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# AUSTRALIAN FAMILIES, CULTURES, AND ENVIRONMENTS: An Annotated Bibliography

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# AUSTRALIAN FAMILIES, CULTURES, AND ENVIRONMENTS:

## An Annotated Bibliography

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**SUMMARY.** This annotated bibliography of books and other cultural resources is offered to readers interested in developing a broad and inclusive understanding of Australian families and the cultural, social, political, economic, historical, and geographic environment in which they live. The contributions of Indigenous Australians, which date back 40,000 to 60,000 years are especially emphasized here.

**KEYWORDS.** Australian families, Australian cultures, Australian environments, annotated bibliography

## AUSTRALIAN FAMILIES, CULTURES, AND ENVIRONMENTS:

### An Annotated Bibliography

This annotated bibliography has been a work in progress for more than a decade, created by Australians and those who love Australia. Listed here are books and other cultural resources which have proven to be enjoyable and meaningful for the creators, and that have helped us develop a broad and inclusive understanding of Australian families and the cultural, social, political, economic, historical, and geographic environment in which they live. The contributions of Indigenous Australians, which date back 40,000 to 60,000 years are especially emphasized here.

The annotated bibliography is divided into seven sections: *Literature; History; Social Commentary; Memoirs, Autobiography and Narrative History; Arts, Crafts, Music, Movies and Television; Language; Travel Guides, Maps and Other Resources*. It is not meant to be all-inclusive and exhaustive, for there are infinite and rich sources that may be tapped to better understand Australia and the Australians. But, given these limitations, we can guarantee the reader that we have personally read, viewed, and experienced everything on the list and that these resources have helped us better understand Australian families in their social context. Nothing, of course, is better than a visit (preferably a lengthy one), and we hope these resources will help readers inspire their own adventures in Australia with Australian families.

If you have your own Australian favorites that need to be added to this annotated bibliography, please let us know via e-mail.

## *Literature*

Astley, Thea. (1996). *The Multiple Effects of Rainshadow*. Ringwood, Victoria, Australia:

Penguin Books. Winner of the *Age* Book of the Year Award and the Miles Franklin Award.

Astley, a "witty, acerbic, psychologically perceptive and tough" novelist, writes about a rampage in 1930 in an Australia where atrocities by whites against blacks are so ingrained few question them.

Bail, Murray. (1998). *Eucalyptus*. Melbourne: Text Publishing. A wonderful love story that could have only been written in Australia. "There was once a man on a property outside of a one-horse town, in New South Wales, who couldn't come to a decision about his daughter. He then made an unexpected decision. Incredible! For a while people talked and dreamed about little else...."

Carey, Gabrielle and Lette, Kathy. (1979). *Puberty Blues*. Ringwood, Victoria: McPhee Gribble. A proto-feminist teen novel about two 13-year-old girls from the Sutherland Shire in Sydney. The girls hope to gain social status by integrating themselves into the Greenhill Gang of boy surfies. A funny / sad novel about youth culture.

Clarke, Marcus. (2000). *For the Term of His Natural Life*. First published in 1889 this classic novel of convict life in Tasmania draws from the suffering of those incarcerated at Port Arthur, Macquarie Harbour and Norfolk Island. Launceston: Tasmanian Book Company.

Courtenay, Bryce. (2001). *Four Fires*. Ringwood, Victoria: Viking. Courtenay, born in South Africa and residing in Australia most of his life, is a best-selling novelist. The four fires in this story are passion, religion, warfare and fire itself. Courtenay believes "many fires drive the human spirit, love being perhaps the brightest flame of all," but the four in this novel have moulded Australia as a people, giving Australians a sense of place and shaping, for

better and worse, the national character. A sprawling, engaging 750-page novel. If you get hooked on Courtenay who in some ways is like an Aussie James A. Michener, you could consider reading *The Australian Trilogy: The Potato Factory, Tommo and Hawk*, and *Solomon's Ring*.

Durack, Mary. (1959). *Kings in Grass Castles*. London: Constable. Patrick Durack left Western Ireland for Australia in 1953. Upon his arrival he began to build a dynasty of pioneers and an empire of cattle stations across great stretches of Australia.

Idriess, Ion L. (1953). *The Red Chief*. Sydney: Angus & Robertson. A classic Australian writer, Ion Idriess writes the story of Red Chief and his Kamilaroi people who lived in the New England region of New South Wales. The setting is traditional Aboriginal society several generations before the arrival of Europeans in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. One of the few historical novels based on oral tradition which captures the life of Aboriginal People before colonization and assimilation.

Grenville, Kate. (2005). *Secret River*. Melbourne: Text Publishing. Short-listed for the Man Booker Prize in 2006, this novel tells the story of the early settlers arriving from England and the distress and destruction caused as they pushed into the homelands of Aboriginal people who had already been living in Australia for at least 40,000 years.

Lawson, Henry. (1998). *A Literary Heritage: Henry Lawson*. Sydney: Lansdowne Publishing. Lawson (1867-1922), recognized as an eminently respected author in the Australian literary tradition, offered insights into the harsh realities of life in the outback and the cities of Australia – the loyalties, hardships, struggle and above all sense of humour told with a subtle blend of wisdom, laughter and pathos. This collection contains ‘The Drover’s Wife,’ ‘The

Loaded Dog,' the Mitchell and Joe Wilson stories, 'Andy's Gone with Cattle,' and many more.

Malouf, David. (1990). London: Vintage/Random House. One of Australia's finest writers tells the story over 70 years of young Australia's enlistment around the world "to fight other people's battles" – from Gallipoli and the Somme to Malaya and Vietnam. Great conflicts of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century are explored through the eyes of the young men who served.

McLaren, Philip. (2001). *Sweet Water... Stolen Land*. Broome, Western Australia: Magabala Books Aboriginal Corporation. Winner of the David Unaipon Award for Black Australian Writing. The destinies of two families, black and white, are fatally interwoven in this frontier novel of racial brutality and the tragic account of the Myall Creek massacre. "A thriller, a historical novel, a story of conflict and resolution... It deals with the problems inherent in the movement towards the understanding and integration of two different cultures."

Niland, Darcy. (1955). *The Shiralee*. New York, W. Sloane Associates. A homeless swagman tramps through back towns of New South Wales looking for work, accompanied by his daughter Buster. Niland has said of his novel, "It is a Biblical truth that all men have burdens. This is the simple story of a man with a burden, a swagman with his swag, or shiralee, which in this case happens to be a child. I have often thought that if all burdens were examined, they would be found to be like a swagman's shiralee – not only a responsibility and a heavy load, but a shelter, a castle and sometimes a necessity."

Park, Ruth. (1948). *The Harp in the South*. Sydney: Angus & Robertson. A nostalgic and moving portrait of the Darcy family living in Surry's Surry Hills, a lower-class community or inner-city slum, depending on how you wish to phrase it. Park followed this first novel with *Poor Man's Orange* in 1949, which traces the life of the heroine Roie Darcy as she grows into

womanhood during the years immediately after World War II. The vitality and humour of the Darcy family in the midst of acute poverty. Born in New Zealand, Park moved to Australia as a young adult and began her writing career as a journalist. Besides ten novels she created 27 children's books.

Paterson, 'Banjo'. (2000). *A Literary Heritage: 'Banjo' Paterson*. Sydney: Lansdowne

Publishing. Selected works include best-loved poems and stories from Paterson (1864-1941), including: 'The Man from Snowy River,' 'Waltzing Matilda,' the Clancy poems, and prose giving insight into life in the country in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the horse racing tales, dispatches from the Boer Wars, and excerpts from his novels.

White, Patrick. (1956). *The Tree of Man*. London: Vintage/Random House. The story of Stan Parker, who with only a horse and a dog for companions, journeys to a remote and scrubby patch of land he has cleared in the hills of Victoria. He brings his new wife Amy to this land and together, and essentially apart, they face upheaval, death and natural disaster. White received a Nobel Prize for his life's work in literature and this classic tells the story of Australia's early white settlers well.

Winton, Tim. (1997). *Blueback: A Contemporary Fable*. A young boy while diving for abalone learns through an encounter with a giant groper that his life's calling is to uncover the secrets of the sea. Set in Western Australia, *Blueback* is a wonderful fable for young and old alike.

Winton, Tim. (1991). *Cloudstreet*. Ringwood, Victoria: Penguin Books. Separate catastrophes force two rural families in Western Australia to flee to the city, Perth, and they end up sharing a large, ramshackle home called Cloudstreet. Winner of the Miles Franklin and NBC Awards, the novel celebrates people, places, and the rhythms of life. Winton is one of Australia's beloved contemporary novelists.



## *History*

Aughton, Peter. (2002). *Endeavour: The Story of Captain Cook's First Great Epic Voyage*.

London: Cassell & Co. The voyage in the *Endeavour* was one of the greatest journeys of discovery ever undertaken, an expedition unrivalled in scientific and artistic discovery. The aftermath of Cook's landing at Botany Bay south of modern Sydney also proved to be a disaster for the Indigenous people inhabiting the Great Southern Land.

Blainey, Geoffrey. (1983). *Triumph of the Nomads: A History of Ancient Australia*. Melbourne:

Sun Books. As the title suggests, this history is a fascinating interpretation of the world of traditional Aboriginal society prior to European imperialism and colonization. This work is considered by many a classic and traces the history of Aboriginal People through ice ages and rising seas, providing information on trade routes, medicines and health, spiritual beliefs and social networks.

Fitzsimons, Peter. (2004). *Kokoda*. Sydney: Hodder Australia. "The Australians who served here

in Papua New Guinea fought and died, not for defence of the old world, but the new world.

Their world. They died in defence of Australia and the civilisation and values which had

grown up there. That is why it might be said that, for Australians, the battles in Papua New

guinea were the most important ever fought." – Former Prime Minister Paul Keating,

Bomana War Cemetery, Port Moresby, Anzac Day, 1992. This book chronicles the epic

struggle high in the New Guinea jungle between Australian and Japanese forces in World

War II, with perspectives from Australians, Japanese, and New Guineans.

Flannery, Tim (Ed.). (1999). *The Birth of Sydney*. Melbourne: Text Publishing. The story of the founding of one of the world's great cities, told through an anthology of writings of early eyewitnesses. The voices of participants in history themselves ring out.

Jebb, Mary Anne. (2003). *Blood, Sweat and Welfare: A History of White Bosses and Aboriginal Pastoral Workers*. Crawley, Western Australia: University of Western Australian Press. A well-researched history of race relations on the pastoral frontier of the Kimberly region in Western Australia, providing a comprehensive examination of first contact between European and Aboriginal Peoples. The book features many oral testimonies from Aboriginal People who tell of the good and bad experiences of this cultural interaction between two distinct peoples.

Knightley, Phillip. (2000). *Australia: A Biography of a Nation*. London: Vintage/Random House. This is a history of Australia focused for the most part on the European perspective of what happened. Traces major events in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, including Australia's contributions in World War I, the tragedy of the Great Depression, fear of being overwhelmed in World War II, and the development of contemporary Australian politics, economics, culture and society.

Miller, James. (1986). *Koori: A Will to Win, The Heroic Resistance, Survival and Triumph of Black Australia*. North Ryde: Angus and Robertson. This book is a social history of the lives of Wonarrua families in the Hunter Region from colonization to contemporary times. The author is a descendant of the Wonnarua people who provides compelling perspectives and disturbing insights into the difficulties faced by Aboriginal People as a result of the impact of British colonization.

Pedersen, Howard, and Woorunmurra, Banjo. (2004). The story of Jandamarra, the Aboriginal warrior who turned from police assistant to resistance fighter, leading his people in the late-

19<sup>th</sup> century against the white forces invading Indigenous land in the Kimberley of northwest Australia.

Reynolds, Henry. (1990). *With the White People: The Crucial Role of Aborigines in the Exploration and Development of Australia*. Melbourne: Penguin Books. A general history of the use of Aboriginal labor as an important part of the colonial development of Australia in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century through employment as guides, trackers, domestic servants, police, pastoral workers and concubines. This work provides an impressive analysis of the intricacies of race relations and clearly identifies the position of Aboriginal People in the colonial social hierarchy.

Reynolds, Henry. (1999). *Why Weren't We Told?* Melbourne: Penguin Books. The violent history of early relations between Aboriginal inhabitants and white newcomers has been glossed over by the Australian school system, according to Reynolds, a historian. Reynolds' research over 20 years draws attention to the abundant evidence of warfare between indigenous people and settlers. Reynolds argues that whites routinely resorted to massacre as a means of taking Aboriginal land. The traditional view that the colonization of Australia was a benign process and that whites encountered little resistance has been severely tested by Reynolds' fascinating and grim efforts. As far as we know, similar historical research in the U.S. to match Reynolds' work in Australia is yet to be done, though the parallels between the two countries are considerable.

### ***Social Commentary***

Chatwin, Bruce. (1987). *Songlines*. New York: Vintage Books/Random House. "*The Songlines* emerge as invisible pathways connecting all over Australia: ancient tracks made of songs which tell of the creation of the land. The Aboriginals' religious duty is ritually to travel the

land, singing the Ancestors' songs: singing the world into being afresh. *The Songlines* is one man's impassioned song." – *Sydney Sunday Telegraph*.

Folds, Ralph. (2001). *Crossed Purposes: The Pintupi and Australia's Indigenous Policy*. Sydney: University of New South Wales Press. Examines the history of contact and interaction between the Pintupi and the whitefellas and looks at the problems inherent in attempts at achieving what white Australia perceives as equality. Folds, who has lived with the Pintupi since 1988, draws on voices of two generations of Pintupi people.

Mackay, Hugh. (1997). *Generations: Baby Boomers, Their Parents and Their Children*. Sydney: Pan Macmillan Australia. A distinguished social researcher and novelist explores the attitudes, values and outlook of three generations of contemporary Australians.

Myers, Fred R. (1991). *Pintupi Country, Pintupi Self: Sentiment, Place, and Politics among Western Desert Aborigines*. Berkeley: University of California Press. "Of the recent books on Australian Aborigines [*Pintupi Country, Pintupi Self*] is theoretically the most important, ethnographically the deepest, and certainly the most lucid." – Peter Sutton, *American Ethnologist*.

Trudgen, R., (2000), *Djambatj mala: Why warriors lie down and die*. Winnellie, Northern Territory: Aboriginal Resource and Development Services Inc. Through the lives of the Yolnu people, this powerful book provides an understanding of the challenges faced by Aboriginal peoples in relation to poor health, unemployment and shorter life expectancy.

Whitlock, Gillian, and Carter, David. (1992). *Images of Australia*. St. Lucia, Queensland: University of Queensland Press. This collection of readings offers an introductory guide to Australian Studies. The historical development and changing contours of Australian culture

and identity are traced through contemporary debates on nationality, Aboriginality, multiculturalism, gender, the bush legend, and suburbanism.

Wright, Alexis. (1997). *Grog War*. Broome, Western Australia: Magabala Books Aboriginal Corporation. The story of how an outback town faces up to problems caused by drinking, as the town searches for the answer to the question, "Who should be blamed?"

### ***Memoirs, Autobiography and Narrative History***

Arneil, Stan. (1982). *One Man's War*. Melbourne: Sun Papermac. The diary of a young Australian army sergeant. Arneil was captured by the Japanese but managed to carefully hide his diary on stolen paper. This is a unique chronicle of World War II, ranging from Japan through Southeast Asia to the Burma-Thailand railway camps and Changi prison camp, finally home to Australia.

Cohen, Patsy, & Somerville, Margaret. (1990). *Ingelba and the Five Matriarchs*. Sydney: Allen & Unwin Australia. An engrossing story highlighting the vitality and diversity of Aboriginal culture in the Ingelba district in rural New South Wales. Memories of descendants of five Aboriginal women born in the 19<sup>th</sup> century are the basis of this compelling narrative history that emphasizes the importance of place, identity and family.

Conway, Jill Ker. (1989). London: William Heinemann. *The Road From Coorain*. Conway's journey from a girlhood on an isolated sheep-farm in the grasslands of New South Wales and gripping descriptions of an eight-year drought, to her departure for America. The sequel, *True North*, tells the story of her acclimatisation to the new continent; her discovery of intellectual, energetic women, and the culmination in her appointment as president of Smith College; her romance and marriage to war hero John Conway and the reality of his manic-depressive disorder; and the lingering and poisonous anger of her mother.

Davis, Stephen, & Fox, Allan. (1986). *Australia's Kakadu Man: Bill Neidjie*. Darwin, Northern Territory: Resource Managers. Traditional Aboriginal philosophy and culture is rarely better seen than in this charismatic story from Bill Neidjie and his Bunitji people who live in the Kakadu National Park. Provides important insight and understanding into traditional Aboriginal culture. This book discusses Aboriginal beliefs, land rights, education, law and art from the perspective of the elder, Mr. Neidjie.

Facey, A. B. (1981). *A Fortunate Life*. Fremantle, Western Australia: Fremantle Arts Centre Press. Bert Facey saw himself as an ordinary man, but his story shows how he survived against impossible odds: rural poverty, backbreaking work clearing, plowing, fencing, droving, sinking dams, boxing with a traveling troupe. Facey survived Gallipoli, returning to Australia to become a farmer, then driven from the land during the Depression. His life was a microcosm of earlier life in Australia as he faced the Bush and the War.

Henderson, Sara. (1992). *From Strength to Strength: An Autobiography*. Sydney: Pan Macmillan Publishers Australia. A widow rebuilds a floundering cattle station on the Bullo River in northern Australia, battling a million acres of red dust and a mountain of debt. The story of one woman's courage and determination.

Jensen, Sister Anne Maree with Ryckmans, Jeanne. (1998). *The Flying Nun and the Women of the West*. Milsons Point, NSW: Random House. The story of Sister Anne Maree, who served remote parts of outback southwest Queensland in a Cessna, bringing companionship to the women living in her vast bush parish.

Jordan, Mary Ellen. (2005). *Balanda – My Year in Arnhem Land*. Crows Nest, NSW: Allen & Unwin. A young white woman leaves city life in Melbourne to spend 14 months in Maningrida, a coastal community in Arnhem Land on the Top End of Australia. She

expected to work alongside the local Aboriginal people and, with good intentions, thinking she would be of some use. Her experiences would challenge her perceptions of race, culture, political correctness, art, language, and whiteness.

Kyle, Roy. (2003). *An Anzac's Story*. Camberwell, Victoria: Penguin Books. Literally hundreds of books have been written by high-ranking officers, historians and military experts on the part the Anzacs (the Australian and New Zealand troops) played in the Dardanelles Campaign in World War I in what is today Turkey. This book is the memoir of an ordinary soldier caught up in the tragedy of one of the defining moments in Australian history, the battle for Gallipoli – a doomed assault on an impregnable Turkish position.

Labumore: Elsie Roughsey. (1984). *An Aboriginal Mother Tells of the Old and the New*. Fitzroy, Victoria: McPhee Gribble/Penguin Books. Born into the Lardil tribe on Mornington Island in 1923 not long after the first missionaries arrived, Elsie Roughsey was raised in a dormitory mission and in the traditional life of her tribe. She writes about power, religion, love and marriage, childbirth, medicine, education, crime and punishment across the Aboriginal world and the white world.

Langford, Ruby. (1988). *Don't Take Your Love to Town*. Melbourne: Penguin Books. An autobiography which focuses on the life of an Aboriginal woman and her struggles, trials and tribulations raising her children in the face of racism, poverty and tragedy in rural and urban Australia. Despite her hardships the author still has a sense of humor, which is reflected throughout this enthralling insight into the lives of Aboriginal Australians during the Assimilation period from 1940 to 1970.

Lowe, Pat, with Jimmy Pike. (1994). *Jilji: Life in the Great Sandy Desert*. Broome, Western Australia: Magabala Books Aboriginal Corporation. "You call it desert – we used to live

there." Soon after the arrival of European settlers in Australia, the lives of the early inhabitants changed dramatically and the Aboriginal people were displaced from their land. The last sizable groups migrated from the Great Sandy Desert in northwest Australia in the 1950s and early 1960s, though a few stragglers have continued to show up from time to time until the present day. This book chronicles in story, photographs and art work the lives of those who once lived in Ilji.

Mathews, Janet. (1977). *The Two Worlds of Jimmie Barker: The Life of an Australian Aboriginal, 1900-1977*. Canberra, Australian Capital Territory: Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies. This autobiographical work takes the reader on a captivating journey into the mind of Jimmy Barker as he tenaciously holds on to the traditional teachings of his people, the Muruwari of northwestern New South Wales. To survive, Jimmy Barker had to live in another world, the world of the European and through his life it is evident he gains wisdom and knowledge of both worlds which he passes on to Janet Mathews.

Meehan, Donna. (2000). *It Is No Secret: The Story of a Stolen Child*. Milsons Point, NSW: Random House Australia. "One 60-year-old white lady came up to me with tears rolling down her cheeks. She held my hand and said, 'I was one of them. I took the children away from their parents. I am sorry. I thought we were doing the right thing.' I wasn't angry. My heart was filled with love. I hugged her and said, 'Thank you for coming.'"

Morgan, Sally. (1987). *My Place*. South Fremantle, Western Australia: Fremantle Arts Center Press. A member of the *Lost Generation* of Aboriginal children adopted into a white family and raised as a white person, Sally Morgan tells the story of her search for her identity, carrying her back three generations. "...a book for everyone; a book with the form and texture of a novel and the complexity and pace of a mystery not solved until the final pages.



It is wonderfully entertaining and a luminous prose poem." – *New York Times Book Review*.

Morgan's subsequent book was *Wanamurraganya* (1989, Fremantle Arts Center Press), the story of Jack McPhee, an itinerant station and mine worker from the Pilbara region of northwest Australia. While searching for her extended family, she met McPhee, her grandfather through Aboriginal kinship.

Pilkington, Doris, and Garimara, Nugi. (1996). *Follow the Rabbit-Proof Fence*. St. Lucia,

Queensland: University of Queensland Press. In 1931 an Aboriginal girl Molly, age 14, led her two sisters, ages 8 and 11, on a 1,600 kilometre walk across remote Western Australia.

The girls were escaping the confinement of a government institution for Aboriginal children removed from their families. Barefoot, without provisions or maps, tracked by Native Police and search planes, the girls followed the rabbit-proof fence, knowing it would lead them home.

Thomson, Donald, Nicholas Peterson (Ed.) (2004). *Donald Thomson in Arnhem Land* (Rev. Ed.).

The personal writings of Thomson, an Australian who became embroiled in a bitter legal

battle that erupted in 1932 when a group of Japanese pearl fishermen raped several

Aboriginal women. Aboriginals retaliated by killing five of the Japanese and were sentenced to death. Thomson accepted a federal commission to investigate the case and stayed in

Arnhem Land to learn about Aboriginal people of the area.

Walmajarri Storytellers. (2002). *Out of the Desert: Stories from the Walmajarri Exodus*.

Broome: Western Australia: Magabala Books Aboriginal Corporation. The stories behind the

historic exodus of the Walmajarri people from the Great Sandy Desert. Within only one

generation an entire people left its land to face cattle station life and the world far beyond theirs.

***Arts, Crafts, Music, Movies and Television***

*The Adventures of Barry McKenzie.* (1972). Dublin: Longford Productions. A film about ocker culture shock comedy based on a grotesque comic-strip character. This rude and crudely made satire depicts Aussies as uncouth beer-swilling, Pommie-bashing yobbos, flexing their elbows and vernacular in the Old Dart. A look at the worst stereotypes about Australian character.

*The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert.* (1994). United Kingdom / Holland: Gramercy Pictures Polygram. Directed by Stephan Elliott. The 1994 Oscar-winning Australian comedy/drama about two drag queens and a transsexual woman driving across the outback from Sydney to Priscilla in a large bus named Priscilla. A controversial classic regarded in some of the gay community as a camp classic.

*Breaker Morant.* (1980). Hendon, SA: South Australian Film Corporation. Based on the true story of members of the Bushveldt Carbineers, accused of murder during the Boer War in 1901. Three Australian irregular soldiers are tried by a British military court for the murder of 12 prisoners and a German missionary. One of the accused Harry Morant (an English born adventurer who spent several years in Australia) maintains they were following unwritten orders. Their inexperienced Australian lawyer struggles to have their case heard. They gradually realize they are being hung out to dry by their British imperial masters. Shot on location in South Australia, the film's anti-British sentiment masks a deeper, more universal statement of the muddy morality of war and its impact on the warriors.

*The Castle.* (1997). Dobbs Ferry, NY: Working Dog Productions. A delightful Australian movie about the Kerrigan family, blissfully residing in their home (their "castle") for years. Unfortunately, the nearby airport wants to expand and plans to evict the Kerrigans and their

neighbours by way of compulsory acquisition. The humour in the film focuses on the self-image of Australians, the concept of the working-class Australians and their place in modern Australia. A very low-budget production, filmed on location mostly in Melbourne. Directed by Robert Sitch. A great entrée into Aussie humor.

*Crocodile Dundee* (1986). Hollywood, California: Paramount Pictures. A glamorous American reporter, Sue Charlton goes to the Northern Territory to interview a man who survived a crocodile attack. Michael J "Crocodile" Dundee charms her with his bushman's humour and toughness. He is both more complex and more mysterious than she expects. She invites him to New York, a city that expands his horizons and tests his survival skills. The first half of the movie showcases both the beauty of the Northern Territory and the cultural quaintness of the Territorians. An exploration of the idea of Australian masculinity.

*The Dish*. (2000). Burbank, California: Warner Brothers. The story of how the Parkes Observatory in New South Wales was used to relay the live television of man's first steps on the moon during the 1969 Apollo 11 mission. The first step on the moon nearly stumbled on Earth. This film is another warm and funny introduction into Australian sensibilities. The top-grossing film in Australia in 2000. Directed by Robert Sitch.

*First Australians*. (2008). Sydney: SBS Television. A seven-part series highlighting Australian history through the eyes and experiences of Australia's First Nations people. The first episode of the series introduces the viewer to Bennelong, Aboriginal warrior, in 1788, and ends with an episode on Eddie Koiki Mabo and his Native Title legal challenge in 1993. A remarkable series providing an insight into the challenges and successes of Aboriginal people over the past 220 years.

*Gallipoli*. (1981). Hollywood, California: Paramount Pictures. The story of two Australians who run the gauntlet of wartime emotions (adventure, patriotism, fear, grief and mateship) in a depiction of one of the defining moments in Australian history, the epic tragedy of the Gallipoli landing.

Isaacs, Jennifer. (1998). *Australia's Living Heritage: Arts of the Dreaming*. The Rocks, NSW: Lansdowne. The classic book that first brought together the different facets of Aboriginal art, from painting, sculpture, ceremony and dance to the making of body ornaments, carved utensils and spun or woven articles for everyday use.

*Jedda*. (1955). Sydney: Charles Chauvel Productions. The first Aboriginal feature film made in Australia. An Aboriginal girl is raised by a white family. Forbidden to learn about her own culture, she is torn between cultures. This is the story of her journey and her search for identity. Many Aboriginal people would recognise the challenges faced by this young girl. Directed by Charles Chauvel

*Kanyini*. (2006). Sydney: Reverb Films. Awarded "best documentary: at the London Australian Film Festival in 2007. The story of Bob Randall, an Aboriginal man from Central Australia, takes you on his journey, sharing experiences and knowledge of Aboriginal people in the past, present and future. Directed by Melanie Hogan

*Lantana*. (2001). Sydney: Beyond Films. A slow-burning suburban melodrama. The story story of a police detective, his wife, and the murder mystery entwining their unhappy marriage. It might not appear quintessentially Aussie but *Lantana* stands as an effective psychological drama.

*Lousy Little Sixpence*. (1982). Los Angeles: Kuri Productions. A documentary featuring historical footage and Aboriginal people who experienced forced unpaid work. The name

reflects the meager amount of money that was promised but never received. The testimonies tell a story of the struggles and injustice to Aboriginal people.

*Mad Max.* (1979). Sydney: Kennedy Miller Productions. A young Mel Gibson plays a gun-sliling loner hero in the ultimate post-apocalyptic wasteland road rage movie where tribal gangs battle for precious fuel. May not appeal to those with more genteel tastes.

*Muriel's Wedding.* (1994). New York: Miramax. A comedy about a desperate ugly duckling's dream of a happier life away from her dysfunctional family. Upbeat disco music from ABBA softens the social satire about small-town mentalities.

*Picnic at Hanging Rock.* (1975). Hendon, SA: South Australian Film Corporation. This haunting and hypnotic mystery is about the strange disappearance of three teenage girls and their teacher from an exclusive English-style boarding school. They go missing on a school excursion in the bush on St. Valentines Day in 1900 at Hanging Rock, in central Victoria. One of the girls is found alive a week later, but the others are never seen again.

Pigram Brothers. (2008). *Pigram Brothers Live*. Broome, Western Australia: Pigram Music. The Pigram Brothers are a seven-member Aboriginal country/folk/rock band living in Broome, northwest Australia. This is a DVD of one of their recent performances, and it complements their three albums, *Salterwater Country*, *Jiir*, and *Under the Mango Tree*. The Pigram Brothers succeed in capturing life in the remote Kimberley region of Australia with their songs. Website: <http://www.pigrambrothers.com.au/>

*Rabbit-Proof Fence.* (2002). Sydney: Films Finance Corporation Australia. In 1931 three Aboriginal girls escape after being plucked from their homes to be trained as domestic staff and set off on a trek across the Outback. If you were kidnapped by the government, would

you walk a thousand miles back home? Directed by Philip Noyce. Adapted from the book by Doris Pilkington. Screenplay written by Christine Olsen.

*Sea Change*. (1998-2001). A popular Australian television comedy/drama that ran for 39 episodes on the Australian Broadcasting Corporation. A judge and her daughter escape the bustle of city life in Melbourne for a new start in a small coastal town. Created by Andrew Knight and Deborah Cox and starred Sigrid Thornton, David Wenham, William McInnes, John Howard, Tom Long and Kerry Armstrong. Directed by Michael Carson.

*Strictly Ballroom*. (1992). New York: Miramax. The story of an Australian ballroom dancer, who comes from a family with a history of ballroom dancing and has been training since childhood. He has become very proficient but he encounters considerable resistance when he tries to dance his own steps in preference to the traditional ballroom moves. His steps are not *strictly ballroom*. His dancing partner leaves him, and he eventually finds a new dancing partner, and love, with this plain and ordinary dancing student. An especially humorous movie.

*Ten Canoes*. (2007). New York: Palm Pictures. Set centuries ago and in mythical times, *Ten Canoes* is a surreal tragic-comedy in the Ganalbingu language of the remote Arafura Swamp region of northeastern Arnhem Land. This is the first major Australian feature film completely filmed in an indigenous Aboriginal language. English narration by David Gulpilil.

*Thomson of Arnhem Land*. (1999). Sydney: Film Australia. The story of Donald Thomson, an Australian anthropologist, photographer and journalist and his lifelong struggle for Aboriginal rights. Explores the personality clashes and politics behind the assimilationist

policies that aimed to deny Indigenous Australians their culture. Directed by Rol De Heer, Peter Djigirr.

### ***Language***

Moore, Bruce (Ed.). (1999). *The Australian Oxford Dictionary*. Melbourne and New York:

Oxford University Press. Australia has its own political, cultural, historical, and geographical realities, and has its own words to describe these realities. As a result of Australia's unique history, Australian English includes words which do not appear in other varieties of English. Some words are British dialect words which were transported to Australia with the early convicts; more than 450 words are borrowed from more than 80 Australian Aboriginal languages; and some words have been created within the past decade. This dictionary contains 10,000 words and meanings which make up the uniquely Australian contribution to the English language. On a practical level, visitors to Australia are likely to be somewhat puzzled on a regular basis. They come to Australia thinking English will serve them well, but quickly they find that Australian English is very different from, say, the English spoken in America. And, because Australians are regularly exposed to American TV and movies, Australians seem much more fluent in American English than Americans are in Australian English. Besides 10,000 different words that are of Australian derivation, visitors will also have some challenges learning the *melody and music* of spoken Australian. Even when the written words are the same, they sounds remarkably different coming from an Australian tongue. The challenges, fortunately, make for delightful and humorous encounters with Aussie mates.

For more popularized versions of Australian language, see:

Lambert, James (Ed.) *Macquarie Book of Slang*. (2000). Sydney: Macquarie University.

Pinkney, Maggie. (1999). *Great Aussie Slang*. Noble Park, Victoria: Five Mile Press.

### ***Travel Guides, Maps and Other Resources***

Australian Geographic. (2008). The society offers an outstanding monthly journal, maps, news and views, activities and a host of other ways to increase one's understanding of Australia.

Website: <http://australiangeographic.com.au/>

Hardie Grant Publishing Co. (2008). *Explore Australia*. The company offers a vast array of maps and guidebooks, including *Explore Australia 2008*, the 26<sup>th</sup> edition of the beautifully produced guidebook packed with detailed information, fine photography, and attractive maps. Website: <http://www.hardiegrant.com/au>

Lonely Planet Guides. (2008). This company has created a remarkable collection of travel materials to many worldwide destinations. Australia is especially well represented with a guidebook to the whole country plus smaller individual guidebooks to the states and territories and cities. Lonely Planet DVDs on Australia are also quite good. Website: <http://www.lonelyplanet.com>

Steve Parish Publishing. (2008). Beautiful photography and guidebooks to help plan and remember your Australian experience. Website: <http://www.steveparish.com.au>