Boom groups nor the rhythm 'n' blues tradition of bands like the Rolling Stones and the Animals, though Troggs songs did sometimes use rhythms and riffs from Bo Diddley and Chuck Berry. In general, however, the Troggs's music was very 'white', combining melody with a driving beat in a conventional verse-and-chorus structure, or, as with slow songs like, 'Anyway That You Want Me' (1966) and 'Love Is All Around' (1967), melody coupled with romantic lyrics.

Increasingly, the Troggs are identified as a proto-punk band—though this begs the question of what is meant by punk. Well before the use of the term to describe the mid-to-late-1970s bands in New

York and London, the eminent American rock critic Lester Bangs
wrote an article in 1971 describing the Troggs as punk. It is worth
quoting Bangs at some length:

> [The Troggs's] music was strong, deep as La Brea without sucking
> you straight down into the currentless bass depths like many of
> their successors, and so insanely alive and fiercely aggressive that it
> could easily begin to resemble a form of total assault which was
> when the lily-livered lovers of pretty-pomp adored la-di-da buddy-
> duddy Beat groups would turn tail just like the tourists before them
> and make for that Ferry Cross the Mersey. 'Cause this was a no-jive,
> take-care-of-business band ... churning out rock 'n' roll that
> thundered right back to the very first grungy chords and straight
> ahead to the fuzztone subways of the future.[64]

Bangs is very clear that the Troggs are a part of a punk tradition that
leads to the MC5 and the Stooges. Going on to reference the Doors
he writes that unlike all these bands, 'The Troggs eschewed all
trendy gimmicks and kinky theatrics ... and came out ... the most
powerfully lust-driven outfit in white rock 'n' roll then or now'.[65] As
an aside we can note that the MC5 acknowledged this heritage,
playing the Troggs song 'I Want You', the B-side of 'With A Girl
Like You', on their live first album, *Kick Out the Jams* (released in
1969)—though the MC5 renamed the song 'I Want You Right Now'
and claimed to have composed it themselves.

For Bangs in this article it is the straightforward expression of
white, male, teen lust which is the defining quality of punk music.
He writes:

> If you happened to be a sixteen or seventeen-year old male sagging
> in the rubberband scrotum of suburban America ['I Can't Control
> Myself'] braced you, each hearing injected new confidence for
> however brief a time almost as if some Little Doll had in all
> phantasmal actuality come pouting up and reached and grabbed yer
> cock for just a minute like you always dreamed of 'em doing.[66]

And here, for us, we reach the crux of Bangs's argument: the Troggs
make music for suburban (male) teenagers. Indeed, hailing from
suburban Andover, unlike the Mersey bands, or the majority of
rhythm and blues bands, who came from major cities, the Troggs
were a suburban band.

If their preoccupation with straight down the line white male
teen lust is what the Troggs and the Stooges have in common, we

also need to understand what distinguishes the two bands. Here, we can begin by thinking about what Michel Foucault has to say about transgression. Foucault writes that:

> The limit and transgression depend on each other for whatever density of being they possess: a limit could not exist if it were absolutely uncrossable and, reciprocally, transgression would be pointless if it merely crossed a limit composed of illusions and shadows.[67]

However, while the limit and transgression need each other, '[t]ransgression carries the limit right to the limit of its being; transgression forces the limit to face the fact of its imminent disappearance, to find itself in what it excludes'.[68] What we need to do here is distinguish two kinds of transgression, the radical, absolute transgression, about which Foucault is writing, which challenges the very existence of what is transgressed and, as a consequence, its own existence as transgression, and a relative transgression which depends on what is transgressed to give meaning to the transgression. It is in this distinction that we can find a way to differentiate the Troggs from the Stooges.

In a 1977 article Bangs has a rather different take on Iggy Pop's work with the Stooges. In 'Iggy Pop: blowtorch in bondage', Bangs criticises what was then Iggy's new album, *The Idiot*, remembering how 'normal standards' could not be applied to the Stooges, how Iggy had 'an intensity that comes from a murderous driven-ness that has in the past made him the most dangerous performer alive'.[69] Bangs goes on to write about Iggy's work with the Stooges in terms of 'apocalypse' and of a 'holocaust at its most nihilistically out of control'.[70] What Bangs is offering here is a definition of punk as a form of music that threatens the foundation of social order, and more specifically the genre of rock music, by its complete loss of control. This loss conjures the moment of absolute (self)destruction.

While this transgression may be what is fascinating, powerful, and threatening in the work of the Stooges and, for that matter, the Sex Pistols, it is not what we find in the Troggs. Rather, the Troggs delve beneath the veneer of suburban, bourgeois respectability to show us the gothic desires kept hidden. Fred Botting argues that:

> The terrors and horrors of transgression in Gothic writing become a powerful means to reassert the values of society, virtue and propriety: transgression, by crossing the social and aesthetic limits, serves to reinforce or underline their value and necessity, restoring or defining limits.[71]

This is, in the end, a more reassuring form of transgression than that described by Foucault and acted out by the Stooges. While appearing to threaten, in the end the Troggs's work reinforces the bourgeois values of suburbia. They sing about lust rather than love as most obviously in 'I Can't Control Myself'; in 'Cousin Jane' they offer the fantasy of illicit sex with one's cousin when she stays in your parents' home; and in 'Little Girl' they gave us the story of a young, unmarried father who is forbidden to see his daughter by his girlfriend's parents. And all this expressed within a tightly controlled musical form. While the singer tells us that 'I Can't Control Myself', we know that his loss of control is likely to lead to no more than masturbation—this is not an apocalyptic end of the world. The Troggs may challenge suburban values but they are not going to destroy them. In this way, the band were the forerunners of the power-pop end of English punk: the Buzzcocks with Pete Shelley singing about being an 'Orgasm Addict' not the Sex Pistols with Johnny Rotten screaming that 'Belsen Was A Gas'.[72] In their own way the Troggs were just as suburban as Ian Dury.

In the terms of this distinction, Dave Warner's music was more Troggs than Stooges. With Pus he developed a one chord, rhythmic chant which used to close the set called 'Throbbing Knob'. Howard, who contributed to its creation, writes that:

> We … realis[ed] that the time taken to learn the 'dirty' Fugs songs had prompted us to write one of our own. We finished the jam secure in the knowledge that we had created a song which could out-Fug the Fugs.[73]

However, on the evidence the chant seems to have lacked the sexual politics of the New York band but had, instead, the directness of a male sexual statement of desire more analogous in intent to the Troggs—and, indeed, similar to a slightly later song that Warner and Howard wrote called 'Hot Crotch' which Warner continued to perform with From the Suburbs. In Howard's description:

Throbbing Knob evolved into a spectacular finale to which the audience often contributed, for example by making animal noises when the 'Knob' was reworked as 'Animal Knob'.[74]

Certainly this suggests something more like the Troggs meet music hall (the two were not a great distance apart anyway) than the Stooges's attempts to alienate their audience and produce chaos.

To continue with this distinction between the Troggs and the Stooges, the Scientists mk I were more Troggs also. This is in spite of Salmon's assertion, quoted earlier, that the band 'was like a collision between the Stooges and Herman's Hermits', and in spite of Salmon name-checking the New York Dolls in 'Teenage Dreamer':

Had no fun before I was twenty-one,
All I could do was think about the New York Dolls …

This track, like many on the album, has guitar work influenced by the Dolls's basic guitar style. Nevertheless, suggesting the song's poppy qualities, the Scientists mrk1 even managed to get an appearance on Countdown singing 'Frantic Romantic', perhaps the most obviously Troggs influenced track on the first album and, as I have already mentioned, the single. Even so, the Scientists failed to make an impact in a city with hardly any cosmopolitan bohemia.

When Kim Salmon formed the second version of the Scientists, he did so in inner-city Sydney in 1981/82. It was this band, influenced as Salmon has said by Alex Chilton's remarkable *Like Flies on Sherbet* album[75], made when Chilton was on the verge of a mental breakdown[76], which produced the foundational *Blood Red River* mini-album in 1983. It is *Blood Red River* which justifies the claim that Salmon was one of the inventors of grunge. This will be discussed in Chapter Five. The point here is that it happened in Sydney's inner city where the Scientists found themselves in an environment which enabled them to experiment musically in ways not appreciated in suburban Perth, ways closer to Foucault's, and the Stooges's, understanding of transgression. When Salmon writes about the *Blood Red River* period, in language that echoes the English Romantic poet William Blake, that: '*The path of riotousness was the path of righteousness* and only we [the band] were on it' [sic][77], he is signalling his move towards the Stooges and New York Dolls's apocalyptic punk.

Suburban Perth and the Troggs's Continuing Influence

The story that links the Troggs, a relative transgression that strips away bourgeois nicety, Perth as the ultimate suburban city, and the good time rock that starts with Dave Warner, re-starts in the power-pop punk of the second-half of the 1970s, in the music of the Victims, the Cheap Nasties, and the Manikins, and then reaches outside of Perth, first with Dave Warner's From the Suburbs, then with the Scientists and the Hoodoo Gurus, does not stop at this point.[78] In the 1980s Perth produced the Stems, and later the Chevelles.[79] Reviewing a 2001 Chevelles single on the web, John McPharlin writes that:

> During the dark ages, the light of learning was kept burning in isolated monasteries at the periphery of the failed civilisation. Perth seems to have fulfilled a similar roll for power pop, which has remained a fundamental feature of the music scene there.[80]

In a review of the Chevelles's second album, *Girl God*, released in 2002, Luke Torn suggests that the album's closer, 'Sunshine', is 'reminiscent of a punched-up Troggs circa "Love Is All Around"'.[81]

However, the place where all these elements come together most strongly is in Jebediah's music.[82] They formed in 1995; the guiding force of the band is singer and lyricist Kevin Mitchell, who comes from Bull Creek, another suburb like Bicton, though newer, between Perth and Fremantle. The band's name comes from Jebediah Springfield, the founder of Springfield, that quintessential American suburban town in the cartoon series *The Simpsons*. In reviews, the band are, themselves, often described as power-pop or, more specifically, as 'punk-pop perfectly suited to the post-grunge alternative generation'.[83] On the band's first album, *Slightly Odway*, released in 1997, is a track called 'Invaders'. Towards the end the rhythm of the track changes and the band go into the 'ba-ba-ba' Troggs chorus off 'With A Girl Like You'. Presley gets a composing credit. The band are acknowledging Perth's musical history.[84]

In 2003, taking a break from Jebediah, Kevin Mitchell recorded an album under the pseudonym Bob Evans. It was called *Suburban Kid*. On the Bob Evans website Mitchell/Evans writes that as Mitchell got older Evans's personality was harder to ignore, 'until by the age of twenty, he was beginning to compile a short list of songs based around an acoustic guitar, a pop melody and simple lyrics

inspired by the simple life of a suburban kid brought up in Bullcreek, Perth, Western Australia, 6149'.[85] Mitchell could be read as talking about how he had tried to deny the importance of suburbia in his teenage years, or to criticise it, maybe using Jebediah to try to escape from his suburban origins. Mitchell/Evans tells us that *Suburban Kid* contains:

> Twelve songs, incorporating country, pop, soul and folk influences and subject matter involving falling in love, broken down cars, falling out of love, coming off drugs on a Christmas morning, falling in love again, going out on a Friday night, and the wonder of being loved whilst being totally unworthy.
>
> These are simple songs about life's simple pleasures written by a guy who lives for the simplicities of life. Few of us have grown up on the streets, been to jail and live a tortured life filled with pain, just as few of us have lived privileged lives, attending private schools before obtaining art degrees.[86]

Mitchell/Evans is rejecting the inner city—you can't live on the streets in suburbia—and asserting the legitimacy of the ordinariness of suburban life. He sounds like a young Sandy Stone. Twenty-two years and another generation on, he also sounds like Dave Warner, realising that what he valued in Perth was the suburban life against which he had previously rebelled.

When Alternative Rock evolved in Australia in the decade from the mid-1970s, it did so in the inner city areas offered by the major cities. However, because of its later population growth, Perth was quite distinct. It had little in the way of a built environment that could be appropriated as inner city and what there was was rapidly transformed either by gentrification, in the case of Subiaco, or by a more radical urban renewal, in the case of north of the line's transformation into the restaurant district of Northbridge. Dave Warner came out of the suburbs. While his first important band, Pus, critiqued suburban values, his second, and more well-known band, Dave Warner's From the Suburbs, acknowledged and ambivalently celebrated these same values.

Warner sees Pus as a pioneering punk band and his justification for this would be that his influences at that time were, among others, the New York bands the Velvet Underground and the Fugs. While the Velvet Underground are commonly considered to be one of the formative influences on the development of the punk sound and

the punk attitude, as found in their lyrics about drug use, sado-masochism and the like, the Fugs are usually left out of conventional punk histories. However, as a New York, inner-city band that challenged the values of middle-class, suburban life, Warner is right to think of them as a punk band. As we have seen, a part of the problem lies with the definition of punk. Alternative Rock in Australia tended to mine a similar musical vein to the Velvet Underground, the Stooges, the MC5, and the New York Dolls. This understanding of punk is of a radical transgression, of an absolute, and nihilistic critique of middle-class and suburban values.

Like many Perth artists who came from the suburbs and remained attached to suburbia, Warner espoused the punk of relative transgression, the punk of English bands like the Troggs and the Buzzcocks, and also the punk of the American garage band tradition, of groups such as the Electric Prunes and the Seeds. Where Salmon's first version of the Scientists, especially with Baker's liking for the Troggs, was predominantly in this vein, Salmon moved to Sydney when he wanted to take his music further into the more radical, more problematic and problematising musical arenas. Warner, though, moved from the relatively transgressive Pus to the ambivalent acceptance of suburbia in From the Suburbs.

In addition, as we have also seen, the English pop tradition, with its roots in music hall and sing-a-longs, has played a much larger part in popular musical development in Perth than elsewhere in Australia. As well as the Fugs, as I have mentioned, another band that influenced Warner, though to a more minor degree, was the Bonzo Dog Doo-Dah Band. This English group released songs that were an affectionately humorous take on English suburban life, such as 'My Pink Half Of The Drainpipe' (on the album *The Doughnut in Granny's Greenhouse* [1968]) and 'I'm The Urban Spaceman' (1968), a critique of the fantasy of male urban—for which read inner-city—life. The Bonzos were also steeped in the English popular music tradition and music hall was central to their musical sensibility. With an understanding of these influences and attitudes we can appreciate why Warner is written out of histories of Alternative Rock, which privilege those bands whose work lifts off from American groups such as the Stooges and the MC5 and have little, if any English influence.

The situation of Perth, geographically remote from other Australian capital cities and, at least until the impact of new

communications and transport technologies, culturally remote as well, has been very important in the evolution of a 'Perth sound'. Equally important has been the overwhelmingly suburban nature of Perth's built environment. As we have seen, this importance remains and has contributed to the continued prominence of power-pop in Perth and the sympathetic lyrical acknowledgement of the importance of suburbia in the songs of bands such as Jebediah and Eskimo Joe, whose second album, *A Song is a City* (2004), is in part about Fremantle.

5

The Scientists and Grunge:
Influence and Globalised Flows

The Scientists, or at least two of the band's three members, left Perth for Sydney in September 1981. By this time Kim Salmon was already re-defining the sound of the band. In Perth the first version of the Scientists, with James Baker, who subsequently joined the Hoodoo Gurus on drums, had produced what, in retrospect, was the quintessential Perth punk album. Released in 1981, the *Pink Album* as it came to be known for its pink cover was composed of songs that had a powerful combination of English and American influences. Crudely, you could say the sound amalgamated the Sex Pistols and the New York Dolls. However, the band's over-riding influence was the conservative tunefulness of the English power-pop tradition that runs from the Troggs to the Buzzcocks and the Vibrators.

The Scientists mk I had already decided to break up when the *Pink Album* was recorded. Salmon subsequently formed the short-lived band Louie Louie with the drummer who would later provide the beats for the second version of the Scientists, Brett Rixon. It was during this time that Salmon began to evolve the sound that would characterise the second, and more well-known (nationally and internationally), version of the Scientists. 'Swampland', a song that will feature prominently in the historical narrative of this chapter, was written at this time with the third member of Louie Louie, Kim Williams. Also written at this time was another staple of the

Scientists mrkII, 'We Had Love'. Evolving this more radical sound, Salmon and Rixon moved to Sydney, where the inner-city music scene offered more space and encouragement for the more confrontational music that Salmon was beginning to develop. Here, Salmon added Boris Sujdovic, with whom Salmon had played before in Perth, on bass, and Tony Thewlis on guitar.

It is the music from this period onwards, from the definitive re-working of both 'Swampland', which appeared as the B-side of the 'This Is My Happy Hour' single, in late 1982, and the *Blood Red River* six-track mini-album of 1983, that forms the basis of the claim that the Scientists were precursors of and influenced that musical form, identified with Seattle bands such as the Melvins, Mudhoney and Nirvana, that came to be categorised as grunge. Kim Salmon himself has asserted that: 'The Scientists were really forging a sound that was later taken up in Seattle.'[1] He goes on to contextualise this, saying, 'if you think chronologically there was punk in the Sex Pistols, and then the guitar action went to Australia … I always say that Australian music was the premier exporter of grunge'. This is by no means an idiosyncratic opinion. Greta Moon of Au Go Go Records has stated clearly that:

> The Scientists and Lubricated Goat were most definitely big influences on bands like Mudhoney in particular. The Scientists were the first grunge band. They were in existence before any of those US Sub Pop bands came along. It was US Sub Pop bands like Nirvana and Mudhoney that were openly avowed fans of the Scientists.[2]

And, indeed, the singer of Mudhoney himself, Mark Arm, has stated that: 'By the time Mudhoney began two of our most influential bands were feedtime and the Scientists, along with the Stooges and Neil Young.'[3]

What is being asserted here is a history of grunge that does not understand the genre as a movement brewing in the relative isolation of the American Northwest and then taken up globally by way of the commodification and subsequent popularisation of Nirvana. Rather, the claim is that 'grunge', however that is defined, and this definition has to be a part of the project of this chapter, evolved in Australia, most especially in the innovative sonics of the Scientists and other inner-city alternative bands of the early-to-mid-1980s, and that these sonic developments travelled in the reverse

direction to the usually accepted understanding of global musical flows. A more elaborated version of this argument is that these Australian bands functioned in an increasingly globalised, locally-based 'underground' of musical innovation that operated outside of the highly commercialised system established by the major record companies. 'Indie', from the idea of independently produced recorded material, is the commonly used term, but this doesn't cover the global reach of this development through the 1980s, nor the complex, and often chance, interactions between local indie bands and labels.

Global Flows and the Globalised Music Industry

Arjun Appadurai has argued that twentieth-century technological developments have transformed our experience of the world: 'For with the advent of the steamship, the automobile, the airplane, the camera, the computer, and the telephone, we have entered into an altogether new condition of neighborliness, even with those most distant from ourselves.'[4] Appadurai is describing the conditions of possibility for the new, globalised cultural flows.

Utilising an idea drawn from the work of Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, Appadurai writes that

> the world we live in now seems rhizomic, even schizophrenic, calling for theories of rootlessness, alienation and psychological distance between individuals and groups on the one hand, and fantasies (or nightmares) of electronic propinquity on the other.[5]

The important word here is 'seems'. These technological innovations produce an appearance of a flattened-out world. Cultural flows appear to all function in the same plane. I have already begun to suggest that this is not actually the case. We can identify a distinction that we might call dominant and subaltern cultural flows.

In my discussion here about the subaltern counter-flow of popular music, that is a part of the prehistory of grunge, I shall focus on a technology that has been nowhere near as obviously influential as the aeroplane or the computer. However, the humble cassette enabled music to be recorded cheaply and easily. While, especially in the early days, recordings on cassettes were not of a high quality, for many people this was outweighed by the

technology's advantages, of which accessible recording was crucial. Moreover, the cassette is compact and relatively hard to break. It could hold at least an album's worth of music. It could be easily copied to produce many cassettes of the same music. It could be posted without needing much packaging. In other words, as a number of people in different countries realised around the same time, cassette technology took both recording and distribution of music out of the hands of the record companies. We can think of the cassette as the basis of subaltern counter-flow, which was important not only in the development of grunge but, more generally, in the establishment of that genre of indie music.

Appadurai reinforces his point about cultural flows by arguing that we no longer live in a world that can be distinguished in the terms of a core and a periphery. He writes that the 'crucial point … is that the United States is no longer the puppeteer of a world system of images but is only one node of a complex transnational construction of imaginary landscapes'.[6] While this might be the case for nation-states, the situation is more complex when we think about the role played by increasingly globalised multinational companies. Most importantly, for my argument here, was the globalisation of the music industry during the 1980s. Robert Burnett tells us that:

> The trend towards concentration that characterized the takeover and fusion binge of the 1980s was also felt … especially in the music industry. The Big Six major phonogram companies—Sony, Warner, Polygram, EMI, BMG and MCA—now [in 1996] account for over 90 per cent of US sales and an estimated 70 to 80 per cent of worldwide sales.[7]

As it happens, the national ownership of these majors at that time broke down into one American (Warner), two Japanese (Sony, MCA), one German (BMG), one British (EMI), and one Dutch (PolyGram). All are owned in the old Euro-American 'core' with the exception of the Japanese-owned companies.

The Japanese ownership did not change the musical policy of these companies which, like all the other companies, favoured Anglo-American, and English-sung, popular music. Indeed Keith Negus reports on a study carried out by Larry Shore in the late 1970s of 'top selling records around the world', which showed that:

Songs with English lyrics dominated the hit records in most countries ... Britain and the United States were the only countries to have a mutual exchange of recordings although the flow was greater from the United States into Britain. Shore concluded that there was a predominantly one-way flow of music from the United States, and to a lesser extent Britain, to other parts of the world.[8]

While the United States did not dominate ownership of the major music recording companies in the 1980s and 1990s, American popular music dominated sales globally. Burnett writes that:

> As the number of sales has levelled off in the crucial American marketplace since reaching saturation point in 1978, the major companies have increasingly looked outwards internationally for new markets. By the mid-1980s CBS, WEA, EMI and Polygram were all claiming in their annual reports that their international divisions accounted for more than half of their sales.[9]

This is, as we have seen, the same time period when the Scientists and other Australian inner-city bands were developing their guitar-based post-punk sound, and when a new flowering of local labels enabled these bands to be recorded.

Negus tells us that: 'The major record labels began setting up distinct international departments during the late 1960s and early 1970s'[10] and that:

> The term 'international repertoire' gained increasing currency and usage in the organizational discourses of the recording industry during the 1980s ... International repertoire is marketed to a 'global' market; the recordings are released simultaneously in all the major territories of the world.[11]

In other words, during the 1980s the popular music industry became truly international in the sense that the major companies acquired both the will and the ability to release material in all significant markets at the same time.

Burnett has categorised record companies into three types: majors, minors and 'alternative labels' or 'indies'.[12] The minors 'are the middle tier ... smaller companies who tend to gain their share of the market by making production and distribution deals with the majors'.[13] As Burnett writes, during the 1980s most of these companies were absorbed into the six majors. The consequence was that an increasingly large gap developed between the global majors

and the indies which, as Burnett describes them, 'place their emphasis on cheapness of production and often have localized networks of production and distribution'.[14]

From Regional to Independent Labels

At this point it is important to make the distinction between indie labels and regional labels. This distinction is, to a large extent, historical. That is, regional labels have mostly been supplanted by indies as a result of the nationalising, and subsequent globalising, of the major companies. Regional labels were labels that catered to the needs of a particular local area. These labels would record local artists who would sometimes have local hits; they might also record local musical genres. More often than is acknowledged, a common musical genre might have a local inflection, resulting in a band having a local hit but failing to translate this into a national or international hit. Sometimes a local recording would be picked up by a major. In England, with its small size and highly integrated economy, there were few regional labels. Brian Epstein didn't think to look for a label in Liverpool for the Beatles, he travelled down to London. In the United States and Australia, though, there were many regional labels.

The numbers of regional labels increased considerably in the late 1950s. One reason for this was the rock'n'roll-based explosion in the production and consumption of popular music. Underlying this, and to some extent making it possible, were two technological developments. First, there was the replacement of easily breakable shellac records with vinyl. One impetus for this was the lack of shellac during the Second World War. Another seems to have been the problem of safely mailing records to the American troops overseas.

The second development which underwrote the spread of recording studios was the use of magnetic tape for recording. The Germans had made great advances in tape recording during the Second World War. At the end of the war John T Mullin was given two AEG Magnetophon tape recorders when visiting a recording studio at Bad Neuheim near Frankfurt. He took them back to the United States and worked on improving the technology. With investment capital from Bing Crosby, who understood the potential of the technology, Ampex produced the Model 200 in 1948.

Michael Chanan writes that by 'the early 1950s most recording studios in the United States were using tape ... The equipment was not expensive and tape was reusable'.[15] The adoption of tape recording for music transformed the studio process, making recording music easier and cheaper.

In Perth, for example, Martin Clarke had a studio built and started the local Clarion label in 1962. The Australian-made Byer professional tape recorder he bought for the studio was the only one in Western Australia. In this studio he recorded what became local boy Johnny Young's first national hit in 1966, 'Step Back'. The single was distributed outside of Perth by Melbourne-based Festival Records. Much of Clarion's output, though, shows how derivative, from one point of view, Perth's music scene was of the English pop-rock of around 1960. To put this differently, at a time when the only instantaneous form of communication was the telephone, Perth's popular music scene, more than that of other cities in Australia, lived in the past brought by its British migrants. English migrant Robbie Snowden's 1967 single, 'No One Really Loves A Clown' 'was supposedly an update of a 1962 Johnny Crawford number, but ... still manages to sound a few years older than the original!'[16] Crawford's American hit was filtered through an English music sensibility. Snowden's version bears a generic resemblance to Joe Meek's production of Lance Fortune's 'Be Mine' released in England in 1960, including pizzicato strings.

At the same time, with the advent of television in Perth in 1960, Perth's musical culture began to catch up with Britain's. The Valentines, also on Clarion, with Bon Scott as co-lead singer, released a cover of the Small Faces's 'I Can't Dance With You' a year after the original in 1967. In 1968 the band released 'Peculiar Hole In the Sky' which takes much of its psychedelic inspiration from the English band Traffic's 1967 hit 'Hole In My Shoe'.[17] There is, then, a different way of thinking about Perth's musical history. Rather than considering it derivative, we can think about how the mix of genres from different popular musical periods, most importantly pre and post the English pop explosion of the Beatles and the beat sound, meant that Perth developed a quite distinctive musical style. One long-term example of this style has been the on-going importance of power-pop in the city's musical culture.

Through the 1950s and 1960s Seattle had a more vibrant music scene than Perth. One possible reason for this was the presence of

its small and segregated African-American population. Historically, the European middle class has frowned on music that was designed to produce affect. Glossing Immanuel Kant, Jeremy Gilbert and Ewan Pearson write that: 'As long as music exists to make us feel good—its sonorous textures caressing our bodies but not our intellects—rather than to provide us with an object of rational contemplation, it can never aspire to [Kant's] category of the beautiful.'[18] Classical music is supposed to be experienced rationally, cerebrally. If dancing is thought of as an expression of emotion then, Gilbert and Pearson write: 'The classical tradition itself was defined, in a way, by the gradual detachment of music from the dance.'[19] In Perth rock'n'roll was frowned upon as the music of bodgies and widgies, of so-called hooligans and juvenile delinquents. Those playing it would have been regarded as even worse than those listening and dancing to it.[20] In Seattle, as elsewhere in the United States, music was integral to African-American culture. In his history of popular music in Seattle, Clark Humphrey writes that white bands like the Wailers and Swaggerz:

> Learned their chops the way all early white rockers did, by copying black musicians who couldn't get the opportunities white kids could get. The Wailers went straight to local black clubs like the Black and Tan, Birdland, the Esquire ...[21]

Rich Dangel, guitarist with the Wailers, confirms this: 'We were going to the Evergreen, coppin' from those black revues, drawing from great musicians and workin' up our version of it, but with our direction and our kind of excitement.'[22] The Wailers's first single, 'Tall Cool One' was released on the New York label Golden Crest in 1959. Showing that cultural exchange in the Northwest could also sometimes work in the other direction, 'Tall Cool One' was the first tune that Jimi Hendrix learnt to play on his first electric guitar when he was sixteen. He used to watch the Wailers perform at the Spanish Castle, a dance hall between Seattle and Tacoma, memorialised in his song 'Spanish Castle Magic'.

It was during this time that Seattle and the surrounding population centres like Tacoma produced their own, indigenised inflection on the dominant rock sonic which became known as 'The Northwest Sound'. Reflecting and reinforcing this development were a number of new regional labels. Dolton, for example, was started in 1959 by Bonnie Guitar, Bob Reisendorff and Lou

Leventhal. The label's first release was the Fleetwoods's 'Come Softly To Me', which happened to become a national hit, reaching number one on the Billboard chart. Liberty Records distributed the label nationally. In 1961 two of the Wailers, John 'Buck' Ormsby and Kent Morrill, started another local label, Etiquette. The Wailers released the first rock version of 'Louie Louie' on Etiquette that same year. Etiquette subsequently released the early, and best, singles and albums by Seattle's most influential rhythm and blues/garage band, the Sonics, the band which, more than any other, defined the Northwest Sound of the 1960s. In 1966 the Sonics signed to another Seattle label, Jerden, which, after a false start in 1960, restarted in 1963, releasing the Kingsmen's classic version of 'Louie Louie' and material by most of the important garage-rock bands in the Northwest.

Independents

Regional labels are, of course, independent labels in the sense that they are not owned by the major companies. However, since the late 1970s, independent, or indie, has become a term used more for labels that record and release non-mainstream genres of music. As Veronika Kalmar tells us: 'The first major wave of indies occurred in the 1950s and served artists of color and what was then known as hillbilly music.'[23] Philip Ennis is more detailed. He writes about Black music that:

> Hundreds of small firms were created on the approximately $1000 then required to record and press five hundred copies of a record. Anywhere from four to six hundred record labels with some commitment to rhythm and blues appeared in the years immediately following the war.[24]

Inevitably, many of these labels did not last long. One early independent label was Syd Nathan's King records, started in 1945. James Brown began his career on King. Rick Kennedy and Randy McNutt write that: 'Nathan targeted the neglected race, country, and western music markets, which he called the "music of the little people".'[25] Berry Gordy founded Motown in 1959. But, as Kalmar writes: 'The explosion of labels that began in the late 1970s gave birth to an array of indies and movements.'[26] This 'explosion' is associated with the advent of punk. In England, Kalmar lists the

three most important indies as Stiff (started in 1976), Factory (started in 1978) and Rough Trade (started in 1978). Where regional labels draw their artists from a particular locale, indies have always been more identified with particular musical genres. Factory, it should be added, also functioned as a regional label, something historically unusual in Britain, promoting bands from Manchester, including Joy Division/New Order, A Certain Ratio and the Happy Mondays. Rough Trade went bankrupt in 1991 and Factory declared bankruptcy in 1992.

It is often argued, by Kalmar for example, that the music industry works in cycles.[27] The majors establish a dominant musical form which, in order to appeal to the largest constituency, is watered down to increasingly bland product. Meanwhile, and partly in reaction, new musical styles evolve and indie labels are formed to release this new music. At this point the majors, whose sales have begun to decline because of the repetitiveness and superficiality of their releases, start signing the bands which have been honing their abilities on indie labels, or buying up the indie labels themselves and thereby getting access to all the bands on those labels. To take one example, pub rock and punk specialist label, Stiff, was bought by the 'minor' Island in 1984 and the major company Polygram bought Island in 1989, one example of the concentration of companies that we have already noted took place during the 1980s.

However, something more than the cycle I have just described was happening in the second half of the 1970s and through the 1980s. This proliferation of independent labels, and the punk and post-punk establishment of indie as a general, catch-all description for non-mainstream popular music, for music that was not being picked up by the majors, signals a structural development in the popular music industry that directly relates to the industrial transformation of the majors, becoming apparent through the 1980s. In Britain, *Record Business* started the indie chart in 1980. Ian McNay, who began Cherry Red Records in 1978, tells the story like this:

> I remember waking up with an idea one morning in December 1979, 'Why doesn't someone compile a proper independent chart based on accurate sales information' I thought to myself. I suggested the idea to *Record Business*, a weekly trade paper, and

within a few weeks the chart was up and running. The rules were simple; any record was eligible that didn't go through the major record distributors.[28]

As McNay goes on to write, by the early 1990s the majors were beginning to set up their own indie labels putting the records through indie distribution systems to get their artists into the indie chart. McNay's recognition of the possibility, and worth, of an indie chart signalled a realisation that this time independent labels would have some permanence, if not in particular labels—though some of these have indeed had significant longevity—then in the musical genres that indie labels release.

One context for the new viability of independent labels, like that of the earlier regional labels, was a decrease in production costs. As Burnett puts it: 'A key factor in the development of the independent sector was provided by cheaper, more compact and efficient technologies for recording music.'[29] At the same time, with the decreasing number of large record companies caused by a combination of takeovers by the majors and their concurrent globalisation, the variety of music generally available decreased. This is illustrated in Negus's research on what constitutes the majors' international repertoire:

> In addition to providing music that in some way can be likened to a melodic ballad, any potential international artist must sing their ballads or melodic rock songs with the right kind of voice. This was highlighted by an international director who remarked that in theory an artist could come from any place in the world as long as they sing 'in English without an accent'.[30]

Simply put, then, as a negative definition, indie music can be described as music disregarded by the majors. Any music, or musical form, not picked up by the majors, whether it be regional music—identified here in the broadest sense—to re-workings of the rock tradition which the majors do not consider saleable in large enough quantities to make worthwhile, can be considered indie music. In this sense the construction of indie as a music category in the late 1970s and 1980s was a function of the increasing hegemony of the majors.

In Australia, too, there was a flowering of independent labels, here associated with the development of Alternative Rock in the inner cities. In 1978 Bruce Milne worked for a short-lived national

music monthly based in Adelaide, called *Roadrunner*. As Walker tells
it:

> One of Bruce Milne's self-appointed tasks at *Roadrunner* was to
> note the release of every new independent Australian record.
> Doing that today [in the late 1990s] would be a mammoth task; in
> 1978, such releases were still few and far between.[31]

In Brisbane the Saints released their first single, '(I'm) Stranded', on
their own label that they created for the purpose, Fatal, in 1976.
They distributed the record themselves. In Perth, the Victims
likewise released a single in 1977 and an EP in 1978 on their own
Victim label. They, too, distributed the records themselves. In 1979
the Scientists released an EP on White Rider. Like many
independent labels, the White Rider label was an outgrowth of a
specialist record shop, in this case White Rider Records. In Sydney
the Trafalgar Studios, where Radio Birdman recorded the *Burn My
Eye* EP in 1976, created its own record label, Trafalgar, to release
Birdman's records.[32]

Indies and Cassettes

The label that concerns us most here, though, is the Melbourne-
based Au Go Go. Bruce Milne and Philip Morland started the Au
Go Go label in 1979. The label's first release, in July of that year, was
an EP by Two Way Garden. Milne had begun a fanzine called
Plastered Press in 1977. Subsequently, he and Clinton Walker started
Pulp, another fanzine.[33] In November 1980 Milne began what was,
in all probability, the first cassette fanzine, *Fast Forward* with Andy
Maine. The cassettes were a mixture of interviews and new music.
Moreover, while the bulk of the material was Australian, Milne and
Maine did not think of *Fast Forward* as being concerned only with
local music. For example, while FF-008/009, the *Fast Forward*
double-cassette issue of December 1981, had an interview with, and
a song by, the Sydney-based synth-dance band the Machinations, it
also had an interview with and a song by the Cure. On the other side
of the same cassette were, among other things, interviews with Ian
Dury and Kraftwerk and a track by Brisbane-originated, Sydney-
based band JFK and the Cuban Crisis.

Meanwhile, the Scientists, re-formed in their mk II version in
Sydney, were by the end of 1981 looking for a record label. Salmon

sent a tape of 'Swampland' to Milne at Au Go Go. Milne put the song and an interview with Salmon on *Fast Forward* 012, which came out in August 1982, before releasing it as the B side of the 'This Is My Happy Hour' single in December 1982. As we have seen, Milne clearly viewed *Fast Forward* as international in its content, but also in its distribution. Being based on cassette technology, the magazine was easy and relatively cheap to package and post.

Milne was in contact with Bruce Pavitt who at that time was living in Olympia, Washington. As it happened, the 1981 *Fast Forward* double-cassette already mentioned had a track from Pavitt himself titled 'Debbie'. Pavitt had travelled from Illinois and studied at Evergreen State College in Olympia. In 1980 Pavitt had started a fanzine which he called *Subterranean Pop*, that had been inspired by John Foster's Olympia music magazine, *Op*.[34] The story goes that Pavitt got credit for *Subterranean Pop* as part of his course at Evergreen. Helping Pavitt on the fanzine from issue 2 was Calvin Johnson, who will reappear in this story later. *Subterranean Pop* was shortened to *Sub/Pop* from the second issue. The full title makes clear that Pavitt saw the burgeoning independent music scene as a kind of underground to the mainstream popular music purveyed by the majors. Johnson writes that the motto of *Sub/Pop* was: 'Decentralise Pop Culture'.[35] Decentralisation here is only in part geographical. It is, more generally, an undermining of, and an alternative to, the increasing consolidation and globalisation of the majors. In the contact between Milne and Pavitt we have a small example of the grassroots networking and distribution which epitomised *Sub/Pop*'s idea of decentralisation. We also have an example of what I am calling a subaltern counter-flow.

Receiving Milne's *Fast Forward* cassette gave Pavitt the idea of redeveloping *Sub/Pop*. From issue 5 *Sub/Pop* alternated between print and cassette. On the cover of *Sub/Pop* 5 Pavitt wrote: 'Well hi there. *S/Pop* now alternates quarterly between a C60 transregional cassette and a networking newsletter.' The idea of trans-regional here retains some of the localism associated with regional labels. But now it also carries connotations of resistance to the globalising hegemony of the major music companies. Appadurai argues that in the postmodern globalised order there is a tension between what he styles 'homogenization and heterogenization'.[36] Indigenisation is the key to the process of heterogenisation. The idea of trans-regionalism recognises the indigenisation of popular music as styles

are re-worked in particular places, such as the Northwest, and, maybe, combined with local musical forms.

In *Sub/Pop* no 8, 1982, Pavitt expands further on his philosophy, offering his 'Supreme Statement of Purpose':

> 1. Culture is controlled by large corporations. It is bland. 2. Sub Pop combats this by supporting independent means of expression: Cassettes, records, publications, video, public access, cable television, whatever. 3. We are very big interested in regional trends, movements, ideas, slang, record labels, what have you. We are very big interested in small communities that aren't big time like important N.Y. and L.A. 4. A decentralized cultural network is obviously cool. Way cool.[37]

Here, Pavitt suggests the importance of regions, of localism, and networking, of the recognition of the informal, and the importance of indigenous cultural expression and production, as ways to counteract the hegemony of the massified companies and their commercialised cultural production. Pavitt mentions cassettes and, indeed, as we have begun to see in the examples of *Fast Forward* and *Sub/Pop*, cassettes were a not-quite-new technology that became very important to the indie movement of the late 1970s and 1980s to some extent as a recording technology but, much more significantly, as a means of transferring music through networks and, indeed, as a cheap means of distributing music for purchase.

The cassette, or compact cassette as it was first known, was patented in 1963 by the Dutch firm, Philips. Originally the idea was to use cassettes in dictation machines. However, by the mid-1960s record companies were beginning to release albums on cassette, as the quality of reproduction improved because of improvements in the audio quality of cassette tapes. In 1970 Dolby introduced its noise reduction technology, making cassettes even more desirable as a music storage medium. From these beginnings, the cassette got taken up and reused as a counter-technology, an alternative technology appropriated to resist the globalising and limiting force of the multinational majors.

Two inventions further transformed the importance of the cassette: the Walkman and the ghetto blaster. Sony marketed the Walkman in Japan from 1 July 1979. Once its popularity was assured, it was launched in other countries in 1980. Between them, these two technologies revolutionised the cassette by making it a

personal music reproduction technology, enabling people to listen to music of their choice while on the move. With his finger on the cultural pulse, Malcolm McLaren, better known for his management of the Sex Pistols, had Bow Wow Wow release 'C30, C60, C90, Go!' as a cassette single in 1980 (this paean to home taping was also released on vinyl), followed by a cassette-only EP equivalent with eight songs titled *Your Cassette Pet*. Home taping of albums had begun to take off in the second half of the 1970s. With the advent of the Walkman and the ghetto blaster, home taping became much more pervasive. In the early 1980s the British Phonographic Industry ran a campaign against home taping with the slogan 'Home taping is killing music'.

One crucial element in the importance of the cassette is that it enabled people to take some control over the organisation of the music that they listened to. Perhaps the best example of this was the spread of the idea of the mixtape. A mixtape is a collection of pieces of music usually recorded from vinyl (or another cassette) onto a blank cassette for a particular purpose. Thus you could have party tapes, or tapes made for a loved one, or tapes for oneself made up of your favourite pieces of music placed together in the order you wanted to listen to them. In his new, edited collection on the mixtape, *The Mix Tape: The Art of Cassette Culture*, Thurston Moore, better known as the guitarist in Sonic Youth, recalls that the first time he heard of a mixtape was in a 1978 column by the rock critic Robert Christgau in *Village Voice*. Christgau was writing about his favourite Clash album, an album he had put together himself from the B sides of the Clash singles.[38] Like many popular culture developments, mixtapes have multiple origins. Another lay in the recording and circulation of their shows by early hip hop DJs in the Bronx from around the mid-1970s. As Alex Ogg writes: 'The mix tapes that resulted became a vital source of revenue, as well as one of the main ways in which the music gravitated downtown and through suburbia.'[39] The term 'mixtape' as first two words and then one is a later neologism.[40] The majors attacked home taping on commercial grounds, arguing that it decreased sales and therefore put artists' livelihoods in jeopardy. However, from a consumer's point of view, home taping changed the power relation where majors not only imposed on consumers what music was available but, in the case of albums, even the order in which pieces of music would be heard.

By this time also, many musicians who were just starting out would make cassette recordings of themselves to hear what they sounded like or to use as demos when contacting record companies. For example, we know that the Saints were making blistering fast, buzz-saw guitar-based pop songs before the release of the Ramones's first album, because of a recording they made in the first half of 1974 on a mono cassette-deck in Ed Kuepper's parents' garage.[41] In 1980 the first band of Mark Arm, later of Mudhoney, Mr Epp and the Calculations, recorded some music on a two-track cassette recorder in the basement of one of the band members' homes. A part of this ended up getting played on local Seattle radio station KZAM-AM.[42] The cassette came of age as a high-quality recording medium when Bruce Springsteen released the demos of his new songs recorded at his home on a four track cassette recorder in 1981 as his new album, *Nebraska*, in 1982.

In Australia the cassette was already being used to distribute music by the turn of the decade. Clinton Walker published an article in the Australian *Rolling Stone* that reminds us that Perth's Dave Warner From the Suburbs was getting known in the Eastern States in the latter part of the 1970s through cassettes of live concerts, and the Manikins, a Perth band descended from Kim Salmon's pre-Scientists punk band, the Cheap Nasties, released a cassette 'of 50 or so songs' in 1979, titled *Live Locally*.[43] The focus of Walker's article was a cassette compilation of sixty bands called *One Stop Shopping*, released out of Sydney in 1981 by Terse Tapes. Seemingly anticipating Pavitt's Statement of Purpose, Walker writes that on the front of the booklet accompanying *One Stop Shopping* was: 'Convince some friends to record on a cassette'.[44]

It is not surprising, then, that somebody, as it happens Bruce Milne, would get the idea of not just making a fanzine that distributed ideas and impressions of music but actually distributed the music itself. By 1988, when Steve Jones submitted a paper to the International Communication Association Popular Communication Interest Group, he was able to describe what he called 'The Cassette Underground':

> The term Cassette Underground, as it is used in this essay, refers to a vast international network of musicians and music fans who create and consume music via cassettes. They exist largely in opposition to the traditional music industry not only by virtue of their adoption of cassettes over the vinyl recording, but also in their

rejection of the musical values prevalent in mainstream music. Cassettes allow musicians to become the ultimate modern one-man-band—not only because cassettes allow easy access to multi-track recording, but also because they are a mass medium that allows individual control.[45]

As it happens, the book that Jones's piece appeared in, *The Cassette Mythos: Making Music at the Margins*, about the usefulness of cassettes for making and distributing non-mainstream music, was edited by Robin James, a resident of Olympia, Washington, where both Pavitt and Johnson were living. In the relative remoteness of the Northwest, there was a similar recognition of the problems for non-mainstream artists arising from the massification of the music industry, and similar solutions, as there was in Australian cities. Historically, the major record companies had viewed Australia as a market, not as a place to look for new talent.

In his book James includes a short piece by John Foster, the editor of the music paper, *Op.*, founded in 1979, where both Pavitt and Johnson had worked and from which they drew the idea, as we have seen, for *Subterranean Pop*. In his article, Foster notes that, when *Op.* started, 'an independent cassette-only release was an anomaly ... It wasn't until 1982 that we started getting quite a few [for review]'.[46] Cassette technology for recording and for music reproduction enabled a quantum leap in the variety and amount of music being recorded and distributed at a time when the majors were reducing their rosters of artists and concentrating on music which could maximise sales and, therefore, profits. It is worth remembering that none of this music that was only available on cassette would show up in that British indie chart that was Ian McNay's brainchild. That chart only represented vinyl distribution to shops.

It was also in 1982 that Johnson started the recording label K as cassette-only, 'focusing,' he wrote, 'on Olympia's downtown music scene'.[47] Johnson acknowledges the influence of Milne's *Fast Forward* initiative as one contribution to his decision to start a cassette-based label, as well as the new Walkman and ghetto blaster technologies and, as he puts it, the 'giant advances in audio fidelity' of cassette technology.[48] Milne had confined his innovative use of cassettes to his fanzine. It seems that, for Milne in 1979, music had still needed to be released on vinyl to have credibility. However,

cassettes were ideal for small runs because the technology to reproduce music on cassettes was itself cheap and accessible.[49] Demonstrating the small scale of his cassette-based initiative, Johnson writes that: 'The usual run for a release was around 100 copies.' It is clear from this, if nothing else, that the importance of the music on a label such as K lies not in profits and commercial success but in the distribution of music to interested people and, in addition, the influence that that music can have.

This influence can be suggested in the case of Johnson's own band, Beat Happening. Formed in 1983, Beat Happening was highly influential in the development of a characteristic indie 'sound' to the extent that there developed a positive definition, a musical genre that could be called indie. There is debate about where this sound originated. David Hesmondhalgh writes that:

> by 1986 post-punk's status as the most progressive branch of alternative music was under threat. At the same time, the term 'indie' was becoming widely used to describe a new phase in the cultural politics of alternative pop/rock in Britain. Rather than a melange of experimental influences covered by the umbrella term 'post-punk', 'indie' described a narrower set of sounds and looks.[50]

Hesmondhalgh sums up the indie sound, suggesting that 'indie records turned to "jangly" guitars, an emphasis on clever and/or sensitive lyrics ... and minimal focus on rhythm track'.[51] Writing from a British perspective, Hesmondhalgh appears to date the development of an identifiable indie sound to around 1986, coordinate with the use of the term 'indie' to describe that sound. Beat Happening were making music in Olympia that fits Hesmondhalgh's definition two or three years earlier than this. Jason Ankeny writes that the band

> adopted a stance in direct opposition to the accepted norms at the heart of rock music; ignoring all notions of pretense, professionalism, and stardom, Beat Happening created an unorthodox, raw sound which democratically rotated vocal, guitar, and drum duties between members while jettisoning bass altogether.[52]

All Beat Happening's music has been released on K starting with the *Three Tea Breakfast* cassette-only equivalent length EP in 1984 and the self-titled *Beat Happening* album released on cassette the same

year and vinyl the following year.[53] K's first vinyl release was the 1984 Beat Happening single 'Our Secret'. Into this discussion we can add Walker's attempt to find a general description for the bands on the *One Stop Shopping* cassette of 1981: 'it's fair to say it's most commonly characterized by "low tech" sound and instrumentation, equal parts electronic and acoustic, an amateurism bordering on naivety and occasionally pretension, spontaneity, vigour and (often black) humour. It's a sort of primitivism, and sound collage is popular.'[54] Many of the characteristics that Walker identifies are present in Ankeny's description of Beat Happening's music. What is clear is that in many different places the revolt against the increasingly slick and professionalised music being released by the internationalising majors took a similar form, not least, one suspects, because it was the same music that was being rebelled against. Cassette release was one element in this rebellion.

Doubtless Beat Happening's cassettes reached Britain, helping to found what was subsequently identified as the 'indie sound'. What we do know is that, in 1985, David Nichols, then playing in Sydney-based band the Cannanes, flew from Australia to London by way of Olympia. One of Nichols's inspirations to form the Cannanes was Beat Happening. He thinks he heard the first Beat Happening cassette in 1984 when he lived in Melbourne.[55] It is likely that the cassette was sent to Melbourne because Johnson was in contact with Milne from the *Fast Forward* days. As Nichols wrote to me: 'We didn't imitate [Beat Happening] musically but they were inspirational as a genuine minimalist, cool, DIY group.'[56] In Olympia Calvin Johnson, with whom Nichols had been corresponding, asked him to take copies of the first Beat Happening album to London. There Nichols gave one copy to the rock music journalist Everett True.[57] True played the album to Geoff Travis at Rough Trade. *Beat Happening* was released by Rough Trade in England in 1986.[58]

Grunge and the Scientists

Pavitt subsequently left Olympia for Seattle where he was introduced to Jonathan Poneman by Kim Thagil, the guitarist with Soundgarden. And so it was that, in 1986, Pavitt and Poneman launched Sub Pop as a record label. Their first release was a compilation LP, *Sub Pop 100*, which included tracks by Sonic Youth ('Kill Yr Idols', previously released as the title track on an EP on

Zensor in 1983), the Vancouver-based Skinny Puppy ('Church In Hell') and a Seattle band to which we shall soon return, the U-Men ('Gila' previously released on an EP in 1984 by Bombshelter Records). The following year, 1987, Sub Pop's second release was Green River's second EP, *Dry As a Bone*. Green River included members who went on to both Mudhoney and Pearl Jam. As such, Steve Huey describes the band on the All Music Guide website as 'arguably the first grunge band'.[59] One of the band's members was Mark Arm whom we have met before (when he acknowledged the influence on Mudhoney of the Scientists).

As I have already mentioned, Arm had started out his musical career as a member of Mr Epp and the Calculations. Humphrey describes their music as 'loud, stupid "snide rock"'[60] and notes that: 'the hardcore punks treated the slow-droning Mr Epp as "art fags"'.[61] The combination of 'loud' and 'slow-droning' suggests that already, in the early 1980s, Arm was developing a sound that was a radical departure from punk.

As it happens, Arm sent a spoof letter to the fanzine *Desperate Times* under his own name, Mark McLaughlin, in the guise of a punk attacking the music of Mr Epp: 'I hate Mr Epp and the Calculations. Pure grunge! Pure noise! Pure shit!'[62] While this may be the first use of 'grunge' to describe the new kind of music that Mr Epp were playing, we need to also remember that it is not, here, a genre description, but derogation. Humphrey writes that Pavitt 'claimed to have popularized (but not invented) the word as a musical label in a 1987 Sub Pop promo blurb for Arm's later band Green River as "ultra lose grunge that destroyed the morals of a generation"'.[63] Etymologically, the term goes back to the mid-1960s when, as American slang, 'grunge' meant sloppy or dirty. It may have a similar origin to 'scungy'. The re-application of the term to the musical form itself as a description may well have something to do with the impression created by the music: slow and apparently loose in instrumental cohesion, a tendency to dissonance and the use of feedback—all characteristics which could make a listener think in terms of sloppiness. The anonymous author of the web-based Wikipedia entry on grunge gives this description:

> Grunge music is generally characterized by 'dirty' guitar, strong riffs, and heavy drumming. The 'dirty' sound resulted from a stylistic change in the standard method of playing punk rock, and

from the common use of guitar distortion and feedback. Grunge involves slower tempi and dissonant harmonies that are generally not found in punk.[64]

This impression of sloppiness is especially marked when the music is compared to the tight, fast, limited songs of punk and its derivative genres like thrash and hardcore.

Salmon tells us that he was using the term 'grunge' in 1983 to describe the sound of the Scientists mk II, the sound on the *Blood Red River* mini-album: 'I don't know why this happened but it was the only word I could think of to describe the Scientists's sound. I was being interviewed on 2JJJ [at that time the Sydney-based ABC-controlled youth radio station] and I know that I used the term repeatedly.'[65] Certainly by the northern summer of 1985 the term had some currency as a generic description. At that time Richard Cabut, under the pen-name Richard North, published a review of the Scientists's album *You Get What You Deserve* in the *New Musical Express* in which he wrote that the 'LP fully captures the band's stunning live form and establishes them as the premier grunge merchants'.[66] At this point the Scientists were based in London.[67]

I do not here want to make any claim for the priority of usage for 'grunge.' Rather, I want to suggest that both Mark Arm (and other inner-city Seattleites) and Kim Salmon (and other inner-city Australians) were developing a similar musical form in reaction to punk and that both Salmon and the Seattleites found 'grunge' a useful term to describe this music. This similar reaction was to some extent a consequence of similar, or indeed the same, musical influences and to some extent a consequence of similar modes of indigenisation of rock music.

The Regional Indigenisation of Rock

We can start here by thinking about what characterises the 'Northwest Sound'. The Seattle Mayor's Office of Film and Music offers this history of a new 'garage' sound in Seattle around 1965:

> Gone were the earlier ties to jazz and R & B, and the formerly requisite sax and organ. The new Northwest sound was distinguished by a savage rock aesthetic—fuzz-damaged guitars and angry singers who screamed came into vogue. Years later bands from the Kinks to the Sex Pistols would acknowledge the influence of Northwest garage rock.[68]

In other words, among other things the Northwest sound was whitened. Losing its Black influences the sound became more guitar-based and generally heavier on the beat.[69] Typifying this shift was the whitening of what became a classic track for Northwest bands, 'Louie Louie'. Written in 1955 by the African-American doo-wop and proto-soul singer, Los Angeles-based Richard Berry, the original version had a calypso influence. Berry coupled this with a lyric about a sailor missing his girl back in Jamaica (even though mento was the music of Jamaica and calypso the music of Trinidad). The song was picked up and re-worked by the white Tacoma-based Wailers with what is often thought of as the definitive version being recorded by the Portland-based Kingsmen in 1963.[70] By this time the song combined melody, infectious riffs and a hard rock edge. In other words it became ideal garage-band material. The key band, though, at this point in the Northwest tradition, were the Sonics. The most important incarnation of this band from white working-class Tacoma dates from 1963. They released their first single, 'The Witch', in 1964, and their first album, *Here Are the Sonics*, in 1965, on Etiquette. Cub Koda on the All Music Guide website describes the band as combining, 'classic Northwest area teen band raunch with early English band grit (particularly influenced by the Kinks), relentless rhythmic drive, and unabashed '50s-style blues shouting for a combination that still makes their brand of rock & roll the raunchiest ever captured on wax'.[71] Koda compares Gerry Rosalie's vocals to a white Little Richard, 'whose harrowing soul-screams were startling even to the Northwest teen audience, who liked their music powerful and driving with little regard to commercial subtleties'.[72] So respected are the Sonics in the Northwestern music tradition that, in 2000, three members of Mudhoney, Mark Arm, Steve Turner and Dan Peters, along with members of other Seattle bands, played a selection from the Sonics's catalogue at a tribute show for Northwest bands. They later recorded the material for an album titled *The New Original Sonic Sound*. In this acknowledgement we can appreciate an ongoing assumption of the specificity, importance and influence of the local 'Northwest Sound'.

The inheritors of this tradition and the band which, arguably, most directly created a platform for the grunge aesthetic, were the U-men. Formed around 1981, according to Humphrey the band's name comes from a bootleg Pere Ubu album.[73] As Humphrey describes the band:

They were slow, harsh and (in the early days) clumsy players. They invoked a Dionysian orgy of mutual aggression and abandon that no cartoon-devil metal band could approach. They were also extremely loud.[74]

Their first recording was a self-titled EP in 1984, one track of which would later be lifted, as we have seen, for the *Sub Pop 100* compilation. The U-Men's music, which bears similarities to that of the Scientists, is one place where we can also track a common influence. Humphrey mentions the importance of the Cramps's music for the U-Men's sound.[75] The Cramps were just as important to Kim Salmon's idea of what the Scientists should sound like. In an interview Salmon says:

> I guess somewhere in that time the Cramps came along (this is the early line-up of the Scientists, I mean), and when I heard that I thought 'that's the sort of idea I had.' Not necessarily that much rockabilly in it, but the feedback and the simplicity of it and the kind of screaming and everything. The wildness of it. That was the sort of thing I had in my head.[76]

The Cramps, whose early albums were on the independent IRS label, were also a big influence on the other foundational Australian post-punk band, the Birthday Party (which included Nick Cave), and on Australian post-punk generally.[77] As Walker writes about the Cramps:

> Punk's going back to the garage was one thing; going back, as the Cramps did, to the swamp, where it all began, was something else again. In regurgitating rock's most primal white trash/black magic origins, the Cramps pointed to a profound realignment of the garage band tradition. The Cramps were art and trash all at once, a collision of sex, death and rock'n'roll, and their impact was more keenly felt by Australian music than any other.[78]

In its lyrics as well as in its rhythms, the Scientists's 'Swampland' is the clearest evocation of the Cramps's influence on the Scientists's work.[79] It is one of those intriguing coincidences that this track, at that time perhaps the most immediately accessible to a Northwest audience of all the Scientists's oeuvre because of its most significant reference point, should have been the track that Milne put on the *Fast Forward* cassette. However, the Cramps's influence runs through all the Scientists's later work to a greater or less extent. This

common reference point is another reason for the underlying commonality between not just the Scientists but the Australian post-punk tradition more generally and the Northwest grunge movement.

The Northwest tradition of fuzz and feedback-laden guitar work coupled with a pounding, heavy beat, a tradition that includes the guitar style of African-American Seattleite Jimi Hendrix, was a constituent feature of grunge. Indeed, from the perspective of localism and indigenisation, grunge was a further evolution of this tradition. In Australia there is a similar, if less-well known, tradition that can also be traced back to the 1960s garage sound. In Australia, as in the American Northwest, there was little African-American, rhythm and blues influence. The White Australia Policy ensured that, aside from the limited presence of African-American servicemen during the Second World War, there was no direct ongoing African-American musical influence. The result was that, as in the Northwest, Australian garage rock during the early 1960s became harder, emphasising the beat more than the rhythm, with innovation based around guitar-work that critiqued melodic form, and vocal timbre that sounded 'dirty', a reaction against the clear, pure-sounding enunciation of white pop singers.[80]

The most radical of the Australian garage bands were the Missing Links, a Sydney group who released a self-titled album in 1965. We have already met the Missing Links in Chapter Three as the band that gave their name to the Melbourne record label that Keith Glass founded in 1977, Missing Link. On the All Music Guide website Richie Unterberger describes the band as 'at their best sounding like a fusion of the Troggs and the early Who, letting loose at times with wild feedback that was quite ahead of its time'.[81] The Missing Links's use of feedback was probably influenced by the Australian surf band the Atlantics, whose first album, *Bombora*, was released in October 1963, and their second, even more radical album, *Stomping Time*, in December of the same year. The Missing Links's 1965 self-titled album contains a backwards version of the band's rendition of Bo Diddley's 'Mama Keep Your Big Mouth Shut', titled 'H'Tuom Tuhs' which, surprisingly, was released as a single. Not just occasional feedback, then, but an entire track made by reversing the run of the recording tape. Acknowledging this radical heritage, the Saints put a version of the Links's 'Wild About You' on their first album, *(I'm) Stranded*, in 1977. The point here is

that in Australia, as in the American Northwest, there has been a tradition of white and heavily beat-based, loud, angry, guitar work with feedback and similar noise-related effects. Given this similarity of history and influence it is no wonder that the music of the Scientists and other Australian bands should have been taken up with such understanding by the bands in the Seattle scene.

Mark Arm remembers the music he played on a radio program he DJ'd before Mudhoney started, that is before 1987. He says:

> I would play quite a few Australian bands. I was familiar at the time with the Scientists, Celibate Rifles, and of course the Saints. I never quite got into Radio Birdman who I thought were a little flat.[82]

The Saints and Radio Birdman were recording in the late 1970s. The Celibate Rifles's first album, *Sideroxylon*, was released in 1983. It was independent label Hot's first album release. It is clear, then, that a significant amount of Australian independent material, on both cassette and vinyl, was finding its way as a global counter-flow to Seattle.[83] Most likely it could be bought in one of the import record shops which, like similar shops in Australia, specialised in hard-to-get, independent releases.

Humphrey writes that Kim Harris's Campus Music, a hang-out in the mid-to-late 1970s for the early Seattle punks, was 'the first store in town with import records'.[84] Harris closed this store in 1980 and opened the Easy Street store in Bellevue.[85] Here, he developed the legendary 'Wall of Death', consisting of the largest variety of heavy metal in the Northwest. As Humphrey explains, heavy metal had become the music of choice for the white, working-class, suburban teenagers of the Northwest. Humphrey describes what he calls 'the suburban metal circuit'.[86] Indeed, punk was seen by its inner-city aficionados as being distinct from metal. Humphrey quotes Dawn Anderson in 1988: 'There were two types of rock'n'roll in 1981: New Wave and Rawk. New Wave was thought to encompass punk; rawk was thought to encompass heavy metal.'[87] From the point of view of this distinction, in the Northwest grunge has a history in the infiltration of heavy metal aesthetics into punk. In Australia the primary distinction was between inner-city punk and post-punk and suburban Oz Rock. Heavy metal had a more subterranean existence. Its influence on Australian inner-city sound is harder to track but it is there. Clinton Walker, the journalist, music critic and chronicler of the inner-city scene, has noted in his semi-

autobiographical account of the era that, around 1984: 'This was a time ... when I was going back to stuff that I thought I'd outgrown, early seventies metal like Black Sabbath and Led Zeppelin, and finding out how much I still loved it.'[88] Harris's wall would certainly have included AC/DC and, doubtless, the Scientists, Celibate Rifles and not forgetting feedtime whose music John Dougan describes this way:

> Imagine laying your head on railroad tracks, feeling the vibrations of the oncoming train rattling through your head, and leaving your head on the tracks as the train roars over it, and you're getting close to the sonic assault that is feedtime.[89]

feedtime's first album was released by the Sydney independent label Aberrant in 1985. As Ray Ahn, guitarist with the Hard Ons, has remarked: 'Bands like feedtime, King Snake Roost and the Scientists were the exclusive bands. The American people who knew about Australian bands knew a lot about them.'[90] People like Arm were acquiring this music and playing it on specialist radio programs.[91]

And so, to cut a longer story of global counter-flows short, we come to Nirvana. Where Mudhoney were the intellectual, artistic pioneers of grunge—both Steve Turner and Mark Arm have humanities degrees—Kurt Cobain was the working-class boy from the timber-logging town of Aberdeen. When he was fifteen in 1982, Cobain was hunting for a copy of REO Speedwagon's *Hi Infidelity* (1980) album.[92] At sixteen, the first concert he went to was Sammy Hagar and Quarterflash. When he discovered the Melvins he compared their energy to his Iron Maiden records. Commenting on how, even after his discovery of punk, Cobain went to see Judas Priest, his biographer, Charles Cross, writes that: 'Like other kids in Aberdeen, [Cobain] mixed his punk with loads of heavy metal.'[93] Cobain had been reared on a combination of heavy metal, as we have seen the working-class music of choice in the Northwest, and mainstream arena rock. Nirvana recorded their first album, *Bleach*, for Sub Pop. It was released in 1989. Humphrey accurately describes *Bleach* as 'an amalgam of scorching anthems'.[94] Cobain has described how 'he felt pressured to conform to a "Sub Pop Sound" on *Bleach* by toning down his pop-songwriting sensibility'.[95] By this time the majors were beginning to look at the Seattle scene. Nirvana were wanting to sign with a label that had better promotion and distribution than Sub Pop. In 1990 Kim Gordon of Sonic Youth

persuaded David Geffen to sign the band. Sonic Youth had already signed up themselves to Geffen's DGC label.

In his early days David Geffen had promoted the careers of Laura Nyro, Joni Mitchell, Crosby, Stills and Nash, among many others. Geffen founded Asylum Records in 1971. Among those he signed for the label were Jackson Browne and the Eagles. In 1974 Geffen sold Asylum to Warner Communications for seven million dollars. Founding Geffen Records in 1980 he signed Guns N' Roses and Aerosmith. With Geffen's contacts it had rapidly become a very significant 'minor' label. Tom King writes that: 'With projected 1989 revenues of $175 million, Geffen Records was no longer a small company. In three years, the staff had tripled to 110 employees.'[96] With the sales of Island and A&M to PolyGram, 'Geffen Records [became] the only major privately owned record label in the United States'.[97] Looking to develop a stable of independent music artists, Geffen started the DGC label in 1990, signing not only Sonic Youth but among others Weezer and Teenage Fanclub.[98]

Nirvana went into Sound City Studios in Los Angeles, the same studio in which Fleetwood Mac had made *Rumours*, with the producer Butch Vig who had recently produced Killdozer's 1989 album, *For Ladies Only*, a remarkable collection of cover versions of late 1960s and 1970s songs by such diverse artists as Deep Purple and Don McLean. *Nevermind* was mixed by Andy Wallace who had worked with the popular heavy metal band, Slayer. Later, Cobain was to complain that Wallace had made the album sound too slick but this, of course, was an important element in *Nevermind* getting mainstream airplay. *Nevermind* was released in 1991. By this time Geffen Records had been bought by MCA for around $545 million—one more acquisition in the massification and globalisation of the music industry—and in 1990, shortly after MCA acquired Geffen, the Japanese company Matsushita bought MCA itself for $1.6 billion.

Nevermind is grunge with a pop gloss. Everett True, among many others, has remarked that: 'The chords in "Smells Like Teen Spirit," that famous guitar riff that helped launch a thousand MTV executives' bank-balances, are basically Boston's "More Than A Feeling" updated.'[99] As it happens, the melody of 'More Than A Feeling' in part echoes that of 'Louie Louie', so as well as being related to 1970s stadium rock, Cobain's song is firmly lodged in the Northwest's musical history.[1] Indeed, Dave Marsh writes of 'the

evidence of "Louie Louie" spirit and rhythms throughout Nirvana's recordings' and quotes from Cobain's diaries: 'I learned everything I needed to know from one week of lessons which resulted in the famous musical knowledge of the louie louie (sic) chords E, A, B'.[2] Sub Pop's Jonathan Poneman has compared Mudhoney and Nirvana:

> Mudhoney channelled the Scientists and the Stooges and to a lesser degree, bands like the MC5 and Beasts of Bourbon. If you listen to Nirvana's early stuff you can hear, God forbid, Tom Petty. There is a song called 'If You Must', which is the very first Nirvana song I ever heard. [Kurt] starts off with these kind of dissonant chord changes then this sort of Tom Petty-ish type vocal thing, then a roaring crescendo like 'Adam Raised A Cain' by Bruce Springsteen.[3]

Clearly, Cobain was constructing his version of grunge with a conservative rock sensibility. Where Mudhoney, and the Scientists, remained immersed in the global counter-flows of the indie, underground rhizomatic disorder, Cobain's acceptance of his musical influences enabled the mainstreaming of Nirvana. Nirvana, with the marketing help of Geffen Records and MCA, and along with grunge as a marketing category, became an international commodity—indeed a part of the international repertoire. Within six months of its release *Nevermind* was certified triple platinum in the United States, meaning that it had sold three million copies. It is estimated to have sold around ten million copies worldwide.

6

The Triffids: The Sense of a Place

Well, nothing ever happens here
Not too much gets done
But you get to like it
You get to like the drinking and the swimming around
    David McComb, 'Bottle Of Love', on the Triffids's *The Black Swan*

The Triffids were founded in Perth in the mid-1970s and released their first album in 1983. *Treeless Plain* reached number 6 on the UK independent record charts in 1984 and, two years later, *Born Sandy Devotional* got to number 2 in that chart. In 1984 the band moved to Sydney and moved again to London a year later where, in 1985, they made it on to the cover of the high profile British popular music weekly, *New Musical Express*. Throughout the 1980s the band had a large following not only in Australia but in Britain and across northern Europe. One of their most well-known songs is 'Wide Open Road' which only reached number 64 on the Australian singles chart though it made number 26 on the British chart.

In this chapter my concern is with the extent to which the cultural experience of Perth permeated the band's music, and this regardless of where they were actually living. As we shall see, much of this influence was channelled through the band's lead singer and songwriter, David (Dave) McComb. The band was not a mainstream pop band. In the terms of the binary between suburban Oz Rock and inner-city Alternative Rock the band were characterised as an Alternative Rock act, playing what came to be called 'indie' music.

Music and Place

The distinction between Oz Rock, the music of Australia's suburbia, and Alternative Rock, the music of the inner city, has pervaded this book. It is in the inner city where those people that Herbert Gans, in his 1962 discussion of the distinction between the inner city and suburbia, called 'cosmopolites' live.[1] Gans includes in this category 'students, artists, writers, musicians, and entertainers, as well as other intellectuals and professionals'.[2] He tells us that these people live in the inner city 'in order to be near the special "cultural" facilities that can only be located near the centre of the city'.[3] What I will be arguing is that the Triffids appear to have the characteristics of an inner-city band, in their rejection of Oz Rock, their espousal of American influences and their liking for 'difficult' and unusual musical forms. However, I will argue that, unlike artists such as Nick Cave and his band the Birthday Party, or the Beasts of Bourbon, the Triffids put over a clear and in the end quite conservative moral position, one which corresponded with the idealised value system of middle-class suburbia. In all this there is a similarity with Dave Warner. I will be suggesting that the Triffids's rebellion was couched very much in the mythic terms that dominated, and still dominate, Western Australians' worldview.

The influence of Western Australia always remained in the Triffids's music. As Felicity Cull notes: 'From the aerial photograph of Mandurah in 1961 on the *Born Sandy Devotional* cover to *In the Pines*, which was recorded in a shearing shed in Jerdacuttup, Western Australia never left this band's music, whether or not they were resident in Perth'.[4] Thus, the Triffids's apparent rejection of suburbia and its values was, in fact, constructed through the mythic nostalgia for a lost utopia which is so prevalent in Western Australian thinking. David McComb and the rest of the Triffids did not turn their back on the suburbia which is so central to Perth's existence but, ideally, wanted to find ways of making it more habitable, to return suburbia to the mythic utopian state from which many Western Australians believe it has fallen.

I have discussed the absence of an inner city in Perth in Chapter Four. The suburban decentralisation of Perth reached a climax during the 1970s. In her history of the city of Perth, *City of Light*, Jenny Gregory describes the contents of a report 'prepared by Perth property consultant Max Johnston' and released in May 1974:

He found that, as in most western countries, the rise of the suburban shopping centre had created a new and different type of shopping experience that was detrimental to traditional city retailing. In Perth this was especially marked because of the growth of large residential developments in the outer suburbs. Between 1969 and 1972 ninety-two new retail shopping centres had been approved by local government authorities.[5]

The destruction of Perth's small inner city and the massive suburbanisation of Perth were taking place at the same time and this was also the time that Perth's music scene was developing its own version of the Australian punk and post-punk scene, a scene for which there was little or no inner city, and therefore little or no critical, cosmopolitan, bohemian and intellectual population to sustain it. In this context it is no wonder that the Triffids, like Kim Salmon's Scientists and the musicians who were to form the Hoodoo Gurus, reached a point where they felt they had to move to the inner cities of either Sydney or Melbourne in order to progress musically.

Commenting on his song 'Bright Lights Big City', the title of which evokes not only Jimmy Reed's (1961) blues song of the same title but probably more directly Jay McInerney's 1984 novelistic take on inner-city New York life, David McComb notes that:

> Going from a small town to a bigger town, even leaving Perth to go to Sydney, was as much of a break as going to a completely different country. I don't mean we've been living it up at parties and so on all the time since then, but when you've been brought up in a small town environment you are innocent of all that, and that's what it's been like.[6]

'Living it up at parties' is a metaphor here for inner-city life—what it was the Triffids's members were 'innocent of'. McComb's description of a city of what was then nearly one million people as a small town signals not the population size of Perth but the city's suburban conservatism and its preoccupation with looking inwards—at least in part the consequence of a lack of an inner city and the population that such an area nurtures.

Suburbia

At this point it will be useful to discuss what is meant by suburbia. Suburbia, meaning a specific way of forming suburbs, has an

English history. John Archer tells us that 'the story begins in the eighteenth century with a concentration of houses in the Thames Valley, west of London in the general vicinity of Richmond'.[7] Archer writes that what was novel about these houses was that they were designed solely for 'leisure pursuits'. He relates the development of this new kind of house, that enabled a person to live separately from their work and commute instead, 'to critical changes in English modes of consciousness at the beginning of the eighteenth century, consciousness that began to anchor identity primarily in the autonomous *self* rather than in a social hierarchy or collective'.[8] Archer is here tying in the advent of suburbia to the new middle class's acceptance of the ideology of individualism. Setting aside for a moment the apparently paradoxical claim that suburbia is homogenising if not homogeneous, Archer's point is that the suburban house, situated some distance from work, expresses the need of the person who thinks of him or herself as an individual to live separately from their work so that they can have the space in which they can develop their personal, individualised life.

Robert Fishman, describing the built environment of suburbia, writes that: 'Suburbia can thus be defined first by what it includes—middle class residences—and second (perhaps more importantly) by what it excludes: all industry, most commerce except for enterprises that specifically serve a residential area, and all lower class residents (except for servants)'.[9] The spread and naturalisation of individualism mentioned by Archer was directly connected to another development. To quote Fishman again:

> The London bourgeoisie who invented suburbia were also experiencing a new form of family, which Lawrence Stone has called 'the closed domesticated nuclear family.' Inner-directed, united by strong and exclusive personal ties, characterized in Stone's phrase by 'an emphasis on the boundary surrounding the nuclear unit,' such families sought to separate themselves from the intrusion of the workplace and the city.[10]

Hence the tendency towards detached, low-density housing and the utility of gardens both as a means of separation from neighbours and as a site for personal development. Fishman notes that these pioneers of suburbia constructed 'their "bourgeois utopia" of

leisure, neighbourliness, prosperity, and family life'.[11] Writ large in
Perth, this was the environment in which the founding members of
the Triffids grew up.

At the core of the group were David McComb and his best
friend Alsy (Allan) McDonald. David and his elder brother Rob,
who joined the group as the key membership began to stabilise,
were the sons of Dr Harold McComb and Dr Athel Hockey. Born
in Brisbane, Harold established plastic surgery in Perth and gave his
name to the McComb Foundation. Athel was a highly regarded
geneticist. The family lived just back from the river in Mosman Park.
Mosman Park sits astride Stirling Highway, the main thoroughfare
between Perth and the port city of Fremantle on the western (that
is the northern), and generally more expensive, side of the Swan
River.

Mosman Park itself is a mixed suburb with some public housing
as well as some very expensive property. The 1981 census found that
thirty-six per cent of the population were employed as tradespeople
or in clerical work while two per cent worked in the technical or
professional areas.[12] It is positioned at one corner of what Perth real
estate agents now call the 'golden triangle', the group of western
suburbs that sit between the Swan River, the sea and the city. The
apex of the triangle is the suburb of Crawley where the elite
University of Western Australia is situated. It is called the golden
triangle because these are the most expensive suburbs in Perth for
housing. Mosman Park abuts Peppermint Grove which in turn abuts
Claremont which backs on to Dalkeith. By Perth standards these are
old suburbs, built mostly in the 1920s and 1930s during Perth's
population boom of that time[13], and are 'inner' suburbs, that is,
suburbs that, while suburban, now have the feel of being integrated
into the Perth–Fremantle conurbation, as compared to the
sprawling 'outer' suburbs. Mosman Park can be described as being
on the edge of Fremantle. That the McCombs lived in Mosman
Park at the time before it became a part of the golden triangle
perhaps suggests that the family was not as preoccupied with social
status as many with similar occupations. If this is the case, then it
could also be argued that this may be reflected in the concerns of
the Triffids and, in particular, the McComb brothers' sense of the
importance of service to the community, something reflected in the
work of their parents.

Alsy's father, Bill, was Professor of Child Health at the University of Western Australia and his mother, Dr Judy Henzel, was a well-known paediatrician.[14] Phil Kakulas, who gigged with the group in its early days, is the son of award-winning neuropathologist Professor Byron Kakulas. Kakulas subsequently went on to be a founding member of the Black-Eyed Susans along with David McComb after the break-up of the Triffids. Kakulas, who played guitar and organ, left the early Triffids to complete a degree in chemistry. Later, Margaret Gillard played keyboards and, by the time of the band's first album, *Treeless Plain*, Jill Birt had taken over this duty. She remained with the band until it broke up. Birt came from the country farming town of Tambellup, where her family is a pillar of the community, and had attended Methodist Ladies College, known locally as MLC. Rob and David went to Christ Church Grammar, the highest profile Anglican private boys' school in Perth. MLC, where Birt went, is geographically next door to Christ Church and, while St Hilda's is Christ Church's official sister school, in practice MLC takes on some of those roles. Alsy went to Hollywood High. Closed down in 2000, Hollywood was an exclusive state school located in Shenton Park, which had links with the University of Western Australia. It specialised in children who were artistically gifted.[15]

According to Rob, the McComb parents wanted their sons to have a religious grounding and so used to take them to the Claremont Presbyterian Church on Stirling Highway and, when that closed, to the Uniting Church in Nedlands.[16] At school David won both the literature and the religious studies prizes. We will return to this Presbyterian influence later. Here we can note that the Presbyterian elements in McComb's lyrics might just be what helped the Triffids to their extraordinary popularity in Scandinavia, a region which has a strong Lutheran tradition. As the Howlspace website tells us: 'the Triffids had become incredibly popular in Scandinavia and they left behind a live recording, "Stockholm", as their final album'.[17] *Stockholm—Live* was indeed recorded in the Swedish capital at the Cirkus theatre. The same argument could be made about the band's popularity in the Netherlands and, perhaps, Belgium. This is not to say that the band's audiences in these countries agreed with the moral positions that were being expressed

in the band's lyrics but, rather, that the worldview embedded in those lyrics gave them a sense of familiarity to listeners from those countries.

Subsequently, David McComb went to the Western Australian Institute of Technology (now Curtin University of Technology) where he majored in literature and journalism. In highly stratified Perth the choice of WAIT would have been quite unusual. Those brought up in the higher-class area 'north of the river' would be expected to go to Perth's oldest university, the 'sandstone', conservative University of Western Australia, rather than the more lower-middle class, profession-oriented WAIT.

The founding members of the Triffids came from families that were among Perth's social elite. Having family members that were at the peak of the medical profession in Perth, these families were likely to have a more cosmopolitan outlook than most Perth inhabitants and this was reinforced—and I'm here referring back to Gans's inclusion of intellectuals in his inner-city cosmopolites—by the links to the University of Western Australia. At the same time, the attitudes of these families are unlikely to have been bohemian. These families were at the core of Perth society and the families' children were brought up in an atmosphere of privilege and service. Both these aspects are in evidence in the story that the Triffids, in their early days, used to play 'a lot of extremely bourgeois pool parties'.[18] The Triffids's members had a grounding for a critical distance on Perth and its suburban values but, at the same time, were thoroughly enmeshed in that same suburban moral order, even if David's choice of WAIT over UWA suggests a certain rebellion against the restrictive expectations of Perth's elite social order.

David and Alsy started playing music together in their mid-teens, using the name Dalsy, a combination of their two forenames. They then changed the band's name to Blok Music and appeared at the Leederville Punk Festival in May 1978. They made their first live appearance in a pub, at the legendary punk venue Hernando's Hideaway in East Perth, when David was sixteen, in April 1979. The band supported Kim Salmon's post-Cheap Nasties group, the first version of the Scientists. It was around this time that the band's name became the Triffids.

It is worth thinking about this name. It derives from John Wyndham's science fiction novel, published in 1951, titled *The Day of the Triffids*. The band's use of the term itself implies Perth's

Anglocentrism. Triffids are carnivorous plants of unknown provenance. After the majority of the population has been struck blind from watching a majestic meteor shower, the triffids become even more threatening to human life. For a Perth band, calling oneself the Triffids suggests various connotations. First of all, it signals the bush rather than Perth's suburban spread—though, in Wyndham's book, people do have triffids in their suburban gardens for decorative purposes. The allusion to the bush is reinforced by some of the local banksia varieties, of which the south-west of Western Australia has sixty out of the seventy-five that are native to Australia. These have an 'out-of-time', 'prehistoric' look to them. Triffids themselves are out of place. They may be grown in people's suburban gardens but they do not belong there. Perhaps there is an association here with Alsy and Dave's early performances at pool parties.

Written in England shortly after the end of the Second World War, Wyndham's work is essentially conservative. Christopher Priest writes that: 'Wyndham is the master of the middle-class catastrophe; his characters are of the bourgeoisie, and the books lament the collapse of law and order, the failure of communications, the looting of shopping precincts and the absence of the daily newspaper.'[19] Wyndham offers his 1950s English readers an image that takes them one step on from the rationing and bombing of the war to a society where the technologies of everyday middle-class, suburban life, and the decencies which they support, have broken down. In *The Day of the Triffids*, the triffids are an agent in this destruction. However, narratively it is a destruction which affirms the values of the world being lost.

Influences

At this time, McComb's influences overlapped with those of inner-city bands in other Australian cities: early American punk. In the liner notes for the Triffids's *Australian Melodrama* (1994) retrospective collection, McComb describes how the Perth of the late 1970s offered 'slim pickings for precocious Stooges/Velvets/Eno fans'.[20] Signalling McComb's lyrical interests, Graham Lee, who played on the side-project *Lawson Square Infirmary* (1984) and joined the Triffids from *Born Sandy Devotional* (1986) onwards, wrote in his obituary for David McComb that: 'His

early musical influences reveal an adventurous and discerning taste—the Velvet Underground, David Bowie, Patti Smith, Bob Dylan, Leonard Cohen.'[21] Only Bowie is English, but this needs to be set in the Perth context. In Chapter Four, in a discussion of the Perth musician Dave Warner, I have pointed out how much greater than in other Australian cities the influence of English music was on the Perth music scene of the late 1970s. As I explained in that chapter, the punk of the Victims and the Manikins was clearly influenced by the English power-pop tradition and listening to the demo recordings of Salmon's Cheap Nasties it is possible to hear equal measures of the Sex Pistols and the Stooges. That McComb was influenced by Eno and Bowie signals more the importance of English artists in Perth than a suggestion that McComb and the Triffids were not properly an inner-city band.

If an Australian inner-city musical sensibility is defined, in the first instance, by a band's influences, then the Triffids were, at that time, rather more 'inner city' than other Perth artists I have mentioned, like the Victims and the Manikins. McComb has commented that:

> Seeing the Sex Pistols make a viscid appearance on the ABC TV *Weekend Magazine* was a singular spur, encouraging us to pick up tape recorders, biros and cheap musical instruments. But instead of the simple background of Yew Kay Punk our bed of influences tended to Patti Smith, Kraftwerk, Television and early Talking Heads.[22]

Here, McComb attributes to the Sex Pistols only the spur to become a band. The musical influences he cites are an American poet turned singer, an early German electronic group, and two bands from the musically more complex end of the New York punk spectrum.

In an interview with Stuart Coupe in the Australian music magazine *RAM*, in 1984, McComb makes his preferences even clearer: 'We did a lot of punk songs at the start ... But that was only because they were easy songs. We would have preferred to do Television songs even then, but Stooges songs were easier to learn'.[23] We can unpack this. For McComb and the Triffids, English punk, taken as a single entity, was a stimulus but it was not influential in its musical form. In this quotation, unlike Kim Salmon, McComb dismisses the musical challenge offered by the (English) Sex Pistols and the (American) Stooges, that is, to drive melody and rhythm to

the point of disintegration. In that bacchanalian destruction of order an assertion of life may, or may not, be found. Amidst what everybody agrees was the disastrous mess of the Sex Pistols's last ever concert, at the Winterland, San Francisco, in January 1978, where destruction overwhelmed the music, Johnny Rotten/John Lydon found a way out. As Jon Savage tells the story: 'In "Anarchy, in the USA," nihilism becomes affirmation: "Don't know what I want" Becomes "I know what I want and I know how to get it"'.[24] Where Salmon picked up on these influences and went on to make the *Blood Red River* mini-album in 1983, this was not the way of McComb and the Triffids.

The Critical Reassertion of Suburban Life

The Triffids were a melodramatic band, as the title of their retrospective suggests. This is as true musically as lyrically. In an interview with Niall Lucy, McComb comments that: 'Ninety-nine per cent of pop music these days is about having absolute regularity of rhythm, having a metronomic beat.' He goes on:

> Whereas the Triffids might occasionally glance into that, basically I think our music is about surges, is about crescendo, is about beats that resemble spasms. It's immediately clear why we gravitated to 3/4 time, why we have this long bunch of songs starting with 'Too Hot To Move' and 'Red Pony' and going right the way through to 'Jerdacuttup Man' which are in 3/4 time or 6/8 time.[25]

Three-quarter time need not be melodramatic, but when it is used in a musical form in which 4/4 time is the standard, the effect on the auditor is to produce a dramatic drag that can lead to the kinds of crescendos and musical spasms McComb identifies.

In melodrama the experience of the 'ordinary', the everyday, is heightened to the 'extraordinary', to a transgressive excess. As Ien Ang and myself have put it elsewhere in a discussion of realism: 'It is precisely because the "extraordinary" is founded on the "ordinary" that the disruption caused by a melodramatic excess will ultimately confirm the "normality" of a pre-established order naturalized by realism'.[26] Peter Brooks emphasises the moral components: 'melodrama [is] the principal mode for uncovering and making operative the essential moral universe in a post-sacred era'.[27] It is this melodramatic reassertion of the 'ordinary' moral order, of the values that underpin suburban life, which makes the Triffids's

work so powerful. And it is this reassertion which makes sense of Ticher's point that: '[McComb] writes some extraordinary lyrics, often desolate and depressive with images of death and bitter failure, decline and corruption, but without ever slipping into any fake Goth doom and gloom'.[28] In an interview with Lynden Barber, McComb avers: 'People assume that morality is something different from the songs, whereas it's actually part of it very often'.[29] McComb's lyrics may often conjure images of death and corruption, of a fallen world, but these images are set in the context of a firm moral universe.

The Velvet Underground are often named as one of the progenitors of punk, both for their lyrics which address subjects such as drugs and sado-masochism and for their tendency to stretch musical forms to new limits. Their 1968 album, *White Light/White Heat* is described by Mark Deming for the web-based All Music Guide as 'capturing the group at their toughest and most abrasive'. He sums up the album as 'guitar-mauling tribal frenzy'.[30] It is not this aspect of the Velvet Underground's work which McComb champions but, rather, the lyrically innovative ballads. During their covers show in Perth in 1985, out of twenty-one songs, four were drawn from the Velvet Underground: 'Sweet Jane', 'Femme Fatale', 'Waiting For The Man', and 'Pale Blue Eyes'. The riff for 'Sweet Jane' is also used at the opening of 'Love And Affection', the last track on *In The Pines* (1986).[31] In the Velvet Underground's material, McComb found topics usually considered deviant or, at the least, unpalatable and not acknowledged in popular music or polite, middle-class company, expressed in everyday, matter-of-fact terms. This matter-of-factness was reinforced by the use of conventional popular music forms such as the ballad and the pop tune.

However, the Velvet Underground's heyday was in the late 1960s. Of more immediate bands that influenced the Triffids, as we have seen McComb cites Television. Television's first, and critically best received, album, *Marquee Moon*, was released in 1977. Television worked within very tight structures, forms which gave order to the improvisations of the band's two lead guitarists. This is most successful on the title track. Stephen Thomas Erlewine writes that: 'Television completely strip away any sense of swing or groove, even when they are playing standard three-chord changes.'[32] The effect is to heighten the feelings of angularity and tension. This innovation gives Television's music an analogous feeling of unsettlement to that

achieved by the Triffids's use of unusual time signatures. Within the severe structure imposed on Television's music, Tom Verlaine offered lyrics that, as Erlewine puts it, 'conveyed a fractured urban mythology unlike any of his contemporaries'.[33] What McComb drew lyrically from the Velvet Underground and Television was an understanding of how to write about those things suburbia likes to keep hidden away without losing his own moral footing.

Suburban Values, the Triffids, and Country Music

It is the sense of a clear and conservative moral binary, in Anglican if not Presbyterian terms a sense of evil and good, and the inevitability of evil's existence in the world, which makes understandable McComb's interest in traditional American country music. I say traditional here to distinguish it from the more morally complex country music sung by other Australian bands contemporaneous with the Triffids, most importantly the Beasts of Bourbon. Released in 1984, the Beasts's *The Axeman's Jazz* has mostly new compositions on it such as 'Ten Wheels For Jesus' and 'Evil Ruby'. However, the album does include a version of Jack Kittel's 1974 recording of 'Psycho'. This song is sung in the first person by a man who has killed a number of people including his ex and culminating in his mother to whom he sings the song. These morally problematic songs form one thread in the pre-history of what is now called alt.country. This was not the kind of country music with which McComb empathised. The influence of more traditional country music pervades the Triffids's work and is central to the side project that I have already mentioned, *Lawson Square Infirmary*. After the Triffids broke up, McComb contributed a track to a collection of more or less avant-garde renderings of traditional country songs put together by Graham Lee called *When Joy Kills Sorrow* (1997).[34]

On *In the Pines*, the Triffids cover 'Once A Day' which was a hit for Connie Smith in 1964. On their first album, *Treeless Plain* (1983), the band recorded a McComb song titled 'My Baby Thinks She's A Train'. While the music and lyrics are quite different, in common with a number of McComb songs the title comes from elsewhere. In this case it is an American country song by Leroy Preston of Asleep at the Wheel and also covered by Rosanne Cash. In 1985, the Triffids released a version of William Bell's 'You Don't Miss Your

Water'. While this is a soul song, originally released on Bell's *The Soul of a Bell* (1967) album, it was covered in country-rock style the following year by the Byrds (with Gram Parsons in their line-up) on *Sweetheart of the Rodeo*. David Battersby, who used to work in Thomson's Record Bar in Hay Street, remembers Alsy and Dave when they were about fifteen asking for Gram Parsons's albums.[35] It is not surprising, then, that the Triffids's version has more in common with the Byrds's recording than with Bell's.

In *Creating Country Music* Richard Peterson discusses the importance of Hank Williams. Born in 1923, Williams revolutionised country music by combining what had previously been two quite separate strands of music, in Peterson's words 'lusty and sentimental'[36], into a single song. Peterson writes that: 'Hank Williams was uniquely able to convincingly evoke in a single performance the dialectic in the epic struggle between good and evil'.[37] Quoting an earlier article of his own, Peterson writes that: '[Williams's] heroes are undone by their own desires, tempted by illicit sex, plied with alcohol, rejected by a cooled lover, and left alone bathed in guilt and remorse groping for eventual reunion with wife, home and God'.[38] This understanding formed the corner-stone of country music until the advent of alt.country in the 1980s. McComb's work is pervaded by the same sense of a struggle between evil and good—the values of home and family and indeed church.

In this regard it is worth looking in some detail at perhaps the Triffids's most well-known track, 'Bury Me Deep In Love'. While the tune is different, the lyrics of 'Bury Me Deep In Love' are very similar in part to the lyrics of a song that was an American cross-over country hit, 'The Three Bells'. 'The Three Bells' is the Englished version of a French song written in 1945 titled 'Les Trois Cloches'. The American song was recorded by the Browns and reached number one in both the Billboard pop chart and the country chart in 1959. In essence, 'The Three Bells' describes the life of Jimmy Brown, born when the chapel bells were ringing. The bells also ring when he gets married and, again, when he dies. Brown's life is framed by religion. The chorus tells us that, at these moments: 'Then the little congregation prayed for guidance from above.' They pray: 'Lead us not into temptation' and then with different requests at each of Jimmy Brown's life-defining events. 'The Three Bells' is a typical religious country song. It asserts a

strong Christian message of an established moral order built on a religious foundation. God may not be ever-present but he watches over the little flock and their religion binds them together as a community. These ideas are fundamental in McComb's lyrical world so it is not surprising that 'Bury Me Deep In Love' should follow 'The Three Bells' so closely. Lyrically, there are many similarities. For instance, where 'The Three Bells' has:

> There's a village deep in the valley
> Among the pine trees half-forlorn
>
> ...
> All the chapel bells were ringing

'Bury Me Deep In Love' has:

> There's a chapel deep in a valley
> For travelling strangers in distress
> It's nestled among the ghosts of the pines
> Under the shadow of a precipice.

While the similarity is obvious, the difference is also important. In 'The Three Bells,' we have a sense of a village community in a valley among pine trees, possibly an alpine image. In 'Bury Me Deep In Love' the village has disappeared and, instead, we are just given the chapel, and this is situated far more ominously in the shadow of a precipice and among what seem to be dead pine trees rather than half-forlorn ones. McComb then has a 'lonesome climbing figure' falling to his death. It is after this that the singer implores an unnamed God to 'Bury him deep in love' and to 'Take him in, under your wing'. The shift here is towards a more Presbyterian understanding of God. There is a greater feeling of the presence of evil in the world and of God, the creator, as being removed from the world, to be prayed to for his grace but a God who does not constantly watch over and intervene to protect his flock.

Later in 'Bury Me Deep In Love,' we have:

> And the little congregation gathers,
> Prays for guidance from above
> They sing, 'Hear our meditation,
> Lead us not into temptation
> But give us some explanation
> Bury us deep in love.'

Here, we have a much more agonised congregation than in 'The Three Bells'. In that lyric, the congregation asks for 'guidance from above'. In McComb's lyric we have an accidental death and a congregation that needs 'some kind of explanation'. This is a world in which evil, or at the very least random disaster, exists, and where believers don't understand why bad things happen to good people. As a consequence, we might say, this congregation doesn't just ask, as in 'The Three Bells', that Jimmy Brown and his new wife's marriage be 'filled with love'. Rather, McComb's congregation cry out that it wants to be buried in the love of God. At bottom, I would argue, this is a Presbyterian view of our relationship with God. As importantly, though, this view resonates with a West Australian view, as we shall see in the next section, that we have fallen from a utopian existence. McComb achieves all this with a re-writing of an American country song asserting the values of a Christian community, and without changing the fundamental values of the song.

However, there is more. Judging by the reputed popularity of 'Bury Me Deep In Love' as a song played at weddings in Australia, it would seem to be read by most people as a secular love song. In this reading, the imprecation to bury the singer deep in love would be a cry to the loved one by the male singer to enfold him and protect him, to create a loving couple from which the evil world outside is kept at bay.[39] This understanding resonates with the values of the middle-class, privatised nuclear family of suburbia. It is, then, understandable that 'Bury Me Deep In Love' was used on *Neighbours* in episode 724, in 1988, at the wedding of Harold and Madge. *Neighbours* is the quintessential Australian suburban soap opera. Here we have an origin for the popularity of the song at Australian weddings. More importantly for my argument here, though, the successful use of the song on *Neighbours* suggests the ease with which McComb's lyrics can be read as expressing suburban values.

The Western Australian Mythos

At this point we need to say something more about the Western Australian—by which I really mean Perth–Fremantle—worldview. For Western Australians there is something more than a barrier between the 'Eastern States' and the West. The West is thought of as a distinct, heterotopic space. Michel Foucault writes that:

There are also, probably in every culture, in every civilization, real places—places that do exist and that are formed in the very founding of society—which are something like counter-sites, a kind of effectively enacted utopia in which the real sites, all the other real sites that can be found within the culture, are simultaneously represented, contested, and inverted.[40]

I am not suggesting something quite so rich for the experience of Western Australia. Rather, by borrowing the term heterotopia I want to imply that Western Australia is thought of by those who live there as a qualitatively different space to the rest of geographical Australia, but a space that exists in a dynamic relation to the idea of 'Australia'. In her preface to a 1973 collection of poetry and short prose she edited, Dorothy Hewett writes of the West, referencing a poem by the Victorian, Bernard O'Dowd, that

> this is 'another country,' a 'last sea-thing dredged by sailor Time from Space,' and as such, it seems to contain, in microcosm that old Utopian dream so many Australians once had, [quoting Vincent Buckley] that, 'insistence of the self-contained abiding life that can be lived by communities in touch with the earth'.[41]

Hewett is arguing that still, in the 1970s, Western Australians see themselves as attempting to live a pastoral, perhaps pre-urban and pre-industrial, utopian fantasy of community.

Certainly there remains in the West an underlying feeling of the imposition of the Perth–Fremantle conurbation on the land. In 1990 Delys Bird wrote that:

> Even today in the West there is a sense that life has only a tenuous hold in these landscapes lodged between the desert and the sea, that European settlement here is vulnerable, chancy and could easily disappear. This sense of the omnipresence of the natural world is characteristically remarked on by literary commentators as one of the major elements of West Australian writing.[42]

It is the desert that is important here. In a comparison of the experience and the treatment of the Perth wetlands area with the English fens, John Kinsella comments that:

> What is doubly fascinating is how in an environment like Perth's, which is extremely vulnerable to drought, where water restrictions during the summer, and even winter are far from unusual, where

people describe themselves as living on the edge of the desert—
there is a desire to preserve a notion of the well-watered and yet
sensibly engineered lushness of England.[43]

As well as this nostalgia, the desire for lushness can also be read in
part as an anxious rejection of the desert that is thought of as
running so close to the city.

On the one hand, large parts of inner suburban Perth are built
on drained wetlands. Rod Giblett writes that:

> Founded on the banks of the Swan River, the colonial settlement
> which grew into a city was also backed by a chain of swamps. These
> swamps formed a network which dominated the whole of
> Northbridge, North Perth, East Perth, Highgate and Leederville
> areas. The settlement could only expand uninterruptedly by filling
> or draining the swamps.[44]

In addition to the presence of the desert hard by, the sense of the
tenuousness of life in Perth is, in part, an effect of the cultural
memory that Perth is built on land claimed from the water.

On the other hand, the people of Perth think of themselves as
living on the edge of the desert, and have an unsettling feeling, born
of declining rainfall and increasing water restrictions, that Perth will
be reclaimed by the desert. To appreciate the full implications of
this for the Western Australian worldview, we need to understand
the mythic power of the desert in Western thought. Roslynn Haynes
writes about the desert that:

> In Hebraic tradition the desert wilderness is not only a perpetual
> reminder of the Fall (Genesis 3: 17–19); it is a warning that
> disobedience to God will perpetuate the curse: 'the earth that is
> under thee shall be iron. The Lord shall make the rain of thy land
> powder and dust' (Deuteronomy 28: 23–24). In the Eden story the
> desert stands in contrast to the garden, the oasis, and by extension
> to the cultivation that both sustains and emanates from
> civilisation.[45]

Haynes refers to the work of the geographer Yi-Fu Tuan who 'has
pointed out [that] European attitudes to that specific form of
wilderness, the desert, are characterised by a strong element of
denial, a conspiracy of silence about the very existence of deserts
because they appeared as a moral flaw in creation'.[46] In the Eden
story, though, deserts are not a moral flaw, but living in them is the

consequence of immoral behaviour. To Christian society, deserts are a reminder of Eve's original sin, of the founding transgression of human society. Echoes of these understandings still pervade Australian, and especially Western Australian life. Moreover, in Presbyterian thinking, the evil in the world is directly related to the original sin. All human beings share the propensity to commit sin. God has foreordained some human beings to be saved by his grace. However, we cannot know if we are of this elect so we have no choice but to live as morally as we can in the constant hope that we are of the saved.

The idea of wilderness crops up a number of times in McComb's lyrics where it can be read as suggesting just such a personal desolation. In 'Wide Open Road', where the images of the empty bush conjure the affect of the experience of the end of a relationship, the singer remembers 'carrying the baby just for you/Crying in the wilderness'. In 'Raining Pleasure' we are told:

> Trail through the wilderness
> Dryest [sic] season known to us …

Here the image of wilderness is used to help build a sense of moral emptiness: 'In your arms it's a raining pleasure' but, without you, the lyrics appear to suggest, there is nothing but this drought in the wilderness. Again, there is a sense of an emotional conflation of God, or more likely Jesus, who died for our sins and therefore to redeem us, and the loved one.

Haynes writes of the twentieth century that, while

> physical dangers became increasingly uncommon, the desert offered writers a new range of terrors physical and mental, to supply the horror story and horror film. Invoking the longstanding nightmare images of the Australian landscape as threatening to swallow up anyone who trespasses there, they focus in particular on the added threat posed by extreme isolation.[47]

The desert remains a threat to society. For Western Australians the desert, as an idea, has a two-fold significance. In the material form of the Nullarbor, it exists as the marker of the heterotopic divide between eastern Australia and 'the West'. Until at least the Second World War, those who came from the eastern states were known as 't'othersiders' and, indeed, as Hewett expresses this worldview: 'We only joined Federation because the t'othersiders on the Goldfields

[the miners who had come from the eastern states] voted us in'.[48] For Western Australians, the Nullarbor protected the Western Australian quality of life from the depravities of the urban, eastern cities. In literal terms there is truth in the impermeability of the Nullarbor. The distance from Norseman in Western Australia to Ceduna in South Australia is a little over 1,200 kilometres. A telegraph line was opened across the desert, connecting east and west in 1877. The railway, enabling human transport from coast to coast, was completed in 1917. It was not until 1941, during the Second World War, that a gravel track was built across the desert, for military purposes, and this, the Eyre Highway, was only sealed in 1977.

From a West Australian point of view, the Nullarbor is still an expression of a qualitative divide between the east and the West. Robert Drewe makes use of this sense of a fracture in his memoir about growing up in Perth during the 1960s, *The Shark Net*.[49] The book focuses on the intersection of the young Drewe's life with the Perth murderer Eric Edgar Cooke, who would now be known as a serial killer. In order to set the scene Drewe begins *The Shark Net* with a prologue describing Cooke's committal hearing in 1963, which Drewe attended as a court reporter for the *West Australian* newspaper. Aside from this, the bulk of the memoir is introduced by the young Drewe's twelve-hour flight to Perth from Melbourne with his mother, re-fuelling in Adelaide and Kalgoorlie. The book ends with Drewe and his wife boarding the Trans-Continental train back to Melbourne. The device of opening and closing the narrative with the journeys across the Nullarbor gives the book a sense of describing a special reality, an Other to the practically unwritten, and for that reason all the more 'real', reality outside the memoir, that of eastern Australia.

Given both of these understandings of the desert: the religious sense of expressing a moral fall, and a physical and real limit to Western Australian civilisation, it is not surprising that the desert features extensively in McComb's work. Thus, for example, the Triffids's first album, recorded in Sydney in August and September 1983, was called *Treeless Plain*. The title not only suggests the literal and metaphysical distance across the Nullarbor—the place of no trees—that the band had travelled, but also the moral desolation evidenced in many of the songs. Thus, in 'Red Pony', the title of which comes from a John Steinbeck story made into a film released

in 1949, the pony of the title, a gift from the singer to his lover, is blind. In Steinbeck's story, a narrative about growing up and accepting responsibility, the young boy is given a pony by his father. When it dies there is a scene of the pony's eyes being eaten by a buzzard. The boy seeks somebody to blame for the horse's death.

In 'My Baby Thinks She's A Train', she 'don't know the difference between pleasure and pain', a moral problem if ever there was one for a Presbyterian because it would mean a loss of the awareness of the evil in the world. 'Hanging Shed' is also on this album. In it the singer repeatedly enjoins the unknown addressee:

> & there's one thing you must never forget;
> What you did that night behind the hanging shed.

We are never told what was done behind the shed but the lyric conveys the suggestion that it was something dreadful; again, we have the sense of the evil that is in all human beings. In addition to these songs by McComb, *Treeless Plain* contains a cover of Bob Dylan's 'I Am A Lonesome Hobo' from his *John Wesley Harding* (1967) album. While the Triffids retain the lyrics, the musical setting, with its country inflection, is made more dramatic emphasising the moral failure that turned this 'rather prosperous' man into a 'lonesome hobo/without family or friends'.

Two years later, in London, the Triffids recorded a McComb song still only available on vinyl, 'Field Of Glass'. Running for a little over ten minutes, 'Field Of Glass' comes the nearest of any Triffids track to a sonic breakdown. Seemingly influenced by the Velvet Underground's *White Light/White Heat* album and the lengthy Doors track, 'The End', off their self-titled first album, McComb describes it as coming out of 'a particularly violent sonic period'.[50] The lyrics begin with the singer telling us:

> I walk a field of glass
> I buy a diamond ring
> I take a lonesome road.

As they progress we find he is addressing a young girl, most likely a virgin as 'This is your 1st taste of mystery', whom he wants to 'come ride with me'—a not-uncommon metaphor for sexual intercourse. As the lyrics develop we get the impression that the singer is at the least predatory and more likely 'evil' in his desire to corrupt the young girl's innocence. McComb rarely, if ever, wrote from this

speaking position. His songs of moral decay are usually written as observations or as accounts of the impact of actions on the singer, as in 'Wide Open Road' when he asks:

> How do you think it feels?
> Sleeping by yourself
> When the one you love, the one you love
> Is with someone else?

This sonic dissolution in 'Field Of Glass', then, can be read as expressing the moral dissipation of the singer.

But again there is more. A 'field of glass' can be a metaphor for the desert. In 1877, the Australian poet George Loyau published 'The Desert'. Haynes tells us that Loyau's 'vivid descriptions of "white volcanic sand," "bright as glass—dazzling, burning glass" (an elegant reference to the origin of glass) make for some of his most evocative writing'.[51] Whether or not McComb was aware of Loyau's use of the image, the cultural knowledge that links sand with glass is widespread and the connotations of a field of glass as the desert work here in the broader context of McComb's very West Australian awareness of the cultural significance of deserts.

Community and Nostalgia

Veronica Brady argues that: 'There has always been an Arcadian strain in Western Australian writing—not surprisingly, in a society founded by English gentlefolk in search of the "good old days" which, it seemed, would not come again in England'.[52] It is to this yearning for a lost Arcadia that Brady attributes the nostalgia so evident in Western Australian literature. To this yearning, also, we can add the preoccupation with lush, well-watered lawns in utopian suburbia, to which Kinsella adverts. They not only keep the idea of the desert at bay, they also offer a memory of a lost English homeliness. Suburbia, as its name suggests, mediates between the built-up city and inner-city, and the country. In Perth there is little of the city and the suburban sprawl takes on and re-works the nostalgic Arcadian dream. In doing so, that dream is worked over in terms of the suburban, utopian valorisation of the values, and moral universe, of the middle-class, privatised and nuclear family. It is no wonder, then, that commenting on a then-recently published collection of stories, *Decade: A Selection of Contemporary Western Australian Short*

Fiction, in 1982, Brady should remark that, 'most of the stories …
centre on the family, on a community based on people and shared
memories rather than on social and economic functions, and on
coming to terms with nature and the outside world which is more
characteristic of the frontier than of metropolitan life today'.[53] The
Perth experience, especially the suburban experience, is pervaded by
a feeling of lost community.

When this preoccupation with family and community is linked
with the sense of nostalgia it leads to the common Western
Australian claim that the good society is being, or has been,
destroyed. It generates a sense of threat as in the claim that Perth
and Western Australia generally is subject to the depredations of
anybody from bikie gangs to business entrepreneurs to the federal
government coming to Western Australia and destroying 'our way of
life'. In this re-working of the myth, the heterotopic 'West' is under
siege from outside. Perth's 'isolation' is thought of as a good thing.
Topically, the rhetoric of isolation constructs Perth in much the
same way that the island has functioned in Western constructions of
utopia from Thomas More's *Utopia* (1516) onwards, as the site of
difference.

Similarly, the claim that the good society is being destroyed can
lead to the historical claim that, for some reason, Perth society has
fallen away from the utopian community it once was. One of the
most common events used to justify this claim is the reign of terror
imposed by Eric Edgar Cooke in the early 1960s—he about whom
Robert Drewe writes in *The Shark Net*. Cooke was finally caught and
sentenced to death in 1963. He was hanged a year later. He had
committed over 250 robberies, numerous rapes and had murdered
or attempted to murder around twenty people.[54] The Perth
worldview suggests that before Cooke's criminal spree people used
to leave their doors unlocked and windows open, that children
would play in parks unaccompanied, that it was safe for women to
walk alone at night. And so on. In this image of the lost utopian
community, crime is the marker of the falling away.

What has all this to do with the Triffids? First, there is a nostalgia
which haunts the Triffids's work. The cover of *Born Sandy Devotional*
(1986), their highly regarded second album, has an image of
Mandurah and the Peel Inlet circa 1961. Mandurah is about seventy
kilometres south of Perth. In the early 1960s Mandurah was a small
hamlet; by the mid-1980s it had a population of nearly 13,000. By

the time of the Mandurah and District Planning Study, drafted in 1984, Mandurah in the south and Joondalup in the north had been identified as satellite city centres to increase the decentralisation of Perth city. By 2002 Mandurah had a population of over 51,000. *Born Sandy Devotional*'s cover connotes a Perth–Fremantle conurbation that was still only around 500,000; a place of community before Eric Edgar Cooke; a city where suburbia had not yet spread those seventy kilometres down the coast.

McComb's lyrics share in this nostalgia, often expressed through regret for lost relationships. 'Wide Open Road' has this quality, as I have already described. So does 'Estuary Bed,' which is also on *Born Sandy Devotional* and is possibly the pretext for the album cover image. McComb sings:

> I hold you not
> but I see you still
> What use eyesight if it should melt?
> What use memory covered in estuary salt?

Then we could also mention 'A Trick Of The Light' off *Calenture* (1987). Here McComb sings about a 'Yellow photograph in a pocketbook' which shows

> Well, the rim of her mouth was golden
> Her eyes were just desert sands

The desert image suggests to the (Western) Australian auditor that this woman had a certain worldly experience. At the end of the song we find the singer addressing another woman: 'You remind me of someone I used to know.' A nostalgia is being conjured for this woman in the photograph.

The song in which nostalgia and utopia most obviously come together for McComb is 'Fairytale Love', the final track on the Triffids's last studio album, *The Black Swan* (1989). The song's love affair is set 'In an earlier time', a time when there was 'a green land above/By the mill and the willows we made fairytale love'. The mill and willows, and the natural lushness as compared to the artificial lushness of suburban Perth's well-watered lawns, certainly suggest an English Arcadia. This fairytale sex contains no moral impropriety: 'No blemish of lust, flesh unfreckled by sin.' There is no evil here. From a Christian, and especially Presbyterian point of view, the thing that makes this a fairytale is that there is no original

sin. And this Arcadian dream, we discover, is actually in Western Australia for 'the black swan spread its wings and hissed/Lo! The night came on.' Black swans are emblematic of Western Australia for those who live there—indeed, since 1973 the black swan has been the official emblem of Western Australia. In an examination of this lyric we can see how well made are Brady's points about the Western Australian worldview. This is a Western Australian fairytale.

Suburban Concerns

In their rejection of the Oz Rock musical form and their preference for American punk as their most important influence, the Triffids have two characteristics of an inner-city, Alternative Rock band. The band members' elite and university backgrounds also suggest an intellectual, cosmopolitan leaning which would go with a rejection of what is sometimes read as the bland, unthinking conservatism of Oz Rock. In 1989, as part of the promotion for *The Black Swan*, Gavin Martin flew to Perth to interview David McComb for the *New Musical Express*. Martin structures his article in terms of suburban Gothic: the beautiful, utopian surface and the horror that lies beneath it, a horror at least in part produced by the relentless pursuit of utopian pleasures:

> Is this not the promised land? Was this not the place that his parents used to make idle plans to escape to when he was a kid? In Australia it is Christmas dinner on the lawn; you can swim all day, barbecue all night, tend a garden of beautiful wild flowers and wholesome vegetables and on the weekend take yourself off to the bush to watch exotic animals in their natural habitat. What more could you want?[55]

David McComb, Martin goes on, 'appreciates these local attractions but he insists they're superficial, masking the neurosis thriving beneath the surface'.[56] However, McComb is not working with Martin's Gothic binary. He sees the problem as people not having anyone to talk to, 'too many people are sitting in front of VDU machines'.[57] McComb goes on to explain:

> The problem is exacerbated here because there's more access to 24 hour video stores, there's better roads, quarter acre blocks where you're not shoulder to shoulder with each other. So the problems are the opposite to the overcrowding in Handsworth and Brixton.[58]

McComb is not rejecting Perth suburbia for the inner city. Rather, he is suggesting that suburbia—those better roads and quarter acre blocks—contributes to people's isolation. In other words, McComb is making a very characteristically Western Australian statement: there has been a loss of community and this is linked to the failure of the suburban utopia.

McComb and the Triffids never dealt directly with suburbia. With no Perth inner city there was no site from which to get a purchase to critique it. Rather, they turned to the desert and the bush. Their third album, *In the Pines*, was actually recorded in a shearing shed on the McComb family property at Jerdacuttup, just outside Ravensthorpe in the east of Western Australia's fertile south-west. More, with this exception, all the band's albums were recorded outside of Western Australia, while often referencing Western Australian images. Brady argues that:

> Melodrama tends to exteriorise, projecting conflicts outwards on to external events and places. So the antagonist becomes the land itself and isolation and alienation are seen as something external to the self, a kind of general rather than a personal fate.[59]

McComb's lyrics utilise Western Australian cultural understandings of the desert and the bush. They build on the Western Australian assumption that Perth's suburbia is a lost utopia, a lost community, and on the claim that Perth's inhabitants now live isolated in a world of moral decay. Ticher suggests that 'McComb has simply got the priceless ability to portray feelings through physical images'.[60] The dominant feeling in the Triffids's work is a painful nostalgia, an affect still central to the Western Australian experience.

Select Discography

(Much of the Triffids's early work is still only available on rare cassettes or on relatively rare vinyl. The only vinyl material listed here are records that are referred to in the article).

Treeless Plain, LP, Hot Records, 1983. Reissued on CD 1995.
Raining Pleasure, 12" mini-LP, Hot Records, 1984. Only available on vinyl. The track 'Raining Pleasure' is also available on the Triffids compilation album *Australian Melodrama* released on CD by White Records, 1994.

Lawson Square Infirmary, 12" EP, Hot Records, 1984. Only available on vinyl.

Field of Glass, 12" EP, Hot Records, 1985. Only available on vinyl.

Born Sandy Devotional, LP, Hot Records, 1986. Reissued on CD 1995.

In the Pines, LP, Hot Records, 1986. Reissued on CD 1995.

Calenture, LP, White Hot Records, 1987. Reissued on CD 1995.

The Black Swan, LP, White Hot Records, 1989. Reissued on CD 1995.

Love of Will, (David McComb solo) LP, Released on CD by White Records, 1994.

Various Artists, *Where Joy Kills Sorrow* (Dave McComb sings 'Still Alive And Well'), LP, Released on CD by W. Minc, 1997.

Conclusion

Yes, there is something particular about Australian popular music and, in the essays in this book, I have begun the process of examining what makes post-1950s Australian rock music different from, most particularly, British and American popular music.

Popular music is the product of many influences. It is always in process, never a finished thing. Moreover, over the last hundred years popular music has become more and more commodified—especially with the development of new means of recording and preserving music, from wax cylinders to shellac to vinyl to compact discs to MP3s.

Commodification, and the impact of the increasingly transnational record companies, led to the tendency to popularise music across as large an area of the world as possible in order to maximise profits.[1] One consequence of this was the sense that music was somehow 'out there', removed from its audience but available for consumption. One of the points emphasised in this book is that this has never been the case. Popular music is in fact, or by definition, always already local.

Certainly it is true that Australian popular music has been subject to the impact of this globalised music system, which has meant that Australian music has incorporated many of the trends, from rock'n'roll to rap, that have been popularised by those transnational record companies. However, in the end—or, rather, in the beginning—popular music is fundamentally local. Audiences are active. They don't just receive and consume, they consume and

interpret, making sense of what they are listening to in terms of their own cultural backgrounds and experiences. And they make music. Here, I do not want to re-establish the classical distinction between a folk music developed by the people and a popular music constructed and commodified by the commercial considerations of record companies. Indeed, I want to argue the reverse, that people are always playing music and that that music is the product of a multitude of influences, which are more broadly cultural, rather than just musical, and which together combine to instate the local.

It has become a commonplace in musical studies to see the division between the artist and the record company in Romantic terms, where the individual struggles to preserve her artistic integrity against the demands of the capitalistic company which wants to transform her creation into something that the company believes it can sell more of. We can revise this argument in the terms of cultural specificity. Artists make music out of their own cultural backgrounds, experiences and influences. Record companies try to revise that music to make it saleable to as many people as possible in as many places as possible. Woven through this tension are aesthetic arguments over quality but many of these arguments are, in fact, arguments over cultural difference. Indeed, one of the complexities that impacts on the so-called cultural cringe in Australia is the lack of recognition of the validity of local culture, and the lack of acknowledgement, and value, given to the aesthetic elements of that culture as they appear in local artistic products. Central to this argument is the problem of how we define the local.

Since the 1980s, with the theoretical debates over globalisation, there has been a corresponding emphasis on the local.[2] The global has been counterbalanced by the local. However, the local is a very complex idea. Does the local equate with the national, perhaps, or is the local at a more, shall we say, local level, such as the region or the city? Can the local be larger than the national? Can we think of Europe, whatever the limits of that entity are, as a local area? Should we think of Australia as part of a local area that includes New Zealand, Papua New Guinea and, maybe, Malaysia and Indonesia? Were we to do this, how would we think about regional popular music—the impact of Kamahl, for example, on Australia, and the impact of the other music artists who have come here from other parts of the region? What about New Zealanders who have brought their own version of hip hop, for example, helping to develop not

only an Australian sound but a music that makes sense across the region? And, of course, there is the impact of artists from Australia on other parts of the region—Not Drowning, Waving's collaboration with Papuan musicians, *Tabaran*, released in 1990, comes to mind as the most well-known of these developments. These are direct impacts but there are the indirect impacts that are even harder to identify: Johnny Farnham on the radio in Port Moresby, or Midnight Oil albums in New Zealand. My point here is to suggest a way of thinking that considers popular music from the point of view of the local.

In this book I have taken Australia as a local area, and then Perth. Australia, as a colonial construction, has a complex history that involves the importation of other cultures, most significantly those of Britain and Ireland (and recognising that these terms disguise the differential impact of diverse local cultures from within these political areas), and the transformation of those cultures in the new environment that included a wide variety of Indigenous cultures. But we should also think about the impact of, for example, Chinese migrants and, a little later, Italian migrants on the development of what we now call Australian popular music. At the same time, through the second half of the nineteenth century, both English music hall and American minstrelsy, and jubilee gospel singers, were very popular in Australia—and, we need to remember, throughout this period 'Australia' was, in fact, composed of a number of self-governing colonies. Perhaps the most significant cultural element was the preoccupation with keeping Australia 'white'.

By the time Australia developed its own recording industry in the 1920s it had a distinctive popular music.[3] However, the distinctiveness of this popular music can be further refined by looking at what was happening in areas within Australia. In this book, which really starts in the 1950s, I have focused on Perth, but, as I remarked in the Introduction, we could, and should, also think about the distinctiveness of the music in Sydney, Adelaide, Melbourne and Darwin, and, of course, the regional areas. Philip Hayward has recently begun a discussion about Darwin's musical heritage which will lead to important understandings about, for example, the ways that local Indigenous music has intersected with forms of rock and pop.[4] Local rock group, the Swamp Jockeys, which had both Indigenous and non-Indigenous members, morphed into Yothu Yindi, which has been the most commercially

successful group to synthesise Indigenous music and rock music.[5]
Karl Neuenfeld has been doing fascinating work looking at the
variety of influences, from Hawaiian slack-key guitar to jazz, in the
music of the Torres Strait.[6]

I started out by writing about the importance of the
transnational, so-called major, record companies in the evolution of
Australian popular music over the last fifty years or so. We are now
at a watershed. One of the consequences of digitalisation has been
that people can now make sophisticated music with a relatively small
investment, and without the need for expensive recording studios.
Even more importantly, digitalisation means that music has now
been separated from the need for a material means of preservation.
It can be uploaded to the web, and downloaded on to computers
and MP3 players. Even the compact disc has become redundant.
This, of course, is the source of a fundamental crisis for the record
companies, which have always been geared to distribution and sale
of the technology on which the music is stored as their primary
source of income. At the same time, this transformation has
returned music to the local. There has been a proliferation of artists
uploading their own music on to the web. The local has once again
become a key element in the production of popular music. One
thing that has changed is that this music is now available anywhere
in the world to anybody who has the technology to download it.
This means that the influences on local music production have
proliferated. The local is transformed by the global but there is still
a local. Whatever happens, Australian popular music will remain
distinctive.

Endnotes

Introduction

1 G Turner, 'Australian Popular Music and Its Contexts', in P Hayward (ed.), *From Pop to Punk to Postmodernism: Popular Music and Australian Culture from the 1960s to the 1990s*, Allen & Unwin, North Sydney, 1992, p 13.

2 ibid.

3 ibid.

4 Turner's position has a history. In 1988 Lawrence Zion argued, in a piece entitled 'The Sound of Australian Music', that: 'The trap to be avoided … is the search for an indigenous sound.' Zion suggests that what 'Midnight Oil, and other groups such as Mental As Anything, Cold Chisel and Hunters and Collectors have shown, is that it is possible to be musically creative and build up a local following without simply imitating overseas groups'. L Zion, 'The Sound of Australian Music', in V Burgmann and J Lee (eds), *Constructing a Culture: A People's History of Australia Since 1788*, McPhee Gribble/Penguin, Victoria, 1988, p 222. However, Zion's claim is that there is nothing particularly Australian about the sound of these groups.

5 V Riley, 'Death Rockers of the World Unite! Melbourne 1978–80 Punk Rock or No Punk Rock?', in P Hayward (ed.), op. cit., p 113.

6 T Brabazon, *Tracking the Jack: A Retracing of the Antipodes*, University of New South Wales Press, Sydney, 2000, p 101.

7 ibid.

8 ibid.

9 Liner notes by Miles Keylock for *Jiving to the Weekend Beat*, Retro Fresh, 2006.

10 Brabazon, op. cit., p 106.

11 On Britpop and its antecedents, see N Zuberi, *Sounds English: Transnational Popular Music*, Illinois University Press, Urbana, Illinois, 2001, esp. Chapter 1, 'The Last Truly British People You Will Ever Know: The Smiths, Morrissey, and Britpop'; also D Hesmondhalgh, 'British Popular Music and National Identity', in D Morley and K Robbins (eds), *British Cultural*

Studies: Geography, Nationality, and Identity, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2001.

12 The origins of this tradition are made clear in Tommy Steele's 1960 no 5 hit, 'What A Mouth', a song first made popular by the music hall artist Harry Champion, and Herman's Hermits's 1965 recording of 'I'm Henery The Eighth, I Am', a huge hit for the band in the United States, and another song popularised by Champion.

13 T Taylor, *Global Pop: World Music, World Markets*, Routledge, New York, 1997.

14 J Fiske, *Reading the Popular*, Allen & Unwin, Boston, 1989, p 1.

15 J Connell and C Gibson, *Sound Tracks: Popular Music, Identity and Place*, Routledge, London, 2003, p 11.

16 B Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 'Sounds of Sensibility: Reflections on the Klezmer Revival', *Judaism: A Quarterly Journal of Jewish Life and Thought*, vol 47, no 1, 1998, pp 49–78.

17 R Williams, *The Long Revolution*, Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1965, p 64.

18 R Williams, *Marxism and Literature*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1977, p 132.

19 B Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, Verso, London, 1983, p 7.

20 In the original article I used the term 'pub rock'. I have changed this to Oz Rock because that is becoming the more common expression for the music that I'm writing about here.

21 A Stafford, *Pig City: From The Saints to Savage Garden*, University of Queensland Press, St Lucia, Queensland, 2004, p 2.

22 ibid., p 2.

23 T Brabazon, 'Introduction', in T Brabazon (ed.), *Liverpool of the South Seas: Perth and Its Popular Music*, University of Western Australia Press, Crawley, 2005, p 1.

24 ibid., p 2.

25 ibid., p 7.

26 ibid.

27 ibid., p 8.

28 D M Kent 'The Place of *Go-Set* in Rock & Pop Music Culture in Australia, 1966–1974', thesis presented for MA in Communication, University of Canberra, 2002, p 9.

29 See A Jamrozik, C Boland and R Urquhart, *Social Change and Cultural Transformation in Australia*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1995; also J Stratton, *Race Daze: Australia in Identity Crisis*, Pluto Press, Sydney, 1998.

30 G Smith, *Singing Australian: A History of Folk and Country Music*, Pluto Press, North Melbourne, 2005, p 145.

31 T Mitchell, *Popular Music and Local Identity: Rock, Pop and Rap in Europe and Oceania*, Leicester University Press, London, 1996, p 191. See also J Stratton, 'Lost in Music: Popular Music, Film and Multiculturalism', in Rebecca Coyle (ed.), *Reel Tracks: Australian Feature Film Music and Cultural Identities*, John Libby/Perfect Beat, London, 2005, pp 74–93.

32 One exception to this generalisation is Perth band the Tigers, led by Chris Cobilis, who have a track on their sophomore album, *Space Coyote*, released in 1999, titled 'Smells Like Greek Spirit', which is sung in Greek and has a clear Greek musical influence. Cobilis has a Greek heritage.

33 See, for example, P Ennis, *The Seventh Stream: The Emergence of Rocknroll in American Popular Music*, Wesleyan University Press, Hanover, 1992.

34 On *conjunto* see M Pena, *The Texas-Mexican Conjunto: History of a Working-class Music*, University of Texas Press, Austin, 1985. For a lighter introduction to *tejano* and *conjunto* see R Burr, *The Billboard Guide to Tejano and Regional Mexican Music*, Billboard Books, New York, 1999.

35 Quoted from 'BBC Radio 3 Awards for World Music' webpage, <www.bbc.co.uk/radio3/world/awardssusheela.shtml>, 30 August 2006.

36 M Cibula, 'The Death of World Music' review of Susheela Ramen, *Salt Rain*,
<www.popmatters.com/music/reviews/r/ramansusheela-salt.shtml>,
30 August 2006.

37 There is now a large and important academic literature on world music. It is not relevant to my argument here to discuss this; but see, for example, T Taylor, *Global Pop: World Music, World Markets*, Routledge, New York, 1997; S Feld, 'A Sweet Lullaby for World Music', *Public Culture*, vol 12, no 1, 2000, pp 145–71.

38 On world music in Australia it is well worth reading Tony Mitchell's critical analysis of Sirocco's *Ports of Call* album, and indeed Mitchell's section on world music in Australia of which this is a part, in *Popular Music and Local Identity*, pp 191–2.

39 Keith Potger of the Seekers was born in what was then Ceylon, now Sri Lanka, in 1941, and came to Australia when he was six. However, his mother was Irish/Dutch and his father Spanish/French (see <www.australianfestival.com/administration/musicapplications-summary.htm>) so, in Australia, he could pass as white.

40 'Atlantics' page on the *Howlspace* website,
<www.howlspace.com.au/en2/atlantics/atlantics.htm>, 30 August 2006.

41 B Thorpe, *Sex and Thugs and Rock 'n' Roll: A Year in Kings Cross 1963–1964*, Macmillan, Sydney, 1996, p 101.

42 In an article in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, 'It's a Man's World', Lindy Morrison writes that Lea recorded 'It's My Party' in 1959 but left O'Keefe's show when he refused to allow her to sing 'Hippy Hippy Shake', which he considered a 'male' song. See L Morrison, 'It's a Man's World', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 3 July 2004,
<www.smh.com.au/articles/2004/07/02/1088488146548.html>,
30 August 2006.

43 See M Sturma, *Australian Rock'n'Roll: The First Wave*, Kangaroo Press, Kenthurst, NSW, 1991, p 31.

44 For information on Lou Casch, see Peter Cox, 'The Ambonese Connection: Lou Casch, Johnny O'Keefe and the Development of Australian Rock and Roll', in *Perfect Beat: The Pacific Journal of Research into Contemporary Music and Popular Culture*, vol 2, no 4, 2006, pp 1–17.

45 On Australian rap see I Maxwell, 'Sydney Stylee: Hip Hop Down Under Comin' Up', in T Mitchell (ed.), *Global Noise: Rap and Hip-Hop Outside the USA*, Wesleyan University Press, Middletown, Conn., 2001, pp 259–79; and I Maxwell, *'Phat Beats, Dope Rhymes': Hip Hop Down Under Comin' Upper*, Wesleyan University Press, Middletown, 2003.

46 T Creswell and M Fabinyi, *The Real Thing: Adventures in Australian Rock 'n' Roll 1957–Now*, Random House, Milsons Point, NSW, 1999.

47 R Evans, 'The Tonic of Wildness: Johnny O'Keefe and Me, 1958–1998', *Perfect Beat: The Pacific Journal of Research into Contemporary Music and Popular Culture*, vol 5, no 1, pp 60–1.

48 P Doyle, 'Flying Saucer Rock and Roll: The Australian Press Confronts Early Rock and Roll', *Perfect Beat*, vol 4, no 3, p 26.

49 J Hayton and L Isackson, *Behind the Rock: The Diary of a Rock Band 1956–1966*, Select Books, Milsons Point, NSW, 1990, p 3.

50 ibid., p 17.

51 Since I wrote this Introduction, Peter Doyle has published a scholarly account of Little Richard's tour: 'Signs and Wonders', in *Meanjin*, vol 65, no 3, 2006, pp 15–23.

52 These and other reports of Little Richard's 1957 concerts in Australia can be found at: 'Five Concert Reviews from Australia 1957', <www.kolumbus.fi/timrei/lr/an57.html>, 30 August 2006.

53 Creswell and Fabinyi, op. cit., p 15.

54 See Alan Heffernan, *Big Shows: The Lee Gordon Years*, privately published by Alan Heffernan, Ashmore, p 217.

55 A radio show recording which includes interviews with and performances by the Platters, Freddie Bell and the Bellboys, and Bill Haley and the Comets, made during this tour, can be found on *Rock'n'Roll Radio: Australia 1957*, released by Rockstar in 2003.

56 M Deming, 'Song Review: "Back in the U.S.A."', on the All Music Guide website at: <www.allmusic.com/cg/amg.dll?p=amg&sql=33:1vjwe4e64x07>, 30 August 2006.

57 Evans, op. cit., p 61.

58 R Bowman, 'Rhythm-and-Blues Music', Microsoft® Encarta® Online Encyclopedia 2005, <http://encarta.msn.com>.

59 Quoted here from Doyle, op. cit., p 33.

60 Ennis, op. cit., p 329.

61 Taken from the liner booklet for the Missing Links's *Driving You Insane: The Complete Recordings of Australia's Wildest '60s Band*, Half A Cow Records, 1999.

62 D Nichols, 'The Missing Links: Prime Movers', *Puncture*, no 47, 2001, p 59.

63 Missing Links, Liner Booklet, *Driving You Insane*.

64 E Nimmervol, Liner Booklet, Chain, *Toward the Blues*, 30th Anniversary edition, 2001.

65 This quotation comes from a description of the Purple Hearts on the Milesago website: 'The Purple Hearts: Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne 1964–67', Milesago, <www.milesago.com/Artists/Purplehearts.htm>, 30 August 2006.

Chapter 1

1 This particular manifestation of an Australian sound will be discussed in Chapter Two. It is worth noting here that at the 2000 Australian Cultural Studies Association Conference in Brisbane, Christina George gave a paper on the cultural specificity of recent Australian popular music. The paper was entitled 'Re-making Genres—Surfing and Silverchair'. It argues that: 'Australian music in the 1990s and early twenty-first century is a hybrid form and collection of sounds, representing the nation in its current social and political status'.

2   Here it is important to acknowledge the ABC television series *Long Way to the Top*, available on VHS and DVD, which asserted this same point for a general audience. *Long Way to the Top*, Australian Broadcasting Corporation, 2006, <www.abc.net.au/longway/episode_2/>, 25 June 2006.

3   J Hammond Moore, *Over-sexed, Overpaid and Over Here: Americans in Australia, 1941–1945*, Queensland University Press, St Lucia, 1981.

4   On the influence of the American troops on jazz in Australia, see A Bisset, *Black Roots, White Flowers: A History of Jazz in Australia*, ABC Enterprises, Sydney, 1979, Chapter 5.

5   J Stratton, *The Young Ones: Working Class Culture, Consumption and The Category of Youth*, Black Swan Press, Perth, 1992, pp 92–3.

6   S Lees, *The 1950s—How Australia Became a Modern Society and Everyone Got a House and Car*, Hyland House, Melbourne, 1987, pp 127–9.

7   The idea of the cultural cringe was first introduced by the critic Arthur Phillips in the 1950s, but for a more recent discussion see the section 'The Colonial Cultural Cringe', in S Alomes, *When London Calls: The Expatriation of Australian Creative Artists to Britain*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1999.

8   C McGregor, 'Growing Up (Uncool): Pop Music and Young Culture in the '50s and '60s', in P Hayward (ed.), *From Pop to Punk to Postmodernism: Popular Music and Australian Culture from the 1960s to the 1990s*, Allen & Unwin, North Sydney, 1992, p 91.

9   ibid.

10 G Smith, 'Making Folk Music', *Meanjin*, vol 44, no 4, 1985, p 479.

11 For an earlier discussion of the Australian folk revival movement, see J S Manifold, *Who Wrote the Ballads: Notes on Australian Folksong*, Australasian Book Society, Sydney, 1964, Chapter 7.

12 G Smith and J Brett, 'Nation, Authenticity and Social Difference in Australian Popular Music: Folk, Country, Multicultural', *Journal of Australian Studies*, no 58, 1998, p 11.

13 C Walker, *Buried Country: The Story of Aboriginal Country Music*, Pluto Press, Annandale, NSW, 2000, p 31.

14 For an account of this tour, see A Heffernan, *Big Shows: The Lee Gordon Years*, privately published in Queensland, 2003.

15 On this history, see R Waterhouse, *From Minstrel Show to Vaudeville: The Australian Popular Stage 1788–1914*, New South Wales University Press, NSW, 1990. Waterhouse explains that there was a vogue for black-face minstrel shows. However, rather than sensitising the audience to African-American musical forms, these shows worked within the white musical sensibility of the audience.

16 D Laing, *The Sound of Our Time*, Quadrangle Books, Chicago, 1970, p 74.

17 I Chambers, *Urban Rhythms: Pop Music and Popular Culture*, Macmillan, Basingstoke, 1985, p 64.

18 D Bradley, *Understanding Rock 'n' Roll: Popular Music in Britain 1955–1964*, Open University Press, England, 1992, p 57.

19 Chambers, op. cit., p 64.

20 ibid., p 51.

21 J Peel and S Ravenscroft, *John Peel: Margrave of the Marshes*, Bantam, London, 2005, p 132.

22 C Gillett, *The Sound of the City*, Souvenir Press, London, 1971, p 301.

23 D Hebdige, *Subculture: The Meaning of Style*, Methuen, London, 1979, p 53.
24 N George, *The Death of Rhythm & Blues*, Omnibus Press, London, 1989, p 39. George has Leo Fender giving Monk Montgomery, the African-American jazz bass player, the prototype of the electric guitar in 1953.
25 Quoted in George, op. cit., pp 38–9. The addition of the drums to blues instrumentation was also very important. Muddy Waters moved to Chicago in 1943. Waters claims to have been the first to introduce drums to his line-up, which he did in the late 1940s.
26 The Rolling Stones's self-titled first album, released in 1964, only had one track written by Jagger/Richards, 'Tell Me (You're Coming Back To Me)'. The Stones's second single, released in 1963, was a Lennon/McCartney composition, 'I Wanna Be Your Man'. Their first single was a cover of a Chuck Berry song, 'Come On'. Their third single was a cover of Buddy Holly's 'Not Fade Away', emphasising the Bo Diddley beat. The Stones's first album of original material was *Aftermath*, released in 1966.
27 P Manuel, *Caribbean Currents: Caribbean Music from Rumba to Reggae*, Temple University Press, Philadelphia, 1995, p 154.
28 ibid., p 156.
29 See ibid., pp 156–9. See also C Foster, *Roots, Rock, Reggae: An Oral History of Reggae Music from Ska to Dancehall*, Billboard, New York, 1999, Chapter One: 'Ska-Ba-Do-Ska-Ba-Day: Skatalites' bandleader Tommy McCook'.
30 S Smith, *Dancing in the Street: Motown and the Cultural Politics of Detroit*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1999, p 5.
31 These figures are from British Chart Hits of the Sixties, <www.sixtiescity.com/60singles/60singles.htm>, 23 June 2006.
32 Chambers, op. cit., p 52.
33 ibid., p 62.
34 ibid., p 68.
35 ibid., p 73.
36 Bradley, op. cit., p 70.
37 *Long Way to the Top*, episode 2, 'Ten Pound Rockers 1963–1968', taken here from the notes on the website, Long Way to the Top, Australian Broadcasting Corporation, 2006, <www.abc.net.au/longway/episode_2/>, 25 June 2006.
38 For the purposes of this chapter, the best description of Elizabeth can be found in L Zion, 'The Impact of the Beatles on Pop Music in Australia', *Popular Music*, vol 6, no 3, 1987, pp 295–6.
39 M Peel, *Good Times, Hard Times: The Past and Future in Elizabeth*, Melbourne University Press, Carlton, 1995, p 114.
40 Zion, op. cit., p 301.
41 Hebdige, op. cit., p 52.
42 On the history of the White Australia policy, and the shift to multiculturalism, see S Castles et al. (eds), *Mistaken Identity: Multiculturalism and the Demise of Nationalism in Australia* (third edn), Pluto Press, Sydney, 1992; also J Stratton, *Race Daze: Australia in Identity Crisis*, Pluto Press, Sydney, 1998; and G Tavan, *The Long, Slow Death of White Australia*, Scribe, Carlton North, 2005.
43 Stratton, *The Young Ones*, op. cit., Chapter Three.
44 There are now two biographies of Johnny O'Keefe: J Bryden-Brown, *J O'K: The Official Johnny O'Keefe Story*, Doubleday, Sydney, 1982; and D Johnstone, *The Wild One: The Life and Times of Johnny O'Keefe*, Allen & Unwin, New South Wales, 2001.

45 These figures were kindly supplied by Ken Smith, who runs the Oz Net Music Chart site. The website address is <www.onmc.iinet.net.au/>. For comparison, during the same period (1963–1968) in the United States, the Supremes had twenty hits including eleven number ones, Stevie Wonder had thirteen hits, Martha Reeves and the Vandellas had twelve hits and Marvin Gaye, who had no hits in Australia, had eighteen US hits. Chuck Berry was in the American charts three times in this period and Otis Redding eleven times. (These figures are also courtesy of Ken Smith.)

46 For Billy Thorpe's own account, see B Thorpe, *Sex and Thugs and Rock 'n' Roll: A Year in King's Cross 1963–1964*, Macmillan, Sydney, 1996.

47 Thorpe: '(sings) Mashed potato, yeah, yeah ... (laughs). When I listen to the original, I mean the original by Rufus Thomas was like (renders song in big solid bluesy style) ... but ours was like (pinches nose and gives weedy, anaemic reading). Heh, it was just ridiculous! Like wind-up toys!' This interview can be found on the Billy Thorpe and the Aztecs Milesago website: Milesago, <www.milesago.com/artists/thorpe.htm>, 25 June 2006.

48 I would like to thank Lyn Nuttall of the poparchives (Sources of Australian Pop Records from the 50s, 60s and 70s) website for pointing this out to me. Poparchives can be found at <www.poparchives.com.au/home.php>. It was on the poparchives site that I found the original version of 'Mashed Potato' also.

49 Thorpe, op. cit., p 364.

50 This claim is made on the Billy Thorpe and the Aztecs Milesago website, at <www.milesago.com/Artists/thorpe.htm#Biography>. This site is an Australian Music Industry project and usually accurate. The single does not show up in the best-selling charts for either 1964 or 1965 which may be because the sales were split over the two years.

51 G A Baker, *The Beatles Down Under*, Wild & Woolley, NSW, 1982, p 43.

52 'The Easybeats' Milesago page', Milesago, <www.geocities.com/soho/square/8216/easybeats.htm>, 27 June 2006.

53 Zion, op. cit., p 294.

54 Chambers, op. cit., pp 51–2.

55 Baker, op. cit., p 55.

56 Some accounts have the Twilights supporting the Rolling Stones on their 1966 tour instead.

57 Baker, op. cit., p 9.

58 The intersection of English beat music with the Irish musical heritage is another topic again. Perhaps it is most obviously encapsulated in Them, and Van Morrison's later solo career. A history of Irish pop(ular) music can be found on the VHS/DVD release, *From a Whisper to a Scream*, dir. D Heffernan, Radio Telefis Eireann, 2001.

59 'The Twilights', Howlspace: Music from Australia and NZ, <www.howlspace.com.au/en/twilights/twilights.htm>, 25 June 2006.

60 'The Twilights', Milesago, 1999, <www.geocities.com/soho/square/8216/twilights.htm>, 25 June 2006.

61 Zion's concern in 'The Impact of the Beatles' is with why Australian popular music shifted its site of influence from the United States, to which the early rockers such as Johnny O'Keefe had looked, to Britain. His answer is related to the experiences of the high number of British migrants in the post–Second World War period, arguing that: 'the Easybeats and other "immigrant" groups shared ... a desire to reinvent

their respective cultural backgrounds in Australia due to feelings of displacement from their new home environment', p 304.

62 On *Bob Dylan* 'Baby, Let Me Follow You Down' is attributed to Ric Von Schmidt. In later performances Dylan clarifies that he learnt the song from Schmidt.

63 See R Unterberger, '(I Can't Get No) Satisfaction', All Music Guide, 2006, <www.allmusic.com/cg/amg.dll?p=amg&token=&sql=33:rfuvad7kw8cn>, 2 July 2006.

64 M Farren, 'The Stones 1962–2002 Special Collectors Editions', *Uncut*, no 56, 2002, p 70.

65 The best introduction to the Easybeats's music is the Easybeats's *Absolute Anthology 1965 to 1969*, put together by Glenn A Baker and released on vinyl in 1980. This double album also contains a discography and the most complete biography of the band available. Unfortunately, the CD version, released in 1995, while containing the same tracks, condenses the liner notes.

66 G A Baker, liner notes, Easybeats, *Absolute Anthology 1965 to 1969*, Albert Productions, 1980.

67 ibid.

68 ibid.

69 ibid.

70 ibid.

71 E Lee, *Folk Song and Music Hall*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1982.

72 See, for example, D Ewen, *The Life and Death of Tin Pan Alley: The Golden Age of American Popular Music*, Funk & Wagnalls, New York, 1964.

73 The Brill Building is located in Manhattan, at 1619 Broadway. After it was completed in 1931, it became a centre for the music publishing industry: 'The Brill Building in the early '60s was a classic model of vertical integration. There you could write a song or make the rounds of publishers until someone bought it. Then you could go to another floor and get a quick arrangement and lead sheet for $10; get some copies made at the duplication office; book an hour at a demo studio; hire some of the musicians and singers that hung around; and finally cut a demo of the song. Then you could take it around the building to the record companies, publishers, artists' managers or even the artists themselves. If you made a deal there were radio promoters available to sell the record'. Found at <www.history-of-rock.com/brill_building.htm>, 27 June 2006.

74 There is a double CD collection of covers of Vanda/Young songs compiled by Glenn A Baker. Released in 1992 on Sony, it is titled *Their Music Goes Round Our Heads*.

75 On this history, see Zion, op. cit., pp 291–311.

76 On the popular music of Suriname, see Manuel, op. cit., pp 221–31.

77 The Starfighters's homepage, <www.starfighters.info/inhoud/inhoud_10htm>.

78 This track was produced by the extraordinary independent English producer Joe Meek. Meek's heyday was before the Beat Boom. He specialised in melodic rock'n'roll, recording artists such as John Leyton and Heinz. He is most well known for producing 'Telstar' by the Tornados, the first single by an English group to make number one in the US charts. For a biography of Meek, see J Repsch, *The Legendary Joe Meek*, Woodford House, London, 1989.

79 Baker, liner notes, Easybeats.

80 'The Mojos', Merseybeat,
   <www.merseybeatnostalgia.co.uk/html/the_mojos.html>, 2 July 2006.
81 At this time Eric Clapton had just left John Mayall's Bluesbreakers and
   Peter Green had replaced him. John McVie was playing bass guitar with the
   band. The two would later form Fleetwood Mac with Mick Fleetwood.
82 'The Easybeats' Milesago page', Milesago.
83 Information on Roger Savage can be found at: 'Roger Savage', Milesago,
   2002, <www.milesago.com/Industry/savage-roger.htm>, 2 July 2006.
84 Quoted in Baker, liner notes, Easybeats.
85 ibid.
86 ibid.
87 Shel Talmy interview with Richie Unterberger at:
   <www.richieunterberger.com/talmy.html>, 27 June 2006.
88 A di Perna, 'Interview with Shel Talmy', *Guitar World*, October 1996,
   <www.thewho.net/articles/townshen/talmy.htm>, 27 June 2006.
89 A parallel history can be found in the transformation of Willie Dixon's
   'You Need Love', via Muddy Waters's version to the Small Faces's 'You
   Need Loving', which became Led Zeppelin's 'Whole Lotta Love'. Ian
   McLagan, who played organ with the Small Faces, describes how: 'When
   we would jam, we'd play Ray Charles, we'd play Booker T, we'd play Muddy
   Waters ... "You Need Loving", that really came from Willie Dixon's song,
   a Muddy Waters cut. Steve used a phrase from that. We used to jam on
   those things until [we'd say], 'That's one track right there'. (S Egan, 'Small
   Faces Feted with Debut Album Reissue', 27 December 2002,
   <www.rodstewartfanclub.com/about_rod/article/EpupAlFkuFnCQBgiK
   X.php>, 27 June 2006.) The track appeared on the eponymously titled first
   Small Faces album in 1966, credited to Steve Marriott and Ronnie Lane. It
   retained the basic riff and regular beat but lost the blues structure of the
   original. Led Zeppelin's hard rock revision, which emphasises the guitar
   riff and Robert Plant's huge voice equally, placing the beat in relation to
   the riff, is credited to Page, Plant, Jones and Bonham, that is, to Led
   Zeppelin. It appeared on *Led Zeppelin II* in 1969. Led Zeppelin were
   formed out of the Yardbirds, in which Jimmy Page played for a while.
   Page, the Led Zeppelin guitarist, had been Shel Talmy's favourite session
   guitarist. He worked on the early Kinks and Who tracks, among others.
   Page also produced *Led Zeppelin I* and *II*. Glyn Johns, who had worked as
   Talmy's recording engineer, engineered *Led Zeppelin I*.
90 di Perna, 'Interview with Shel Talmy'.
91 The follow-up album to *Good Friday* was recorded with Glyn Johns. The
   album was completed and titled *Good Times*, but contractual problems
   meant that it was never released. Most of the album finally came out under
   the title *The Shame Just Drained* in 1977. Claims about how the Easybeats
   were on the verge of a major breakthrough in England that never
   happened because of poor management often centre on the non-release of
   this album.
92 'AC/DC Milesago page', Milesago,
   <www.geocities.com/soho/square/8216/acdc.htm>, 27 June 2006.
93 ibid.
94 There is evidence that Vanda and Young were moving the band back
   towards their rock/R&B origins with songs like 'Good Times' and 'St
   Louis'. Originally recorded for the *Good Times* album, 'Good Times' was

released as a single in Britain, the United States and Australia in 1968. 'St Louis', on the *Friends* album (which was mostly a collection of Vanda and Young demos), was released as a single in the same countries in 1969. In a review of the Easybeats's *Absolute Anthology 1965 to 1969* at <www.milesago.com/Recommend/EasysAnthology.htm> DK describes 'St Louis' as 'an unmistakable signpost of the direction Vanda & Young would take a few years later with their greatest protégés, AC/DC'. The track reached number 100 in the American singles chart in November 1969.

Chapter 2

1 J Corfield, 'The Australian Style: Some Influences, Images and Myths Concerning Australia's Folk Culture Past and Present', in J Ramshaw (ed.), *Folklore in Australia: Proceedings of the 1st National Folklore Conference*, Melbourne, 1984, p 27. Corfield attributes this reference to Bill Scott, who has published widely on Australian folklore and folk song, but the precise source is obscure. This chapter was originally published as an article. My thanks go to the anonymous readers of this article for *Perfect Beat* who offered a number of suggestions and corrections.

2 The original, article version of this chapter, used the term 'pub rock' rather than Oz Rock. The two terms are quite interchangeable though, of course, their connotations are different. Over the last few years it has become more usual to use the term Oz Rock.

3 The most important exceptions here are AC/DC and INXS. This is not the place to discuss why these bands were more marketable outside Australia than, say, Cold Chisel, or even Midnight Oil. We should also not forget the exceptional success of that Anglo-Australian band The Bee Gees, who started out as pop ballad singers.

4 J Cockington, *Long Way to the Top: Stories of Australian Rock and Roll*, ABC Books, Sydney, 2001, p 184.

5 ibid.

6 ibid.

7 Doc Neeson, quoted in ibid., p 184.

8 See L Zion, 'The Impact of The Beatles on Pop Music in Australia: 1963–66', in *Popular Music*, vol 6, no 3, 1987, for a discussion of the importance of the migrant suburb of Elizabeth in this regard.

9 The biographical information about Neeson comes from 'The Angels' website, Howlspace, <www.howlspace.com.au/en2/angels/angels.htm>, 5 July 2006.

10 I would like to thank the folklorist Graham Seal for generously emailing me a bibliography of works on the ballad in Australia.

11 G Smith, 'Making Folk Music', *Meanjin*, vol 44, no 4, 1985, p 479.

12 ibid., p 480.

13 G Smith, 'Celtic Australia: Bush Bands; Irish Music and the Nation', *Perfect Beat*, vol 5, no 2, 2001, p 6.

14 ibid., p 5.

15 ibid., p 20.

16 *Long Way to the Top* is available on VHS and DVD from ABC publications, at <www.shop.abc.net.au/browse/promotion.asp?promoid=60>.

17 J Manifold, *Who Wrote the Ballads?*, Australasian Book Society, Sydney, 1964, p 7.

18 B Nettl, *Folk and Traditional Music of the Western Continents*, Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, 1973, p 47.

19 ibid.

20 E Lee, *Music of the People: A Study of Popular Music in Great Britain*, Barrie and Jenkins, London, 1970, p 73.

21 A Bold, *The Ballad*, Methuen, London, 1979, p 73.

22 Lee, op. cit., p 85.

23 ibid., p 83.

24 See also, for example, the first album by the Beasts of Bourbon, *The Axeman's Jazz*, released in 1984. Fronted by Tex Perkins, later of The Cruel Sea, the Beasts of Bourbon worked on the fringe of the Oz Rock scene playing a form of countrified hard rock sometimes described as psycho-country for the preoccupations of their songs' lyrics. *The Axeman's Jazz* includes the Perkins/Spencer P Jones composition 'Evil Ruby', in which Ruby murders her boyfriend, and 'Psycho', an American country song written by Leon Payne, in which the narrator murders a number of people, culminating in his mother. (The song's reference point is Alfred Hitchcock's film *Psycho*, itself based on Robert Bloch's novel of that name which, in turn, lifted off from the notorious Ed Gein case). On Weddings, Parties, Anything's third album, *The Big Don't Argue* (1989), there is a ballad composed by Mick Thomas called 'A Tale They Won't Believe'. This is about Alexander Pierce who, in 1823, escaped with seven other convicts from Macquarie Harbour in what is now Tasmania. On their way to Hobart they became so hungry that they resorted to killing and eating each other. Pierce was the only survivor. This composition, based on Robert Hughes's account in his book *The Fatal Shore*, makes clear the connections between Australia's murderous origins and the ballad tradition through its many transformations to today's Australian rock music. This song was one of the band's most popular.

25 'Death Is Not The End' appears on Bob Dylan's 1988 album *Down in the Groove*.

26 Bold, op. cit., p 74.

27 Originally 'Stagger Lee' was the account of a drunken bar room argument and murder. The inspiration for Cave's version's sexual material may well have derived from Robert Hunter's version for the Grateful Dead. This 'Stagger Lee' has Billy DeLyon's girlfriend revenging the death of her man by shooting Stagger Lee in the balls. The Grateful Dead's version can be found on their album *Shakedown Street*, Arista (1978).

28 Manifold, op. cit., p 23.

29 D Spooner, 'Come All Ye Folksongs: The Ballad in Australia', *Ormond Papers*, vol 4, 1987, p 111.

30 Lee, op. cit., p 84.

31 ibid., p 85.

32 ibid., p 93.

33 ibid.

34 ibid.

35 On the history of the music hall and vaudeville in Australia, see R Waterhouse, *From Minstrel Show to Vaudeville: The Australian Popular Stage 1788–1914*, University of New South Wales Press, Kensington, 1990.

36 See, for example, the live double album *Hope and Anchor Front Row Festival* released in 1979.

37 J Bratton, *The Victorian Popular Ballad*, Rowman & Littlefield, Totowa, 1975.
38 Manifold, op. cit., p 24; also C Semmler, 'From Dublin to the Bush', *Quadrant*, January–February 1979.
39 Manifold, op. cit., p 24.
40 The Chieftains's first album, *The Chieftains*, was released in 1963. Horslips's first album, *Happy to Meet, Sorry to Part*, was released in 1973.
41 T K Hoppen, *Ireland Since 1800: Conflict and Conformity*, Longman, London, 1989, p 110.
42 ibid.
43 P O'Farrell, *The Irish in Australia*, New South Wales University Press, Kensington, 1993, p 63.
44 ibid., p 71.
45 N Ó Ciosáin, *Print and Popular Culture in Ireland 1750–1850*, MacMillan, Basingstoke, England, 1997, p 190.
46 G Smith, 'Irish Music in Melbourne, 1950–1980', in P Bull et al. (eds), *Irish-Australian Studies: Papers Delivered at the Sixth Irish-Australian Conference*, July 1990, p 219.
47 ibid., p 221.
48 ibid., p 222.
49 B Meek, *Paddy Moloney and the Chieftains*, Gill & Macmillan, Dublin, 1987, p 93.
50 On the Beatles's tour, see G A Baker, *The Beatles Down Under*, Wild & Woolley, Glebe, 1982; also Zion, op. cit.
51 Manifold, op. cit., p 101.
52 G Jenkin, *Songs of the Great Australian Balladists*, Rigby, Adelaide, 1978, p 17.
53 <www.rich.durge.org/rolf/kangaroo.html>, 6 July 2006.
54 'Duncan' is credited to Pat Alexander. Slim Dusty tells the story of how he came to record the song, and meet the Duncan who inspired the lyric. (S Dusty and J McKean, *Slim Dusty: Another Day, Another Town*, Macmillan, Sydney, 1996, p 235–6). Confusingly, the 'Tex Morton: Boundary Rider' website at <www/nzedge.com/heroes/morton.html> credits Morton with writing the song and having a hit with it in the 1960s.
55 Nathan Porterfield, 'Hey, Hey, Tell 'em 'bout Us: Jimmie Rodgers Visits the Carter Family', in the Country Music Foundation (eds), *Country: The Music and the Musicians: From the Beginnings to the 90's*, Abbeville Press, New York, 1994, p 16.
56 Eric Watson writes that: 'The Columbia Gramophone Company began pressing records in Australia in December 1926. The following year the flood of American hillbilly records began.' E Watson, 'Country Music: The Voice of Rural Australia', in M Breen (ed.), *Missing in Action: Australian Popular Music in Perspective*, Verbal Graphics, Melbourne, 1987, p 53.
57 All the biography of Morton here comes from 'Tex Morton: Boundary Rider', New Zealand Edge, B Sweeney (ed.), <www.nzedge.com/heroes/morton.html>, 5 July 2006. A reader for *Perfect Beat* points out that we should be wary of claims about his life that derive from Morton. It seems that in his songbooks from the early 1940s he also asserted that he had been a Texan cowboy!
58 Watson, op. cit., pp 54–5.
59 This story is told in 'Tex Morton: Boundary Rider'.
60 Watson, op. cit., p 55.

61 S Dusty and J Lapsley, *Slim Dusty: Walk a Country Mile*, Rigby, Adelaide, 1984, p 23.

62 ibid., p 21.

63 ibid., p 38.

64 Slim Dusty provides a history of 'A Pub With No Beer'. According to this, Sheahan's poem was first published in the *North Queensland Register*, 1 January 1944. Slim Dusty subsequently recorded a number of other poems by Sheahan. (Dusty and Lapsley, op. cit., pp 117–21).

65 Spooner, op. cit., p 107.

66 ibid.

67 See his autobiography: Dusty and Lapsley, op. cit. It is worth remarking on the importance of Irish-background Australians to Australian popular music. For example, in addition to Slim Dusty, both Johnny O'Keefe and Kylie Minogue had Irish backgrounds.

68 Interestingly, on American websites Weddings, Parties, Anything are often described as alt. country. This identification of the band as alternative country suggests an American recognition of the band's country heritage which, in Australia, tends to be thought of more as a folk influence.

69 'The Bushwackers' website, <www.bushwackers.com.au>, 5 July 2006.

70 In contrast, the 1960s folk revival in England was just that, a working over of material which was no longer a part of the English musical sensibility. Even Pentangle, the most popular of the folk-rock bands—their album *Basket of Light* reached number five on the British charts in 1969—really only ever achieved a cult following.

71 Watson, op. cit., p 75.

72 The rock artist who most obviously provides a link with the Australian ballad tradition is Paul Kelly. Even a cursory perusal of his published lyrics (1999) will show this. 'From Little Things Big Things Grow,' written with Kev Carmody, the Aboriginal singer-songwriter and activist, is even in traditional ballad form. Kelly's first public performance is reputed to have been of the traditional bushranger ballad 'Streets Of Forbes', which ends with the bushranger being killed by the police and his body paraded round the town. However, I am not considering his work in detail here because he does not play hard rock and is not a part of the Oz Rock tradition. Nevertheless, we can see how well he sits in that tradition by noting that one of his longtime backing musicians has been Spencer P Jones, who worked with Tex Perkins in the Beasts of Bourbon and was one of the founding members of the psycho-country rock band the Johnnys (their album *Highlights of a Dangerous Life* was released in 1986). Kelly illustrates well how the continuing importance of the ballad tradition expands the discourse of rock music in Australia to include performers who elsewhere, say in the United States, would be positioned as folk or country performers.

73 This information comes from the Howlspace webpage for Weddings, Parties, Anything, at <www.howlspace.com.au/en2/weddingspartiesanything.htm>, 7 July 2006.

74 ibid.

75 Discussed in J Mouat, 'Making Australia's Past/Modern: The Music of Weddings, Parties, Anything', *Australian and New Zealand Studies in Canada*, no 6, 1991.

76 It is important to recognise here the significance of country music in
    Aboriginal society. On this, see Clinton Walker's groundbreaking book,
    Buried Country: The Story of Aboriginal Country Music (2000). The
    importance of the Australian ballad tradition is demonstrable in the work
    of, for example, Kev Carmody (whose most obvious influences include the
    Australian bush tradition and American folk music, early Bob Dylan in
    particular) and Archie Roach. That Roach is regarded in Australia as a
    mainstream popular music artist is itself, in part, a consequence of the
    ongoing relevance of the ballad tradition. It is also worth noting that Paul
    Kelly has worked with both artists.
77 Tex Perkins's given name is Gregory. I can find no information on why he
    uses the stage name 'Tex'. However, it not only carries an American
    reference, it also connotes Tex Morton who, the story goes, took his name
    from a sign he saw in a Waihi garage. The name, then, places Perkins within
    the Australian bush music tradition, acknowledging also the post-1920s
    commercial American country music influence on that tradition, in the
    first place as filtered through Tex Morton's work.
78 Versions of this song—ballad really—can be found on both the Beasts of
    Bourbon's *The Axeman's Jazz* and the Johnnys' *Highlights of a Dangerous
    Life*.
79 Thomas, cited in Mouat, op. cit.
80 For a history of the band, see A O'Grady, *Cold Chisel: The Pure Stuff*, Allen
    & Unwin, St Leonards, NSW, 2001; also M Lawrence, in E Nimmervol
    (ed.), *Showtime: The Cold Chisel Story: The First Decade and Beyond*,
    M Lawrence, Belmont, Victoria, 1998.
81 We need to keep clear on the fact that Morton's song was a protest against
    the Vietnam War while Redgum's and Cold Chisel's are about the plight of
    veterans. It is worth noting that there were other popular music songs
    protesting against the Vietnam War: Masters Apprentices's 'War Or Hands
    Of Time' and Johnny Young's 'Smiley'.
82 Cold Chisel website, <www.coldchisel.com.au/petrolheads.html>, 5 July
    2006.
83 Found at the Warner Music Australia website:
    <www.warnermusic.com.au/artists/press.asp?pressid=377>, 10 October
    2003.
84 It is instructive to listen to Tim Rogers's solo album, Tim Rogers and the
    Twin Set, *What Rhymes with Cars and Girls*, released in 1999. Rogers is the
    lead singer and composer of You Am I's songs. On *What Rhymes* one of
    his backing musicians is Jen Anderson, the violinist from Weddings,
    Parties, Anything. This, again, suggests the centrality of Weddings, Parties,
    Anything to Australian rock and does so through recognising the
    continuing importance of country music. Mark Neilsen, in his review of
    the album in *Drum Media*, notes that: 'Tim's gone and packed away his
    distortion pedal and left the rockin' electric guitar at home and produced a
    mighty fine album of acoustic numbers with a bit of country tinge to
    them.' ('You Am I' website, <www.youami.com.au/articles/cd_wrwcag.
    html>, 10 October 2003). *What Rhymes* is an album of songs about love,
    loss and relationships. It is not a ballad album either in content or song
    form. However, while the songs are about situations rather than events, the
    personal rather than the public, they still retain a narrative element and
    evidence the detail characteristic of the ballad tradition. This is in addition
    to the album's country influence, which can be seen to come out of the

continuing importance of country music in the Australian popular music sensibility, especially when we take into account that the album entered the Australian album chart at number fourteen.

Chapter 3

1   L Zion, 'The Impact of the Beatles on Popular Music in Australia, 1963–66', *Popular Music*, vol 6, no 3, 1987.
2   Graeme Turner, *Making It National: Nationalism and Australian Popular Culture*, Allen & Unwin, St Leonards, NSW, 1994, p 69.
3   E Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, Blackwell, Oxford, 1983.
4   B Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*, Verso, London, 1983, p 6.
5   Lawrence Zion, 'Disposable Icons: Pop Music in Australia, 1955–63', in *Popular Music*, vol 8, no 2, 1989, p 173.
6   S Homan, *The Mayor's a Square: Live Music and Law and Order in Sydney*, Local Consumption Publications, Newtown, 2003, p 89.
7   T Brabazon, *Tracking the Jack: A Retracing of the Antipodes*, University of New South Wales Press, Sydney, 2000.
8   D Nichols, *The Go-Betweens* (rev. edn), Verse Chorus, Portland, 2003, pp 35–6.
9   In this context there were at the time, and continue to be, questions about Radio Birdman's politics, which to many, including the Saints when they played a gig with Birdman in Sydney, appeared to have neo-fascist overtones.
10 Homan, op. cit., p 95.
11 J Stratton, *Race Daze: Australia in Identity Crisis*, Pluto Press, Sydney, p 126.
12 Turner, op. cit., p 12.
13 T O'Regan, *Australian National Cinema*, Routledge, London, 1996, p 67.
14 S Dermody and E Jacka, *The Screening of Australia*, vol 1, Currency Press, Sydney, 1988.
15 K Windschuttle, *The Media: A New Analysis of the Press, Television, Radio and Advertising in Australia*, Penguin, Ringwood, 1988, p 118.
16 ibid., p 120.
17 On this history, see Toby Miller, 'The Unmarking of Soccer: Making a Brand New Subject', in Tony Bennett et al., *Celebrating the Nation: A Study of Australia's Bicentenary*, St Leonards, 1992. However, this piece was written before Hill became chairman of Soccer Australia in 1995.
18 D Lowe, The Australian Music Charts, Southern Cross University (online), 2003, <www.scu.edu.au/schools/edu/student_pages/sem1_2003/dlowe/index.html>, 12 June 2006.
19 P Wilmoth, *Glad All Over: The Countdown Years 1974–1987*, McPhee Gribble, Ringwood, 1993, p 21.
20 G Turner, 'Australian Popular Music and Contexts', in P. Hayward (ed.), *From Pop to Punk to Postmodernism*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1992, p 16.
21 R Symons, 'Foreword', in Wilmoth, op. cit., n.p.
22 S Stockbridge, 'Rock Music on Australian TV', in Hayward, op. cit., p 103.
23 Wilmoth, op. cit., p 15.
24 ibid., p 154.
25 P Cox and L Douglas, *Teen Riots to Generation X: The Australian Rock Audience*, Powerhouse, Sydney, 1994, p 24.

26 in Wilmoth, op. cit., p 25.

27 ibid.

28 ibid., p 19.

29 in G A Baker, Marc Hunter: Biography, <www.hotshotdigital.com/WellAlwaysRemember.4/MarcHunterBio.html>, 25 June 2006.

30 Homan, op. cit., p 88

31 These figures come from the relevant *Year Book Australia* put out each year by the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

32 D M Kent '*Go-Set*: Life and Death of an Australian Pop Magazine', at <www.milesago.com/Misc/go-set.htm>.

33 C Walker, *Stranded: The Secret History of Australian Independent Music, 1977–1991*, Pan Macmillan, Sydney, 1996, p 16.

34 D Kimball, 'Rolling Stone (Australia)', Milesago, <www.milesago.com/press/rollingstone.htm>, 13 June 2006.

35 G Smith, *Singing Australian: A History of Folk and Country Music*, Pluto Press, North Melbourne, 2005, p 168.

36 At the same time Dave Warner and Skyhooks had more in common than this suggests. Warner's band, Pus, used stage costuming, for example. Alan Howard in *Dave Warner* (p 122) writes that 'The Monster's Back' 'playfully accused Eastern States group Skyhooks, although not by name, of having become popular by ripping-off Warner's ideas in costuming and use of outrageous song lyrics'.

37 In *Stranded* (p 27), Clinton Walker writes about Radio Birdman that: 'It still seems strange that a band from Sydney could have inspired a genre, a legion of copyists, generally described as "Detroit"'.

38 G Turner, 'Australian Popular Music and Contexts', in Hayward, op. cit., p 22.

39 Homan, op. cit., p 95.

40 ibid., p 96.

41 D Horne, *The Lucky Country: Australia in the Sixties* (third rev. edn), Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1971, p 29.

42 R Howe, 'Inner Suburbs: From Slums to Gentrification', in L C Johnson (ed.), *Suburban Dreaming: An Interdisciplinary Approach to Australian Cities*, Deakin University Press, Geelong, 1994, p 155.

43 ibid., p 155.

44 There is a CD release of a Saints rehearsal tape from 1974 called *The Most Primitive Band in the World*.

45 Walker, op. cit., p 12.

46 ibid., p 18.

47 ibid., p 19.

48 See V Johnson, *Radio Birdman*, Sheldon Booth, St Kilda, 1990, p 6.

49 Walker, op. cit., p 18.

50 A Stafford, *Pig City: From the Saints to Savage Garden*, University of Queensland Press, St Lucia, 2004, pp 52, 72.

51 R Kennedy and R McNutt, *Little Labels—Big Sound*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 2001, p x.

52 Cox and Douglas, op. cit., p 31.

53 Walker, op. cit., p 34.

54 ibid., p 16.

55 ibid., p 14.

56 A Howard, *Dave Warner: Suburban Boy*, Creative Research, Perth, 1981, p 14.
57 78 Records website, <www.78records.com.au>, 25 June 2006.
58 ibid.
59 Homan, op. cit., p 88.
60 D Pepperell, 'The Beginning of Missing Link: The Story of Archie and Jughead', in *Missing Link Newsletter*, no 16, 2004, <http://missinglink.net.au/newsletter.php?issue=mar0402&PHPSESSID=fe47aaef5133aa94253dca9084481bca>, 13 June 2006.
61 Pepperell, op. cit.
62 S Gardner, 'The Big Beat in the Heart of the Vinyl Jungle', Noise for Heroes, <www.nkvdrecords.com/author.htm>, 14 June 2006.
63 Homan, op. cit., p 89.
64 Stafford, op. cit., p 31
65 Homan, op. cit., p 95.
66 'Perth Is a Culture Shock' can be found on the vinyl compilation of the Victims's material *All Loud on the Western Front*.
67 S Gardner, 'Kim Salmon Talks about the Scientists, the Surrealists, and the Rest of his Amazing Career', Noise for Heroes, <www.nkvdrecords.com/kimsalmon.htm>, 14 June 2006.
68 Stafford, op. cit.
69 Given what I am arguing about the way Midnight Oil expressed their politics, it is not surprising that, in 2004, Peter Garrett should get endorsement as a Labor candidate. In 1984 Garrett had stood as a candidate for the Nuclear Disarmament Party.
70 Homan, op. cit., p 110.
71 'Songfacts' website.

Chapter 4

1   K Salmon, Liner Booklet for reissued *Pissed on Another Planet*, Citadel, 2004.
2   D Warner, Dave Warner Online, 2004, <www.davewarner.com.au/biography.html>, 13 July 2006.
3   S Cohen, *Rock Culture in Liverpool*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1991, quoted in J Connell and C Gibson, *Sound Tracks: Popular Music, Identity and Place*, Routledge, London, 2003, p 13.
4   Salmon, op. cit.
5   M Bracewell, *England Is Mine: Pop Life in Albion from Wilde to Goldie*, Flamingo, London, 1997, p 24.
6   ibid., p 111.
7   R T Appleyard, 'Western Australia: Economic and Demographic Growth, 1850–1914', in C T Stannage (ed.), *A New History of Western Australia*, University of Western Australia Press, Perth, 1981, p 215.
8   ibid., pp 221–2.
9   R Howe, 'Inner Suburbs: From Slums to Gentrification', in L C Johnson (ed.), *Suburban Dreaming: An Interdisciplinary Approach to Australian Cities*, Deakin University Press, Geelong, 1994, p 145.
10 ibid.
11 ibid., p 148.
12 G Woods, '1901: A Socio-Economic Profile of Australia at Federation', Parliament of Australia: Parliamentary Library, 2001,

<www.aph.gov.au/library/pubs/rn/2000-01/01RN23.htm>,   13   July
2006.

13 J Gregory, *City of Light: A History of Perth Since the 1950s*, City of Perth,
Perth, 2003, p 7.

14 Jenny Gregory has published an article which includes a discussion of the
development of the suburb of Nedlands in the period between the first
and second world wars. Nedlands is a middle-class suburb close to the city
and this article illustrates well the development of suburban Perth. See
J Gregory, 'Protecting Middle-Class Suburbia: An Ideal Space for the
Citizens of Interwar Perth', *Studies in Western Australian History*, no 17,
1997, pp 77–91. Also available at
<http://search.informit.com.au/fullText;res=APAFT;dn=980303144>.

15 For a history of Subiaco, see Ken Spillman, *Identity Prized: A History of
Subiaco*, University of Western Australia Press, Perth, 1985. Spillman
(p 339) writes: 'While during the early and mid-seventies [during the time
of Perth city's urban renewal] Subiaco had fought to remain intact, its
population had become more and more a population of "Subiacophiles",
and the passions of these people had been reflected ... in an unprecedented
interest in the renovation of old houses and in the formation of
community-interested groups.'

16 S Kinnane, *Shadow Lines*, Fremantle Arts Centre Press, Fremantle, 2003,
p 167.

17 Gregory, op. cit., pp 318–9.

18 ibid., p 249.

19 ibid.

20 ibid., pp 243–4.

21 This information is from *The West Australian*'s 175th Anniversary
Souvenir, *WA's Defining Moments, part four 1958–1970*.

22 Salmon, op cit.

23 ibid.

24 Gregory, op. cit., p 245.

25 *The West Australian*'s 175th Anniversary Souvenir.

26 Gregory, op. cit., p 251.

27 Howe, op. cit., p 157.

28 D Nichols, *The Go-Betweens* (rev. edn), Verse Chorus, Portland, 2003, p 27.

29 ibid., p 31.

30 Kuepper, quoted in C Walker, *Stranded: The Secret History of Australian
Independent Music, 1977–1991*, Pan Macmillan, Sydney, 1996, p 14.

31 Nichols, op. cit., p 31.

32 Gregory, op. cit., p 192.

33 ibid., p 71.

34 R N Ghosh, 'Economic Development and Population Growth in Western
Australia since 1945', in Stannage, op. cit., p 287.

35 Gregory, op. cit., p 58.

36 Ghosh, op. cit., p 289.

37 G Turner, 'Australian Popular Music and Its Contexts', in P Hayward (ed.)
*From Pop to Punk to Postmodernism: Popular Music and Australian Culture from
the 1960s to the 1990s*, Allen & Unwin, North Sydney, 1992, p 23.

38 D Warner, Dave Warner Online.

39 On Radio Birdman see Vivien Johnson, *Radio Birdman*, Sheldon Booth,
Melbourne, 1990.

40 A Howard, *Dave Warner: Suburban Boy*, Creative Research, Perth, 1981, pp 43–4.

41 ibid., p 52.

42 ibid., p 55.

43 C Mele, *Selling the Lower East Side: Culture, Real Estate, and Resistance in New York City*, University of Minnesota Press, 2000, <www.upress.umn.edu/sles/chapter5/ch5-1.html>, 13 July 2006.

44 'Slum Goddess', *The Plastic Exploding Inevitable*, in *Aspen*, no 3, <www.ubu.com/aspen/aspen3/plastic.html#ginsberg>, 13 July 2006.

45 C Walker, *Stranded: The Secret History of Australian Independent Music, 1977–1991*, Pan Macmillan, Sydney, 1996, p 27.

46 Howard, op. cit., p 127.

47 In the liner notes for *Suburbs in the '70s*, Warner writes that during the time this live collection was being recorded: 'The Hoodoo Gurus' Dave Faulkner was cutting his teeth on punk band The Victims and was a regular visitor to our gigs along with alternative music legend James Baker.'

48 Homan suggests the evolution of Oz Rock out of the Australian blues-rock bands of the early 1970s. S Homan, *The Mayor's a Square: Live Music and Law and Order in Sydney*, Local Consumption Publications, Newtown, 2003, p 88.

49 Howard, op. cit., p 149.

50 The original is to be found on Country Joe and the Fish's first album *Electric Music for the Mind and Body*, released in 1967.

51 D Warner, quoted in Howard, op. cit., p 129.

52 Warner, Dave Warner Online.

53 Howard mentions the Doors as another band in Warner's extensive musical knowledge. Howard, op. cit.

54 ibid., p 93.

55 ibid., p 94.

56 For a biography of Ian Dury, see R Balls, *Sex and Drugs and Rock'n'Roll: The Life of Ian Dury*, Omnibus Press, London, 2000.

57 See, for example, John Lahr, *Dame Edna Everage and the Rise of Western Civilisation: Backstage with Barry Humphries*, Bloomsbury, London, 1991. Humphries developed the personas of Edna Everage and Sandy Stone in the late 1950s. Lahr describes Stone as 'the sad, childless, credulous Australian Mr Pooter'; Everage as 'an amalgam of the suburban Australian 1950s, as well as an embodiment of a nascent spirit of critical self-awareness' (pp 90, 90–1). It is important to see Warner's ambivalence about suburbia in the tradition of Humphries's.

58 It should also be noted that Baker drummed with that important Australian grunge/rock band, the Beasts of Bourbon, formed in 1983, in which Salmon played as well. At different times other members of the Scientists—Boris Sujdovic, Tony Thewlis, Brett Rixon—also played in the Beasts.

59 G Brooker, 'Under Your Mushroom: A Brief History of The Stems', in Let Them Eat Lead, <http://letthemeatlead.com/article.php?a=archives/issue3/stems.htm>, 5 May 2002.

60 Salmon, op. cit.

61 'Hoodoo Gurus', Howlspace: Music from Australia and NZ, <www.howlspace.com.au/en2/hoodoogurus/hoodoogurus.htm>, 13 July 2006.

62 D Warner, *City of Light*, Fremantle Arts Centre Press, Fremantle, WA, 1995, p 71.

63 Chip Taylor, who happens to be actor Jon Voight's brother, also wrote 'Angel of the Morning'.

64 L Bangs, in G Marcus (ed.), *Psychotic Reactions and Carburetor Dung*, Serpent's Tail, London, 2001, p 55.

65 ibid.

66 ibid., p 58.

67 M Foucault, 'Preface to Transgression', *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews*, Blackwell, Oxford, 1977, p 34.

68 ibid.

69 Bangs, op. cit., p 205.

70 ibid., p 206.

71 F Botting, *Gothic*, Routledge, London, 1996, p 7.

72 Those American arch-power popsters, the Ramones, covered 'I Can't Control Myself' on an album of psychedelic and early rock classics they released in 1993/94, called *Acid Eaters*.

73 Howard, op. cit., p 58.

74 ibid., pp 127–8.

75 In an interview with online Mod Magazine Salmon says, referring to left-field Memphis producer Jim Dickinson, 'the record he produced for Alex Chilton, *Like Flies on Sherbet*, really informed my musical direction for a good decade' (quoted in 'Kim's in the Kitchen', Mod Magazine, <www.silvergirl.com/ModKSalmonInterview.html>, 13 July 2006). In the liner booklet for the Citadel reissue of *Blood Red River*, Salmon describes how, when he asked Tony Thewlis to join the Scientists mk II, Thewlis understood what he was being asked to play after listening to *Like Flies on Sherbet* (K Salmon, Liner Booklet for reissued *Blood Red River*, Citadel, 2000). Thewlis had previously played in Perth New Wave band the Helicopters.

76 Alex Chilton first found fame in 1967 with the Boxtops. He subsequently co-led Big Star, one of the most influential rock bands of the early 1970s, a band that helped invent power-pop.

77 Salmon, op. cit.

78 After the break-up of the Cheap Nasties, Neil Fernandez (guitar) and Mark Betts (drums) were founding members of the Manikins in 1978.

79 Brooker, op. cit.

80 J McPharlin, 'Review—Cmon Everybody', The Chevelles Website, <www.thechevelles.com/reviews.htm>, 11 May 2002.

81 L Torn, 'The Chevelles: Girl God (Zip Records)', The Chevelles Website, <www.thechevelles.com>, 13 July 2006.

82 I would like to thank Kristen Phillips for pointing out to me the Jebediah connection with the Troggs and for telling me about the Bob Evans album.

83 'Jebediah', Whammo: The Worldwide Home of Australasian Music and More Online, <www.whammo.com.au/encyclopedia.asp?articleid=1049>, 15 May 2002.

84 As it happens the Invaders was the name of the short-lived band of which Salmon was a member in between the Cheap Nasties and the Scientists.

85 B Evans, 'Biography', Bob Evans: Suburban Kid,
    <bobevans.entertainmentit.com/bio.htm>, 9 May 2002.
86 Evans, op. cit.

Chapter 5

1   K Salmon interviewed in B Blunt, *Blunt: A Biased History of Australian Rock*, Prowling Tiger Press, Northcote, 2001, p 15.
2   G Moon interviewed in ibid., p 151. Sub Pop was of course the Nirvana record label.
3   M Arm interviewed in ibid., p 153.
4   A Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1996, p 29.
5   ibid., p 29.
6   ibid., p 31.
7   R Burnett, *The Global Jukebox: The International Music Industry*, Routledge, London, 1996, p 18.
8   K Negus, *Producing Pop: Culture and Conflict in the Popular Music Industry*, Arnold, London, 1992, p 10.
9   Burnett, op. cit., pp 47–8.
10 K Negus, *Music Genres and Corporate Cultures*, Routledge, London, 1999, p 153.
11 ibid., p 156.
12 Burnett, op. cit., p 49.
13 ibid., p 49.
14 ibid., pp 49–50.
15 M Chanan, *Repeated Takes: A Short History of Recording and Its Effects on Music*, Verso, London, 1995, p 103.
16 Paul Martin reviewing Various Artists, *The Clarion Call: R&B, Mod and Pop Psych from Down Under* in Shindig! Magazine online at <www.shindig-magazine.com/reviews-mar2003-1.html>.
17 Bon Scott, who migrated from Scotland with his family when he was four, joined AC/DC in 1974.
18 J Gilbert and E Pearson, *Discographies: Dance Music, Culture, and the Politics of Sound*, Routledge, London, 1999, p 41.
19 ibid., p 44.
20 A short introduction to youth culture in Perth is Jon Stratton, 'Youth Culture', in J Gregory et al. (eds), *The Historical Encyclopedia of Western Australia*, University of Western Australia Press, forthcoming.
21 C Humphrey, *Loser: The Real Seattle Music Story*, Abrams, New York, 1999, p 10.
22 R Dangel in B Miller, *Liner Notes, The Fabulous Wailers at the Castle*, Norton, 1962.
23 V Kalmar, *Label Launch: A Guide to Independent Record Recording, Promotion and Distribution*, St Martin's Press, New York, 2002, p 2.
24 P Ennis, *The Seventh Stream: The Emergence of Rocknroll in American Popular Music*, Wesleyan University Press, Hanover, 1992, p 176.
25 R Kennedy and R McNutt, *Little Labels—Big Sound*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 2001, p 61. This book provides a good outline of the history of independent labels in the United States, especially in the Introduction, subheaded 'Little Labels and the American Beat, 1920–1970'.

26 Kalmar, op. cit., p 6.
27 The foundational article is R Peterson and David Berger, 'Cycles in Symbol Production: The Case of Popular Music', *American Sociological Review*, vol 40, no 1, 1975, pp 158–73.
28 Ian McNay, at <http://www.cherryred.co.uk/bootks/indiehits/ianintro.htm>.
29 Burnett, op. cit., p 59.
30 Negus, *Music Genres and Corporate Cultures*, p 158.
31 C Walker, *Stranded: The Secret History of Australian Independent Music 1977–1991*, Pan Macmillan, Sydney, 1996, p 48.
32 ibid., p 31.
33 ibid., pp 35–6.
34 C Johnson, K records, <//www.krecs.com/html/info/>, 21 July 2006.
35 ibid.
36 Appadurai, op. cit., p 32.
37 Pavitt quoted in Humphrey, op. cit., p 48.
38 T Moore, *The Mix Tape: The Art of Cassette Culture*, Universe, New York, 2005. For another discussion of mixtapes see K Fox, 'Mixed Feelings: Notes on the Romance of the Mixed Tape', *Rhizomes*, no 5, 2002, <www.rhizomes.net/issue5/fox.html>.
39 A Ogg and D Upshal, *The Hip Hop Years: A History of Rap*, Channel 4 Books, London, 1999, p 41.
40 One general discussion of mixtapes can be found on Wikipedia, at <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mixtape>.
41 The music and information can be found on the Saints' *The Most Primitive Band In The World*, released by Hot Records.
42 C Joyce, 'The official Mr Epp Biography', <www.unofficial-mudhoney.com/sideprj/epp/>.
43 For details see the liner notes to the selection from that tape released on CD in 2004. The CD is titled *The Manikins*.
44 C Walker, 'Terse Tapes' Lucky Dip of Quasi-Normality', *Inner City Sound: Punk and Post-Punk in Australia 1976–1985* (rev. edn), Verse-Chorus Press, Portland, 2005, pp 150–1.
45 S Jones, 'The Cassette Underground', in R James (ed.), *The Cassette Mythos*, Autonomedia, New York, 1992.
46 J Foster, 'Op, "Castanets", and the Cassette Revolution', in James, op. cit.
47 Johnson, <www.krecs.com/html/info/>.
48 ibid.
49 J Ankeny, 'Beat Happening', All Music Guide, <www.allmusic.com/cg/amg.dll?p=amg&sql=11:myev97i7krat~T1>.
50 D Hesmondhalgh, 'Indie: The Institutional Politics and Aesthetics of a Popular Music Genre', *Cultural Studies*, vol 13, no 1, 1999, p 38.
51 ibid.
52 Ankeny, op. cit.
53 N Abebe, All Music Guide, <www.allmusic.com/cg/amg.dll?p=amg&sql=10:tb5uak4khm3z>, describes Beat Happening's first album this way: 'Beat Happening can't be given credit for creating the indie pop genre, but they certainly gave it life in America. This, their first album, is indie pop in its purest form: fuzzy bedroom recordings of simplistic, cutesy songs, with intentionally innocent and juvenile lyrics, which Calvin Johnson belts out with one of the most endearingly bad voices in music history.'

54 Walker, op. cit., p 151.
55 D Nichols, email to the author, 22 December 2005.
56 ibid.
57 One version of this story can be found in the booklet accompanying the Beat Happening box set. The booklet, like the box set, is titled *Crashing Through* and was written by Lois Maffeo. Everett True gives another version of this story in his book, *Live Through This: American Rock Music in the Nineties*, Virgin Books, London, pp 83–4.
58 Quoted in the *Crashing Through* booklet, Johnson says: 'Even though the situation [with Rough Trade] didn't work out that well, the fact that he [Geoff Travis] made that call [to Johnson] was very sustaining at the time. The way it affected us was that by our record coming out in England, it reached people there who hadn't been aware of us—people like The Pascals and The Vaselines and Teenage Fanclub.' (Quoted in L Maffeo booklet, *Crashing Through*, K records, 2002.)
59 S Huey, 'Green River', All Music Guide, <www.allmusic.com/cg/amg.dll?p=amg&sql=11:0cu1z85ajyv6~T1>.
60 Humphrey, op. cit., p 74.
61 ibid., p 74.
62 ibid., p 62.
63 ibid., p 62.
64 'Grunge', Wikipedia, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grunge_music>.
65 Salmon interviewed in Blunt, op. cit., p 15.
66 R Cabut, personal communication with the author.
67 David Nichols tells me that there was a Sydney fanzine in 1985 titled *Grunge It Severely* and that the *Rolling Stone Big Australian Rock Book*, published in 1985, informs readers that the Sydney band Box of Fish 'describe themselves as "grunge"'.
68 Office of the Seattle Mayor, <www.ci.seattle.wa.us/music/history.htm>.
69 The best introduction to the 1960s Northwest sound is Various Artists, *The History of Northwest Rock*, vol 2.
70 There is a history of the remarkable career of 'Louie Louie' at <www.louielouie.net/01-welcome.htm>. Also, Dave Marsh has written a book about the song, *Louie Louie*, Hyperion Press, New York, 1993.
71 C Koda, All Music Guide, <www.allmusic.com/cg/amg.dll?p=amg&sql=11:61e67uq0h0j0~T1>.
72 ibid.
73 Humphrey, op. cit., p 64.
74 ibid.
75 ibid. As it happens, on their first album *Songs the Lord Taught Us*, the Cramps cover the Sonics's 'Strychnine'.
76 K Salmon, interviewed in Noise for Heroes, <www.nkvdrecords.com/kimsalmon.htm>.
77 IRS Records was founded by Miles Copeland. The label started in 1979 and had a distribution deal with A&M. In 1994 IRS was bought by EMI and was closed down in 1996.
78 Walker, op. cit., p 85.
79 The lead guitar repeated descending run on 'Swampland' is remarkably similar to the repeated descending run on the English rock'n'roll band Johnny Kidd and the Pirates's 1960 track 'Shakin' All Over'.

80 The best introduction to Australian garage rock of the 1960s is Various
    Artists, *Ugly Things—the CD*.

81 R Unterberger, All Music Guide,
    <www.allmusic.com/cg/amg.dll?p=amg&sql=11:rlf6zfaheh4k~T1>.

82 Arm quoted in Blunt, op. cit., p 153.

83 The same goes for New York. Damien Lovelock, the singer with the
    Celibate Rifles, tells how, at CBGBs, where the band's 1986 live album *Kiss
    Kiss Bang Bang* was recorded: 'we walked on and I didn't open my eyes for
    four songs, I was so nervous ... I remember I opened my eyes and all these
    people, their lips were moving, they knew every fucking word to every
    Rifles song! And nothing was released in America in those days, basically
    nothing released in America, we don't have deals there. So it was all import
    and we had no comprehension that people had ever heard of us there.'
    (Quoted from T Hutchison, *Your Name's on the Door*, reproduced in
    Celibate Rifles, <www.celibaterifles.com/critique.html>).

84 Humphrey, op. cit., p 28.

85 ibid., p 81.

86 ibid., p 82.

87 D Anderson, *Backlash*, November 1988, quoted in Humphrey, op. cit.,
    p 69.

88 Walker, op. cit., p 171.

89 J Dougan, All Music Guide,
    <www.allmusic.com/cg/amg.dll?p=amg&sql=11:m7rvad4kv8w2~T1>.

90 R Ahn, quoted in Blunt, op. cit., p 151.

91 There is another history here of cultural counter-flows which is important
    and complements the story that I have been telling. Johnson became
    friendly with David Nichols, of the Sydney band the Cannanes. He and
    Louise (Zeb) Olsen went to Olympia in 1989. In a personal email Nichols
    writes: 'We went there because I had a longstanding (well, by that stage, 5
    years) friendship/correspondence with Calvin Johnson. This came about
    because he was interested in cassette fanzines/magazines and he read
    about my (usually paper, sometimes cassette) fanzine in *Fast Forward* and
    sent me a Beat Happening cassette, *Three Tea Breakfast*, which I really took
    to. Calvin put out a couple of the early Cannanes releases on K, and that
    band had been inspired by Beat Happening (in attitude rather than sound
    I feel).' Nichols goes on to explain that he and Zeb Olsen first visited
    Olympia in 1986. (This was when he was given the copies of the Beat
    Happening's first album by Calvin Johnson to distribute in London.) Olsen
    co-founded the all-girl (with the exception of the drummer) Matrimony in
    Sydney at the end of 1988. Matrimony made one album, *Kitty Finger*,
    funded, as Nichols has told me, from *Smash Hits*' glee club money derived
    from the sale of review copies of records. Nichols was working for *Smash
    Hits* at the time. Nichols and Olsen went back to the Northwest. Olsen
    recorded two singles with Tobi Vail, later of Bikini Kill, and Calvin
    Johnson as a guest in a band called the Go-Team. Nichols played drums
    on the first single ('Outside'/'Stay Ready' released on K in February 1989).
    A then-unknown guitarist called Kurt Cobain played on the second single
    ('Scratch It Out'/'Bikini Twilight' released on K in July, 1989). Olsen then
    toured with Kathleen Hanna in Viva Knievel. Here, then, is a direct
    connection between the Australian sound and Cobain prior to Nirvana.
    What the impact of this counter-flow was on Cobain and Nirvana's music
    is difficult to gauge in isolation. Hanna went on to form Bikini Kill, kick-

starting the riot grrrl phenomenon. Hanna has always acknowledged the importance of Matrimony as an influence on her music and on Bikini Kill. In 1997 Hanna persuaded the Olympia independent label Kill Rock Stars, which had released the Bikini Kill records, to re-release *Kitty Finger*.

92 On the All Music Guide website, Stephen Thomas Erlewine describes this example of arena rock: 'This is unabashedly mainstream rock, but there's a real urgency to the songs and the performances that gives it a real emotional core, even if the production keeps it tied to the early, previsual 80s. And so what if it does, because this is great arena rock, filled with hooks as expansive as Three Rivers Stadium and as catchy as the flu.'

93 C Cross, *Heavier than Heaven: A Biography of Kurt Cobain*, Hodder & Stoughton, England, 2001, pp 45–6. The other information here on Cobain's music preferences also comes from Cross.

94 Humphrey, op. cit., p 138.

95 ibid., p 138.

96 T King, *The Operator: David Geffen Builds, Buys and Sells the New Hollywood*, Random House, New York, 2000, p 448.

97 King, ibid., pp 448–9.

98 For a biography of David Geffen, see Tom King, op. cit. For background to the California singer-songwriter scene to which Geffen was so important, see Barney Hoskyns, *Hotel California: Singer-Songwriters and the Cocaine Cowboys in the LA Canyons, 1967–1976*, Fourth Estate, London, 2005.

99 True, op. cit., p 9. On the bootleg of Nirvana's 1992 Reading Festival set the band actually begins playing 'More Than A Feeling' before moving on to 'Smells Like Teen Spirit.'

1   D Marsh, in *Louie Louie*, discusses the similarity of 'More Than a Feeling' to 'Louie Louie' on p 155, and devotes three pages (204–7) to what he considers are the similarities between 'Louie Louie' and 'Smells Like Teen Spirit'.

2   Marsh, op. cit., p xiv.

3   J Poneman, interviewed by S Tartan, 'Sub Pop's Second Coming', *The Japan Times*, 26 January 2005, reproduced at <http://search.japantimes.co.jp/print/features/music2005/fm20050126a 1.htm>.

Chapter 6

1   H Gans, 'Urbanism and Suburbanism As Ways of Life: Re-evaluation of Definitions', in S F Fava (ed.), *Urbanism in World Perspective: A Reader*, Crowell, New York, 1968, pp 63–80.

2   ibid., p 66.

3   ibid.

4   F Cull, 'The Wide Open Road—Filling the Potholes', in T Brabazon (ed.), *Liverpool of the South Seas: Perth and Its Popular Music*, University of Western Australia Press, Perth, 2005, p 24.

5   J Gregory, *City of Light: A History of Perth Since the 1950s*, City of Perth, Perth, 2003, pp 183–4.

6   M Ticher, 'The Triffids', *Snipe*, no 1, 1985, reproduced in The Triffids, 27 June 2005, <http://home.tiscali.be/the.triffids/interviewsnipe.htm>, 28 October 2005.

7   J Archer, 'Colonial Suburbs in South Asia, 1700–1850, and the Spaces of Modernity', in R Silverstone (ed.), *Visions of Suburbia*, Routledge, London, 1997, p 40.

8   ibid., p 41.

9   R Fishman, *Bourgeois Utopias*, Basic, New York, 1987, p 23.

10 ibid., p 25.

11 ibid.

12 For a history of Mosman Park, see E Tuettemann, *Between River and Sea: A History of Mosman Park, Western Australia*, Town of Mosman Park, Nedlands, WA, 1991. These census figures come from Tuettemann, p 110.

13 Gregory, in *City of Light* (p 7), writes that: 'Residential construction rose steadily after 1922 and peaked in 1928. Perth's suburbs developed rapidly in the 1920s, fed by immigration from Britain and natural population growth.'

14 Some of this information on the band members' backgrounds comes from T Barrass, 'Beautiful Waste', *Australian*, 17 April 1999. Reproduced in The Triffids, op. cit.

15 The other long-term member of the band was Martyn Casey, who played bass. Casey plays on all the Triffids's albums. Graham Lee, nicknamed 'Evil' by David McComb, came from Sydney. He plays on *Lawson Square Infirmary* and joined the Triffids to play pedal steel guitar from *Born Sandy Devotional* onwards. The band broke up after *The Black Swan* in 1989. David McComb died in 1999 from complications associated with a car accident, his intake of drugs and alcohol, and ongoing complications from a heart transplant in 1996.

16 R McComb, email to the author, 22 March 2005.

17 'The Triffids', Howlspace: Music from Australia and NZ, <www.howlspace.com.au/en2/triffids/triffids.htm>, 28 October 2005.

18 S Coupe, 'The Triffids: Just Another (Great) Casual Tragedy?', *RAM*, 5 January 1984, reproduced in The Triffids, 27 June 2005, <http://home.tiscali.be/the.triffids/articleram.htm>, 28 October 2005.

19 C Priest, 'British Science Fiction', in Patrick Parrinder (ed.), *Science Fiction: A Critical Guide*, Longman, London, 1979, pp 187–202.

20 D McComb, Liner Notes, *Australian Melodrama*, White Records, 1994.

21 G Lee, 'David McComb 17/2/62–2/2/99', Reproduced in The Triffids, op. cit.

22 D McComb, Liner Notes, *Australian Melodrama*.

23 D McComb, cited in Coupe, op. cit.,

24 J Savage, *England's Dreaming: Anarchy, Sex-Pistols, Punk Rock and Beyond*, St Martin's, New York, 1992, p 459.

25 D McComb, quoted in N Lucy, 'Noise Works: An Interview with the Triffids', reproduced in The Triffids, op. cit.

26 I Ang and J Stratton, 'The End of Civilisation As We Knew It: Chances and the Postrealist Soap Opera', in R Allen (ed.), *To Be Continued ... Soap Operas around the World*, Routledge, London, 1995, p 127.

27 P Brooks, *The Melodramatic Imagination: Balzac, Henry James, Melodrama and the Mode of Excess*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1976, p 15.

28 Ticher, op. cit.

29 L Barber, 'Plants in the House of Love', *Melody Maker*, November 1984, <www.mmmm.eclipse.co.uk/press/trmm84.htm>, 19 June 2006

30 M Deming, 'Review: White Light/White Heat', All Music Guide, <www.allmusic.com/cg/amg.dll?p=amg&token=&sql=10:j4r9286c058a>, 28 October 2005.

31 The title 'Love And Affection' comes from Joan Armatrading's 1978 hit, which can be found on her self-titled album from that year.

32 S T Erlewine, 'Review: Marquee Moon', All Music Guide, <www.allmusic.com/cg/amg.dll?p=amg&sql=10:16ge4jj70waw>, 28 October 2005.

33 ibid.

34 As it happens, McComb sings a song by the rock guitarist Rick Derringer which had been released by the blues artist, Johnny Winter. 'Still Alive And Well' is, more than anything else, a statement referring to McComb's ailing health.

35 Barrass, op. cit.

36 R A Peterson, *Creating Country Music: Fabricating Authenticity*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1997, p 177.

37 ibid.

38 ibid., p 178.

39 There is a cover version sung by Kylie Minogue and the great Indigenous Australian singer, who happens to have started out his career singing country, Jimmy Little. Kylie, of course, started her career as Charlene on *Neighbours*. The track can be found on the Various Artists album *Corroboration* (2001).

40 M Foucault, 'Of Other Spaces', *Diacritics*, vol 16, no 1, 1986, p 24.

41 D Hewett, Preface, in Dorothy Hewett (ed.), *Sandgropers: A Western Australian Anthology*, University of Western Australia Press, Perth, 1973, p ix. I have added the hyphen in 'self-contained' to make the meaning clearer.

42 D Bird, '"The Spirit of the Place": Women Writers of the West', *Women's Writing*, vol 5, no 2, 1998, p 244.

43 J Kinsella, 'Fens, Rivers, & Droughts', John Kinsella: Poet, Novelist, Critic, Publisher and Journal Editor, <www.johnkinsella.org/essays/fensrivers.html>, 28 October 2005.

44 R Giblett, 'A City and Its Swamp Sett(l)ing', in R Giblett and H Webb (eds), *Western Australian Wetlands: The Kimberley and South West*, Black Swan Press/Wetlands Conservation Society, Perth, 1996, p 127.

45 R D Haynes, *Seeking the Centre: The Australian Desert in Literature, Art and Film*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1998, p 26.

46 ibid., p 27.

47 ibid., p 191.

48 Hewett, op. cit., p x.

49 R Drewe, *The Shark Net: Memories and Murder*, Penguin, Ringwood, 2000.

50 McComb, Liner Notes, *Australian Melodrama*.

51 Haynes, op. cit., p 124.

52 V Brady, 'Place, Taste and the Making of a Tradition: Western Australian Writing Today', *Westerly*, no 4, 1982, p 107.

53 ibid., p 105.

54 On the Cooke case, see Estelle Blackburn's *Broken Lives*, Stellar, Mosman Park, 1998.

55 G Martin, 'Beach to Their Own', *New Musical Express*, 15 April 1989, <www.mmmm.eclipse.co.uk/press/trnme489.htm>, 19 June 2006.

56 ibid.
57 ibid.
58 ibid. McComb goes on to suggest that he's thinking of getting a job as a counsellor or confidante. Here we see the idea of service which was internalised at an early age. After they left the music industry, Rob McComb became a teacher and Alsy, returning to Allan, became a lawyer with the Equal Opportunity Commission in Perth.
59 Brady, op. cit., p 109.
60 Ticher, op. cit.

Conclusion

1   See, for example, Geoffrey Hull, *The Recording Industry* (second edn), Routledge, London, 2004; Robert Burnett, *The Global Jukebox: The International Music Industry*, Routledge, London, 1996; Timothy Taylor, *Global Pop: World Music, World Markets*, Routledge, New York, 1997.
2   One of the more important early discussions of the global and the local was Doreen Massey, *Space, Place and Gender* (University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1994), especially Chapter 6, 'A Global Sense of Place'.
3   On the beginnings of the record industry in Australia, see Ross Laird, *Sound Beginnings: The Early Record Industry in Australia* (Currency Press, Sydney, 1999), especially Chapter 5, 'His Master's Voice (HMV)', which recounts the debate over the worth of establishing a local recording studio.
4   Philip Hayward 'From the Top: Local Difference and Issues of Heritage Identity in the Formulation of Music Policy in Darwin', in *Perfect Beat*, vol 8, no 1, 2006, p 58.
5   For a discussion of recent Indigenous music, see Peter Dunbar-Hall and Chris Gibson, *Deadly Sounds, Deadly Places: Contemporary Aboriginal Music in Australia*, University of New South Wales Press, Sydney, 2004.
6   See, for example, Karl Neuenfeldt (with Martin Nakata), 'From Navajo to Taba Naba: Unravelling the Travels and Metamorphosis of a Popular Torres Strait Islander Song', in Karl Neuenfeldt and Fiona Magowan (eds), *Landscapes of Indigenous Performance: Music, Song and Dance from Torres Strait and Arnhem Land*, Aboriginal Studies Press, Canberra, 2005 pp 12–28; and (with Steve Mullins), 'Grand Concerts, Anzac Days and Evening Entertainments: Glimpses of Music Culture on Thursday Island, Queensland 1900–1945', in Neuenfeldt and Magowan, op. cit., pp 96–117.

Select Bibliography

78 Records website, <www.78records.com.au>, 25 June 2006.

'AC/DC Milesago page', Milesago,
<www.geocities.com/soho/square/8216/acdc.htm>, 27 June 2006.

Alomes, S, *When London Calls: The Expatriation of Australian Creative Artists to Britain*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1999.

Anderson, B, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, Verso, London, 1983.

Ang, I and J Stratton, 'The End of Civilisation As We Knew It: Chances and the Postrealist Soap Opera', in R Allen (ed.), *To Be Continued … Soap Operas Around the World*, Routledge, London, 1995, pp 122–44.

'Angels' webpage, Howlspace,
<www.howlspace.com.au/en2/angels/angels.htm>, 5 July 2006.

Ankeny, J, 'Beat Happening', *All Music Guide*,
<www.allmusic.com/cg/amg.dll?p=amg&sql=11:myev97i7krat~T1>.

Appadurai, A, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1996.

Appleyard, R T, 'Western Australia: Economic and Demographic Growth, 1850–1914', in C T Stannage (ed.), *A New History of Western Australia*, University of Western Australia Press, Perth, 1981, pp 211–36.

Archer, J, 'Colonial Suburbs in South Asia, 1700–1850, and the Spaces of Modernity', in R Silverstone (ed.), *Visions of Suburbia*, Routledge, London, 1997, pp 26–54.

'Atlantics' webpage, Howlspace,
<www.howlspace.com.au/en2/atlantics/atlantics.htm>, 30 August 2006.

Baker, G A, liner notes, Easybeats, *Absolute Anthology 1965 to 1969*, Albert Productions, 1980.

Baker, G A, Marc Hunter: Biography,
    <www.hotshotdigital.com/WellAlwaysRemember.4/MarcHunterBio.html>,
    25 June 2006.

Baker, G A, *The Beatles Down Under*, Wild & Woolley, New South Wales, 1982.

Balls, R, *Sex and Drugs and Rock'n'Roll: The Life of Ian Dury*, Omnibus Press,
    London, 2000.

Bangs, L, *Psychotic Reactions and Carburetor Dung*, G Marcus (ed.), Serpent's Tail,
    London, 2001.

Barber, L, 'Plants in the House of Love', *Melody Maker*, November 1984,
    <www.mmmm.eclipse.co.uk/press/trmm84.htm>, 19 June 2006.

Barrass, T, 'Beautiful Waste', *Australian*, 17 April 1999, reproduced at The
    Triffids, 27 June 2005,
    <www.home.tiscali.be/the.triffids/articleaustralian.htm>, 28 October
    2005.

'BBC Radio 3 Awards for World Music' webpage,
    <www.bbc.co.uk/radio3/world/awardssusheela.shtml>, 30 August 2006.

Bird, D, '"The Spirit of the Place": Women Writers of the West', *Women's
    Writing*, vol 5, no 2, 1998, pp 241–51.

Bisset, A, *Black Roots, White Flowers: A History of Jazz in Australia*, ABC
    Enterprises, Sydney, 1979.

Blackburn, E, *Broken Lives*, Stellar, Mosman Park, 1998.

Blunt, B, *Blunt: A Biased History of Australian Rock*, Prowling Tiger Press,
    Northcote, Victoria, 2001.

Bold, A, *The Ballad*, Methuen, London, 1979.

Botting, F, *Gothic*, Routledge, London, 1996.

Bowman, R, 'Rhythm-and-Blues Music', Microsoft® Encarta® Online
    Encyclopedia 2005, <www.encarta.msn.com>.

Brabazon, T, Introduction, in T Brabazon (ed.), *Liverpool of the South Seas:
    Perth and Its Popular Music*, University of Western Australia Press, Perth,
    2005, pp 1–18.

Brabazon, T, *Tracking the Jack: A Retracing of the Antipodes*, University of New
    South Wales Press, Sydney, 2000.

Bracewell, M, *England Is Mine: Pop Life in Albion from Wilde to Goldie*,
    Flamingo, London, 1997.

Bradley, D, *Understanding Rock 'n' Roll: Popular Music in Britain 1955–1964*,
    Open University Press, England, 1992.

Brady, V, 'Place, Taste and the Making of a Tradition: Western Australian
    Writing Today', *Westerly*, no 4, 1982, pp 105–10.

Bratton, J, *The Victorian Popular Ballad*, Rowman and Littlefield, Totowa, 1975.

'Brill building', <www.history-of-rock.com/brill_building.htm>, 27 June 2006.

British Chart Hits of the Sixties,
    <www.sixtiescity.com/60singles/60singles.htm>, 23 June 2006.

Brooker, G, 'In My Heart, There's a Place Called Swampland: Songs That Kim Salmon Taught Us', in Let Them Eat Lead, <www.letthemeatlead.com/article.php?a=archives/issue8/salmon.htm>, 7 May 2002.

Brooker, G, 'Under Your Mushroom: A Brief History of The Stems', in Let Them Eat Lead, <www.letthemeatlead.com/article.php?a=archives/issue3/stems.htm>, 5 May 2002.

Brooks, P, *The Melodramatic Imagination: Balzac, Henry James, Melodrama and the Mode of Excess*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1976.

Bryden-Brown, J, *J O'K: The Official Johnny O'Keefe Story*, Doubleday, Sydney, 1982.

Burnett, R, *The Global Jukebox: The International Music Industry*, Routledge, London, 1996.

Burr, R, *The Billboard Guide to Tejano and Regional Mexican Music*, Billboard Books, New York, 1999.

'Bushwackers' website, <www.bushwackers.com.au>, 5 July 2006.

Cabut, R, personal communication with the author.

Castles, S, et al. (eds), *Mistaken Identity: Multiculturalism and the Demise of Nationalism in Australia* (third edn), Pluto Press, Sydney, 1992.

Chambers, I, *Urban Rhythms: Pop Music and Popular Culture*, Macmillan, Basingstoke, 1985.

Chanan, M, *Repeated Takes: A Short History of Recording and Its Effects on Music*, Verso, London, 1995.

Cibula, M, 'The Death of World Music' (review of Susheela Ramen *Salt Rain*), <www.popmatters.com/music/reviews/r/ramansusheela-salt.shtml>, 30 August 2006.

Cockington, J, *Long Way to the Top: Stories of Australian Rock and Roll*, ABC Books, Sydney, 2001.

Cohen, S, *Rock Culture in Liverpool*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1991.

Cold Chisel website, <www.coldchisel.com.au/petrolheads.html>, 5 July 2006.

Connell, J and C Gibson, *Sound Tracks: Popular Music, Identity and Place*, Routledge, London, 2003.

Corfield, J, 'The Australian Style: Some Influences, Images and Myths Concerning Australia's Folk Culture Past and Present', in J Ramshaw (ed.), *Folklore in Australia: Proceedings of the 1st National Folklore Conference*, Melbourne, November 1984.

Coupe, S, 'The Triffids: Just Another (Great) Casual Tragedy?', *RAM*, 5 January 1984, Reproduced in The Triffids, 27 June 2005, <www.home.tiscali.be/the.triffids/articleram.htm>, 28 October 2005.

Cox, P and L Douglas, *Teen Riots to Generation X: The Australian Rock Audience*, Powerhouse, Sydney, 1994.

Creswell, T and M Fabinyi, *The Real Thing: Adventures in Australian Rock 'n' Roll 1957–Now*, Random House, Milsons Point, NSW, 1999.

Cross, C, *Heavier than Heaven: A Biography of Kurt Cobain*, Hodder & Stoughton, England, 2001.

Cull, F, 'The Wide Open Road—Filling the Potholes', in T Brabazon (ed.), *Liverpool of the South Seas: Perth and Its Popular Music*, University of Western Australia Press, Perth, 2005, pp 20–8.

Daly, M T, *Sydney Boom, Sydney Bust: The City and Its Property Market 1850–1981*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1982.

Deming, M, 'Review: White Light/White Heat', All Music Guide, <www.allmusic.com/cg/amg.dll?p=amg&token=&sql=10:j4r9286c058a>, 28 October 2005.

Deming, M, 'Song Review: "Back in the U.S.A."', All Music Guide, <www.allmusic.com/cg/amg.dll?p=amg&sql=33:1vjwe4e64x07>, 30 August 2006.

Dermody, S and E Jacka, *The Screening of Australia*, vol 1, Currency Press, Sydney, 1988.

di Perna, A, 'Interview with Shel Talmy', *Guitar World*, October 1996, <www.thewho.net/articles/townshen/talmy.htm>, 27 June 2006.

Dougan, J, All Music Guide, <www.allmusic.com/cg/amg.dll?p=amg&sql=11:m7rvad4kv8w2~T1>.

Douglas, L and R Greeves, 'Music, Counter-Culture and the Vietnam Era', in P Hayward (ed.), *From Pop to Punk to Postmodernism: Popular Music and Australian Culture from the 1960s to the 1990s*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1992, pp 101–12.

Doyle, P, 'Flying Saucer Rock and Roll: The Australian Press Confronts Early Rock and Roll', in *Perfect Beat: The Pacific Journal of Research into Contemporary Music and Popular Culture*, vol 4, no 3.

Drewe, R, *The Shark Net: Memories and Murder*, Penguin, Ringwood, 2000.

Dunbar-Hall, P and C Gibson, *Deadly Sounds, Deadly Places: Contemporary Aboriginal Music in Australia*, University of New South Wales Press, Sydney, 2004.

Dusty, S and J Lapsley, *Slim Dusty: Walk a Country Mile*, Rigby, Adelaide, 1984.

Dusty, S and J McKean, *Slim Dusty: Another Day, Another Town*, Macmillan, Sydney, 1996.

'Easybeats's Milesago page', Milesago, <www.geocities.com/soho/square/8216/easybeats.htm>, 27 June 2006.

Ennis, P, *The Seventh Stream: The Emergence of Rocknroll in American Popular Music*, Wesleyan University Press, Hanover, 1992.

Erlewine, S T, 'Review: Marquee Moon', All Music Guide, <www.allmusic.com/cg/amg.dll?p=amg&sql=10:16ge4jj70waw>, 28 October 2005.

Evans, B, 'Biography', Bob Evans: Suburban Kid, <www.bobevans.entertainmentit.com/bio.htm>, 9 May 2002.

Evans, R, 'The Tonic of Wildness: Johnny O'Keefe and Me, 1958–1998', in *Perfect Beat: The Pacific Journal of Research into Contemporary Music and Popular Culture*, vol 5, no 1, pp 60–1.

Farren, M, 'The Stones 1962–2002 Special Collectors Editions', *Uncut*, no 56, 2002, p 70.

Feld, S, 'A Sweet Lullaby for World Music', in *Public Culture*, vol 12, no 1, 2000, pp 145–71.

Fishman, R, *Bourgeois Utopias*, Basic, New York, 1987.

Fiske, J, *Reading the Popular*, Allen & Unwin, Boston, 1989.

'Five Concert Reviews from Australia 1957', <www.kolumbus.fi/timrei/lr/an57.html>, 30 August 2006.

Foster, J, 'Op, "Castanets", and the Cassette Revolution', in R James (ed.), *The Cassette Mythos*, Autonomedia, New York, 1992. See <www.members.ai5.net/indexer@ai5.net/cassettemythos/SteveJones.html>.

Foucault, M, 'Of Other Spaces', *Diacritics*, vol 16, no 1, 1986, pp 22–7.

Foucault, M, 'Preface to Transgression', *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews*, Blackwell, Oxford, 1977.

From a Whisper to a Scream, dir. D Heffernan, Radio Telefis Eireann, 2001.

Gans, H, 'Urbanism and Suburbanism as Ways of Life: Re-evaluation of Definitions', in S F Fava (ed.), *Urbanism in World Perspective: A Reader*, Crowell, New York, 1968, pp 63–80.

Gardner, S, 'The Big Beat in the Heart of the Vinyl Jungle', Noise for Heroes, <www.nkvdrecords.com/author.htm>, 14 June 2006.

Gardner, S, 'Kim Salmon Talks about the Scientists, the Surrealists, and the Rest of His Amazing Career', *Noise for Heroes*, <www.nkvdrecords.com/kimsalmon.htm>, 14 June 2006.

Gellner, E, *Nations and Nationalism*, Blackwell, Oxford, 1983.

George, C, 'Re-making Genres—Surfing and Silverchair', Australian Cultural Studies Association Conference, Brisbane, 2000.

George, N, *The Death of Rhythm & Blues*, Omnibus Press, London, 1989.

Ghosh, R N, 'Economic Development and Population Growth in Western Australia Since 1945', in C T Stannage (ed.), *A New History of Western Australia*, University of Western Australia Press, Perth, 1981, pp 267–93.

Giblett, R, 'A City and Its Swamp Sett(l)ing', in R Giblett and H Webb (eds), *Western Australian Wetlands: The Kimberley and South West*, Black Swan Press/Wetlands Conservation Society, Perth, 1996, pp 120–46.

Gilbert, J and E Pearson, *Discographies: Dance Music, Culture, and the Politics of Sound*, Routledge, London, 1999.

Gillett, C, *The Sound of the City*, Souvenir Press, London, 1971.

Greater Perth: Population and Housing Discussion Paper Two, Western Australian Planning Commission, Perth, 2003, <www.wapc.wa.gov.au/publications/greaterperth/GPpapers/GPdp2.pdf>, 27 October 2005.

Gregory, J, *City of Light: A History of Perth Since the 1950s*, City of Perth, Perth, 2003.

'Grunge', Wikipedia, <www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grunge_music>.

Hammond Moore, J, *Over-sexed, Overpaid and Over Here: Americans in Australia, 1941–1945*, Queensland University Press, Brisbane, 1981.

Haynes, R D, *Seeking the Centre: The Australian Desert in Literature, Art and Film*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1998.

Hayton, J and L Isackson, *Behind the Rock: The Diary of a Rock Band 1956–1966*, Select Books, Milsons Point, 1990.

Hayward, P (ed.), *From Pop to Punk to Postmodernism: Popular Music and Australian Culture from the 1960s to the 1990s*, Allen & Unwin, North Sydney, 1992.

Hayward, P, 'From the Top: Local Difference and Issues of Heritage Identity in the Formulation of Music Policy in Darwin', in *Perfect Beat: The Pacific Journal of Research into Contemporary Music and Popular Culture*, vol 8, no 1, 2006, p 58.

Hebdige, D, *Subculture: The Meaning of Style*, Methuen, London, 1979.

Heffernan, A, *Big Shows: The Lee Gordon Years*, privately published in Ashmore City, Alan Heffernan, 2003.

Hesmondhalgh, D, 'British Popular Music and National Identity', in D Morley and K Robbins (eds), *British Cultural Studies: Geography, Nationality, and Identity*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2001, pp 273–86.

Hesmondhalgh, D, 'Indie: The Institutional Politics and Aesthetics of a Popular Music Genre', in *Cultural Studies*, vol 13, no 1, 1999.

Hewett, D, Preface, in Dorothy Hewett (ed.), *Sandgropers: A Western Australian Anthology*, University of Western Australia Press, Perth, 1973, pp ix–xiii.

Homan, S, *The Mayor's a Square: Live Music and Law and Order in Sydney*, Local Consumption Publications, Newtown, 2003.

'Hoodoo Gurus', Howlspace: Music from Australia and NZ, <www.howlspace.com.au/en2/hoodoogurus/hoodoogurus.htm>, 13 July 2006.

Hoppen, T K, *Ireland Since 1800: Conflict and Conformity*, Longman, London, 1989.

Horne, D, *The Lucky Country: Australia in the Sixties* (third revised edn), Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1971.

Howard, A, *Dave Warner: Suburban Boy*, Creative Research, Perth, 1981.

Howe, R, 'Inner Suburbs: From Slums to Gentrification', in L C Johnson (ed.), *Suburban Dreaming: An Interdisciplinary Approach to Australian Cities*, Deakin University Press, Geelong, 1994, pp 141–59.

Huey, S, 'Green River', All Music Guide, <www.allmusic.com/cg/amg.dll?p=amg&sql=11:0cu1z85ajyv6~T1>.

Hull, G, *The Recording Industry* (second edn), Routledge, London, 2004.

Humphrey, C, *Loser: The Real Seattle Music Story*, Abrams, New York, 1999.

Hutchison, T, *Your Name's on the Door*, reproduced in Celibate Rifles, <www.celibaterifles.com/critique.html>.

Jamrozik, A, C Boland and R Urquhart, *Social Change and Cultural Transformation in Australia*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1995.

'Jebediah', Whammo: The Worldwide Home of Australasian Music and More Online, <www.whammo.com.au/encyclopedia.asp?articleid=1049>, 15 May 2002.

Jenkin, G, *Songs of the Great Australian Balladists*, Rigby, Adelaide, 1978.

Jenkins, J, *Ego Is Not a Dirty Word: The Skyhooks Story*, Kelly & Withers, Fitzroy, 1994.

Johnson, C, K Records, <www.krecs.com/html/info/>, 21 July 2006.

Johnson, V, *Radio Birdman*, Sheldon Booth, St Kilda, 1990.

Johnstone, D, *The Wild One: The Life and Times of Johnny O'Keefe*, Allen & Unwin, New South Wales, 2001.

Jones, S, 'The Cassette Underground', in R James (ed.), *The Cassette Mythos*, Autonomedia, New York, 1992. See <www.members.ai5.net/indexer@ai5.net/cassettemythos/SteveJones.html>.

Joyce, C, 'The Official Mr Epp Biography', <www.unofficial-mudhoney.com/sideprj/epp/>.

Kalmar, V, *Label Launch: A Guide to Independent Record Recording, Promotion and Distribution*, St Martin's Press, New York, 2002.

Kelly, P, *Don't Start Me Talking: Lyrics 1984–1999*, Allen & Unwin, St Leonards, NSW, 1999.

Kennedy, R and R McNutt, *Little Labels—Big Sound*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 2001.

Kent, D M, '*Go-Set*: Life and Death of an Australian Pop Magazine', at <www.milesago.com/Misc/go-set.htm>.

Kent, D M, 'The Place of *Go-Set* in Rock & Pop Music Culture in Australia, 1966–1974', Thesis presented for MA in Communication, University of Canberra, 2002.

Kimball, D, 'Rolling Stone (Australia)', Milesago, <www.milesago.com/press/rollingstone.htm>, 13 June 2006.

'Kim's in the Kitchen', Mod Magazine, <www.silvergirl.com/ModKSalmonInterview.html>, 13 July 2006.

King, T, *The Operator: David Geffen Builds, Buys and Sells the New Hollywood*, Random House, New York, 2000.

Kinnane, S, *Shadow Lines*, Fremantle Arts Centre Press, Fremantle, 2003.

Kinsella, J, 'Fens, Rivers, & Droughts', John Kinsella: Poet, Novelist, Critic, Publisher and Journal Editor, <www.johnkinsella.org/essays/fensrivers.html>, 28 October 2005.

Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, B, 'Sounds of Sensibility: Reflections on the Klezmer Revival', *Judaism: A Quarterly Journal of Jewish Life and Thought*, vol 47, no 1, 1998, pp 49–78.

Koda, C, All Music Guide,
    <www.allmusic.com/cg/amg.dll?p=amg&sql=11:61e67uq0h0j0~T1>.

Lahr, J, *Dame Edna Everage and the Rise of Western Civilisation: Backstage with Barry Humphries*, Bloomsbury, London, 1991.

Laing, D, *The Sound of Our Time*, Quadrangle Books, Chicago, 1970.

Laird, R, *Sound Beginnings: The Early Record Industry in Australia*, Currency Press, Sydney, 1999.

Lawrence, M, *Showtime: The Cold Chisel Story: The First Decade and Beyond*, M Lawrence, Belmont, 1998.

Lee, E, *Music of the People: A Study of Popular Music in Great Britain*, Barrie and Jenkins, London, 1970.

Lee, G, 'David McComb 17/2/62–2/2/99', reproduced in The Triffids, 27 June 2005, <www.home.tiscali.be/the.triffids/dave5.htm>, 28 October 2005.

Lees, S, *The 1950s—How Australia Became a Modern Society and Everyone Got a House and Car*, Hyland House, Melbourne, 1987.

Long Way to the Top, Australian Broadcasting Corporation, 2006, <www.abc.net.au/longway/episode_2/>, 25 June 2006.

Lowe, D, The Australian Music Charts, Southern Cross University (online), 2003,
    <www.scu.edu.au/schools/edu/student_pages/sem1_2003/dlowe/index.html>, 12 June 2006.

Lucy, N, 'Noise Works: An Interview with the Triffids', reproduced in The Triffids, <www.home.tiscali.be/the.triffids/triffids.htm>, 27 June 2005.

McComb, D, Liner Notes, *Australian Melodrama*, White Records, 1994.

McComb, R, email to the author, 22 March 2005.

McGregor, C, 'Growing Up (Uncool): Pop Music and Young Culture in the '50s and '60s', in P Hayward (ed.), *From Pop to Punk to Postmodernism: Popular Music and Australian Culture from the 1960s to the 1990s*, Allen & Unwin, North Sydney, 1992, pp 98–100.

McPharlin, J, 'Review—C'mon Everybody', The Chevelles Website, <www.thechevelles.com/reviews.htm>, 11 May 2002.

Manifold, J S, *Who Wrote the Ballads: Notes on Australian Folksong*, Australasian Book Society, Sydney, 1964.

Manuel, P, *Caribbean Currents: Caribbean Music from Rumba to Reggae*, Temple University Press, Philadelphia, 1995.

Marsh, D, *Louie Louie*, Hyperion Press, New York, 1993.

Martin, G, 'Beach to Their Own', *New Musical Express*, 15 April 1989, <www.mmmm.eclipse.co.uk/press/trnme489.htm>, 19 June 2006.

Massey, D, *Space, Place and Gender*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1994.

Maxwell, I, *'Phat Beats, Dope Rhymes': Hip Hop Down Under Comin' Upper*, Wesleyan University Press, Middletown, 2003.

Maxwell, I, 'Sydney Stylee: Hip Hop Down Under Comin' Up', in T Mitchell (ed.), *Global Noise: Rap and Hip-Hop Outside the USA*, Wesleyan University Press, Middletown, 2001, pp 259–79.

Mayhew, H, *London Labour and the London Poor: The Condition and Earnings of Those That Will Work, Cannot Work and Will Not Work*, Griffin, London, 1861.

Meek, B, *Paddy Moloney and the Chieftains*, Gill and Macmillan, Dublin, 1987.

Mele, C, *Selling the Lower East Side: Culture, Real Estate, and Resistance in New York City*, University of Minnesota Press, 2000, <www.upress.umn.edu/sles/chapter5/ch5-1.html>, 13 July 2006.

Miller, B, Liner Notes, *The Fabulous Wailers at the Castle*, Norton, 1962.

Miller, T, 'The Unmarking of Soccer: Making a Brand New Subject', in Tony Bennett et al. (eds), *Celebrating the Nation: A Study of Australia's Bicentenary*, St Leonards, NSW, 1992, pp 109–11.

Missing Links, Liner Booklet, *Driving You Insane: The Complete Recordings of Australia's Wildest '60s Band*, 1999.

Mitchell, T, *Popular Music and Local Identity: Rock, Pop and Rap in Europe and Oceania*, Leicester University Press, London, 1996.

'Mojos', *Merseybeat*, <www.merseybeatnostalgia.co.uk/html/the_mojos.html>, 2 July 2006.

Moon, G, interviewed in B Blunt, *Blunt: A Biased History of Australian Rock*, Prowling Tiger Press, Northcote, 2001.

Moore, T, *The Mix Tape: The Art of Cassette Culture*, Universe, New York, 2005.

Morrison, L, 'It's a Man's World', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 3 July 2004, <www.smh.com.au/articles/2004/07/02/1088488146548.html>, 30 August 2006.

Mouat, J, 'Making the Australian Past/Modern: The Music of Weddings, Parties, Anything', *Australian and New Zealand Studies in Canada*, no 6, 1991.

Negus, K, *Producing Pop: Culture and Conflict in the Popular Music Industry*, Arnold, London, 1992.

Negus, K, *Music Genres and Corporate Cultures*, Routledge, London, 1999.

Nettl, B, *Folk and Traditional Music of the Western Continents*, Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, 1973.

Nichols, D, email to the author, 22 December 2005.

Nichols, D, *The Go-Betweens* (revised edn,), Verse Chorus, Portland, 2003.

Nichols, D, 'The Missing Links: Prime Movers', *Puncture*, no 47, 2001.

Nimmervol, E, Liner Booklet, Chain, *Toward the Blues*, 30th Anniversary Edition, 2001.

Neuenfeldt, K (with Nakata, M), 'From Navajo to Taba Naba: Unravelling the Travels and Metamorphosis of a Popular Torres Strait Islander Song', in K Neuenfeldt and F Magowan (eds), *Landscapes of Indigenous Performance:*

Music, Song and Dance from Torres Strait and Arnhem Land, Aboriginal Studies Press, Canberra, 2005, pp 12–28.

Neuenfeldt, K (with Steve Mullins), 'Grand Concerts, Anzac Days and Evening Entertainments: Glimpses of Music Culture on Thursday Island, Queensland 1900–1945', in Neuenfeldt and Magowan, op. cit., pp 96–117.

Ó Ciosáin, N, *Print and Popular Culture in Ireland 1750–1850*, Macmillan, Basingstoke, England, 1997.

O'Farrell, P, *The Irish in Australia*, University of New South Wales Press, NSW, 1993.

Office of the Seattle Mayor, <www.ci.seattle.wa.us/music/history.htm>.

The Official Skyhooks Website, <www.aswas.com/skyhooks/index.html>, 13 June 2006.

Ogg, A and D Upshal, *The Hip Hop Years: A History of Rap*, Channel 4 Books, London, 1999.

O'Grady, A, *Cold Chisel: The Pure Stuff*, Allen & Unwin, St Leonards, NSW, 2001.

O'Regan, T, *Australian National Cinema*, Routledge, London, 1996.

Peel J and S Ravenscroft, *John Peel: Margrave of the Marshes*, Bantam, London, 2005.

Peel, M, *Good Times, Hard Times: The Past and Future in Elizabeth*, Melbourne University Press, Carlton, 1995.

Pena, M, *The Texas-Mexican Conjunto: History of a Working-Class Music*, University of Texas Press, Austin, 1985.

Pepperell, D, 'The Beginning of Missing Link: The Story of Archie and Jughead', in *Missing Link Newsletter*, no 16, 2004, <www.missinglink.net.au/newsletter.php?issue=mar0402&PHPSESSID= fe47aaef5133aa94253dca9084481bca>, 13 June 2006.

Peterson, R A, *Creating Country Music: Fabricating Authenticity*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1997.

Peterson, R and D Berger, 'Cycles in Symbol Production: The Case of Popular Music', *American Sociological Review*, vol 40, no 1, 1975.

Poneman, J, interviewed by S Tartan, 'Sub Pop's Second Coming', *The Japan Times*, 26 January 2005, reproduced at <www.search.japantimes.co.jp/print/features/music2005/fm20050126a1. htm>.

Porterfield, N, 'Hey, Hey, Tell 'em 'bout Us: Jimmie Rodgers Visits the Carter Family', in the Country Music Foundation (eds), *Country: The Music and the Musicians: From the Beginnings to the 90s*, Abbeville Press, New York, 1994.

Potts, J, 'Heritage Rock', in P Hayward (ed.), *From Pop to Punk to Postmodernism: Popular Music and Australian Culture from the 1960s to the 1990s*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1992, pp 55–67.

Priest, C, 'British Science Fiction', *Science Fiction: A Critical Guide*, Patrick Parrinder (ed.), Longman, London, 1979, pp 187–202.

'The Purple Hearts: Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne 1964–67', Milesago, <www.milesago.com/Artists/Purplehearts.htm>, 30 August 2006.

Riley, V, 'Death Rockers of the World Unite! Melbourne 1978–80 Punk Rock or No Punk Rock?', in P Hayward (ed.), *From Pop to Punk to Postmodernism: Popular Music and Australian Culture from the 1960s to the 1990s*, Allen & Unwin, North Sydney, 1992, pp 113–26.

'Roger Savage', Milesago, 2002, <www.milesago.com/Industry/savage-roger.htm>, 2 July 2006.

Salmon, K, Liner Booklet for reissued *Blood Red River*, Citadel, 2000.

Salmon, K, Liner Booklet for reissued *Pissed on Another Planet*, Citadel, 2004.

Salmon, K, interviewed in Noise for Heroes, <www.nkvdrecords.com/kimsalmon.htm>.

Savage, J, *England's Dreaming: Anarchy, Sex-Pistols, Punk Rock and Beyond*, St Martin's, New York, 1992.

Semmler, C, 'From Dublin to the Bush', *Quadrant*, January–February 1979.

'Slum Goddess', *The Plastic Exploding Inevitable*, in *Aspen*, no 3, <www.ubu.com/aspen/aspen3/plastic.html#ginsberg>, 13 July 2006.

Smith, G, 'Celtic Australia: Bush Bands; Irish Music and the Nation', *Perfect Beat: The Pacific Journal of Research into Contemporary Music and Popular Culture*, vol 5, no 2, 2001.

Smith, G, 'Irish Music in Melbourne, 1950–1980', in P Bull et al. (eds), *Irish-Australian Studies: Papers Delivered at the Sixth Irish-Australian Conference*, July 1990, pp 217–27.

Smith, G, 'Making Folk Music', *Meanjin*, vol 44, no 4, 1985.

Smith, G, *Singing Australian: A History of Folk and Country Music*, Pluto Press, North Melbourne, 2005.

Smith, G and J Brelt, 'Nation, Authenticity and Social Difference in Australian Popular Music: Folk, Country, Multicultural', *Journal of Australian Studies*, no 58, 1998.

Smith, K, Oz Net Music Chart site, 1997–2006, <www.onmc.iinet.net.au/>, 30 June 2006.

Smith, S, *Dancing in the Street: Motown and the Cultural Politics of Detroit*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1999.

Spillman, K, *Identity Prized: A History of Subiaco*, University of Western Australia Press, Perth, 1985.

Spooner, D, 'Come All Ye Folksongs: The Ballad in Australia', *Ormond Papers*, vol 4, 1987.

Stafford, A, *Pig City: From The Saints to Savage Garden*, University of Queensland Press, St Lucia, 2004.

Stockbridge, S, 'Rock Music on Australian TV', in P Hayward (ed.), *From Pop to Punk to Postmodernism: Popular Music and Australian Culture from the 1960s to the 1990s*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1992, pp 68–85.

Stratton, J, 'Lost in Music: Popular Music, Film and Multiculturalism', in Rebecca Coyle (ed.), *Reel Tracks: Australian Feature Film Music and Cultural Identities*, John Libby/Perfect Beat, London, 2005, pp 74–93.

Stratton, J, *Race Daze: Australia in Identity Crisis*, Pluto Press, Sydney, 1998.

Stratton, J, *The Young Ones: Working Class Culture, Consumption and the Category of Youth*, Black Swan Press, Perth, 1992.

Sturma, M, *Australian Rock'n'Roll: The First Wave*, Kangaroo Press, Kenthurst, NSW, 1991.

Symons, R, 'Foreword', in P Wilmoth, *Glad All Over: The Countdown Years 1974–1987*, McPhee Gribble, Ringwood, 1993.

Talmy, S, interview with Richie Unterberger, <www.richieunterberger.com/talmy.html>, 27 June 2006.

Tavan, G, *The Long, Slow Death of White Australia*, Scribe, Carlton North, 2005.

Taylor, T, *Global Pop: World Music, World Markets*, Routledge, New York, 1997.

'Tex Morton: Boundary Rider' website, New Zealand Edge, B Sweeney (ed.), 1998–2005, <www.nzedge.com/heroes/morton.html>, 5 July 2006.

Thorpe, B, *Sex and Thugs and Rock 'n' Roll: A Year in Kings Cross 1963–1964*, Macmillan, Sydney, 1996.

Ticher, M, 'The Triffids', *Snipe*, no 1, 1985, reproduced in The Triffids, 27 June 2005, <www.home.tiscali.be/the.triffids/interviewsnipe.htm>, 28 October 2005.

Torn, L, 'The Chevelles: Girl God (Zip Records)', The Chevelles Website, <www.thechevelles.com>, 13 July 2006.

'The Triffids', Howlspace: Music from Australia and NZ, <www.howlspace.com.au/en2/triffids/triffids.htm>, 28 October 2005.

True, E, *Live Through This: American Rock Music in the Nineties*, Virgin Books, 2001.

Tuettemann, E, *Between River and Sea: A History of Mosman Park, Western Australia*, Town of Mosman Park, Nedlands, 1991.

Turner, G, 'Australian Popular Music and Its Contexts', in P Hayward (ed.), *From Pop to Punk to Postmodernism: Popular Music and Australian Culture from the 1960s to the 1990s*, Allen & Unwin, North Sydney, 1992, pp 11–24.

Turner, G, *Making It National: Nationalism and Australian Popular Culture*, Allen & Unwin, St Leonards, NSW, 1994.

'The Twilights', Milesago, 1999, <www.geocities.com/soho/square/8216/twilights.htm>, 25 June 2006.

'The Twilights', Howlspace: Music from Australia and NZ, <www.howlspace.com.au/en/twilights/twilights.htm>, 25 June 2006.

Unterberger, R, All Music Guide, <www.allmusic.com/cg/amg.dll?p=amg&sql=11:rlf6zfaheh4k~T1>.

Walker, C, *Buried Country: The Story of Aboriginal Country Music*, Pluto Press, Annandale, 2000.

Walker, C, *Stranded: The Secret History of Australian Independent Music 1977–1991*, Pan Macmillan, Sydney, 1996.

Walker, C, 'Terse Tapes' Lucky Dip of Quasi-Normality', *Inner City Sound: Punk and Post-Punk in Australia 1976–1985* (revised edn), Verse-Chorus Press, 2005.

Warner, D, *City of Light*, Fremantle Arts Centre Press, Fremantle, 1995.

Warner, D, Dave Warner Online, 2004, <www.davewarner.com.au/index.html> and <www.davewarner.com.au/biography.html>, 13 July 2006.

Warner Music Australia website, <www.warnermusic.com.au/artists/press.asp?pressid=377>, 10 October 2003.

Waterhouse, R, *From Minstrel Show to Vaudeville: The Australian Popular Stage 1788–1914*, University of New South Wales Press, Kensington, 1990.

Watson, E, 'Country Music: The Voice of Rural Australia' in M Breen (ed.), *Missing in Action: Australian Popular Music in Perspective*, Verbal Graphics, Melbourne, 1987, pp 48–77.

The West Australian's 175th Anniversary Souvenir, *WA's Defining Moments: Part four 1958–1970*.

Williams, R, *Marxism and Literature*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1977.

Williams, R, *The Long Revolution*, Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1965.

Wilmoth, P, *Glad All Over: The Countdown Years 1974–1987*, McPhee Gribble, Ringwood, 1993.

Windschuttle, K, *The Media: A New Analysis of the Press, Television, Radio and Advertising in Australia*, Penguin, Ringwood, 1988.

Woods, G, '1901: A Socio-Economic Profile of Australia at Federation', *Parliament of Australia: Parliamentary Library*, 2001, <www.aph.gov.au/library/pubs/rn/2000-01/01RN23.htm>, 13 July 2006.

Wyndham, J, *The Day of the Triffids*, Joseph, London, 1951.

'You Am I' website, <www.youami.com.au/articles/cd_wrwcag.html>, 10 October 2003.

Zion, L, 'Disposable Icons: Pop Music in Australia, 1955–63', in *Popular Music*, vol 8, no 2, 1989, pp 165–75.

Zion, L, 'The Impact of the Beatles on Pop Music in Australia, 1963–66', *Popular Music*, vol 6, no 3, 1987, pp 291–312.

Zion, L, 'The Sound of Australian Music', in V Burgmann and J Lee (eds), *Constructing a Culture: A People's History of Australia Since 1788*, McPhee Gribble/Penguin, Victoria, 1988, pp 209–22.

Zuberi, N, *Sounds English: Transnational Popular Music*, Illinois University Press, Urbana, Illinois, 2001.