Section 2 - Reading Across Genres

2.1 Enhancing the Texture and Colour of the Colonial Image

Many things are noticed that altogether escape the attention of the lords of the creation, and those things that men and women observe in common are noticed in a different way.[1]

With some of the special characteristics of genre articulated, I now look more closely at ways in which certain colonial women were able to add multilayered brush strokes to the traditional colonial image. I examine extracts from men's writing alongside those of their female counterparts as I search for special ways in which male and female writers represented colonial spaces. Together with my two principal female writers, I examine extracts from the diary of Graham Douglas Mylne, who lived during the 1860s at Amby Downs near Roma in southern Queensland. I look also at an extract from the memoirs of Thomas Murray Prior who lived in the mid to late 1850s north-east of Amby downs at what is now Hawkwood Station. And I examine, as I did in the previous chapter, extracts from the diary of Edward Snell from South Australia (1849–1859).[2]

My discussions will be linked to the findings of feminist scholars such as Australians Joy Hooton, Gillian Whitlock and Dale Spender, and scholars from outside Australia like Sidonie Smith, Christl Verduyn and Elaine Showalter. I ask, as many feminists were beginning to ask in the 1980s and 90s, whether distinctive language and imagery, specific emphases, and other stylistic devices, occur in the writings of women like Addy Bowler and Lucy Gray – discursive styles that might reveal hidden narratives, cultural influences and gendered perspectives that, in turn,

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[1] Anon, 'Mrs Meredith's "Sketches of NSW": A Review', *The Living Age* 3, no. 28 (1844) n.p.

[2] Tom Griffiths, ed., *The Life and Adventures of Edward Snell: The Illustrated Diary of an Artist, Engineer and Adventurer in the Australian Colonies 1849 to 1859* (Melbourne: Angus and Robertson and The Library Council of Victoria, 1988); Thomas Murray-Prior, 'Thomas Lodge Murray-Prior Memoirs' (JOL OM64–01–1, n.d.); Graham Douglas Mylne, 'Dairies of Graham Douglas Mylne', *University of New England and Regional Archives AO155*, Armidale, n.d., transcribed by Sheila Sutherland). For location of stations see Fig. 9, Appendix 1.

may have determined the way women represented the colonial situations in which they found themselves.[3]

Because I have limited my source material to the writings of a handful of men and women, I will not attempt to generalise from any differences that appear to arise, either between male and female writers, or within the writings of individuals as they progressed through life. There is little doubt, however, that because of the way they were educated and their marginal position in the imperial endeavour, many women felt free to write in a more subjective and personal way than their male counterparts did. On the other hand, it is important to remember that no writing is purely 'subjective' or 'objective'. So-called 'objective' texts still depend, to some extent, upon the writer's own interpretation of events; and 'subjective' texts, in which the writer explicitly includes his or her own feelings and interpretations, can also employ 'objective' description at times. I argue that the recognition of patterns and variations enables a greater flexibility and profitability in the reading of life writing generated by both men and women and, subsequently, a greater acceptance of women's writing in particular, as we experiment with more insightful and informative ways of reconstructing Australia's colonial past.

Leading up to and during the 1980s and 90s literary theorists began to carry out extensive investigations into women's writing. A component of this involved looking at possible differences between male and female authored texts. The breadth and complexity of this field excludes the possibility of a detailed analysis here. However, there are existing surveys available of feminist literary theory, such as Mary Eagleton's *Feminist Literary Theory: A Reader* (1986), Maggie Humm's *A Reader's Guide to Contemporary Feminist Literary Theory* (1994), and Ruth Robins, *Literary Feminisms* (2000)[4]. American feminists were particularly active in this regard, and Elaine Showalter coined the phrase 'gynocritics' to describe the study of

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[3] For example, see Carol Gilligan, *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, and London, England: Harvard University Press, 1982); Sara Mills, *Discourses of Difference: An Analysis of Women's Travel Writing and Colonialism* (London and New York: Routledge, 1991); Sidonie Smith, *A Poetics of Women's Autobiography: Marginality and the Fictions of Self-Representation* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1987).

[4] Mary Eagleton, *Feminist Literary Theory: A Reader* (Oxford, New York: Basil Blackwell, 1986), in particular the chapter 'Do Women Write Differently?' 200–37; Maggie Humm, *A Reader's Guide to Contemporary Feminist Literary Theory* (New York, London: Harvester Wheatsheaf , 1994); Ruth Robins, *Literary Feminisms* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2000). See also Philip Rice and Patricia Waugh, *Modern Literary Theory: A Reader* (London: Edward Arnold, 1989) 91–107. These publications reproduce extracts only. For a more comprehensive reading of methodology and ideas the original works need to be accessed.

'the psychodynamics of female creativity, linguistics and the possibility of a female language'.[5] Over all, the question of whether or not men and women actually write differently remains a vexed one within feminist theory, because of the problems that it can raise about essentialism.

However, Christl Verduyn and Sara Mills, who have been researching in areas similar to mine, provide some useful models for ways of approaching my primary texts. In Canada, Verduyn concedes that a psychoanalytic approach can explain a good deal about why a written work was created and what its themes and forms mean in terms of the author's life and attitudes. She warns, however, of the dangers implicit in too great a dependence upon such a complex discipline. Mills, from the United Kingdom, has similar concerns. As I have said, Mills suggests a more materialist approach, which she adopts herself when examining women's travel writing in the colonies.[6] I would argue that a materialist as well as a psychoanalytic approach is necessary when examining the writings of men and women in the Australian colonies, as behaviour and attitudes were often very much influenced by the material aspects of survival. Meanwhile, the mind-sets that underscored attitudes towards gender, race, culture, religion and social etiquette were informed by the psychological, philosophical and cultural milieus in which the writers grew up and were educated – backgrounds which, of course, inform the writings of both women and men.

Whatever their backgrounds, one would expect that the most obvious difference between men's and women's writing during the nineteenth century would concern subject matter. Women would write about familial, social and domestic matters, men about manly outdoor pursuits and public matters. Dale Spender confirms this, at least where published works are concerned, pointing to patterns that show women were motivated by very different concerns and had a different view of the world from that encoded by men.[7] We are, of course, talking here only of middle and upper-middle class women, and even within that context, as Mills reminds us, 'we cannot assume that British middle class women necessarily react in a

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[5] Elaine Showalter, 'Towards a Feminist Poetics', in *Modern Literary Theory*, ed. Rice and Waugh (California: Berkeley University of California, 1989) 93–102.

[6] Christl Verduyn, 'Between the Lines: Marian Engle's *Cahiers* and Notebooks', in *Essays on Life Writing: From Genre to Critical Practice*, ed. Marlene Kadar (Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Totonto Press, 1992) 91–101; Sara Mills, *Gender and Colonial Space* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005) 6–8.

[7] Dale Spender, *Writing a New World: Two Centuries of Australian Women Writers* (London: Pandora, 1988) xiv–xv.

homogeneous way within the imperial context'.[8] (See Chapters 2.3 and 2.4 for further discussion on the dangers of taking an homogeneous approach.)

Importantly, Spender points to the 'explanatory' nature of much women's writing from the colonies. This is because women writers in their gendered capacity as nurturers and carers were more conscious that their audience in Britain would require detailed background information about a colonial situation that was unfamiliar to them.[9] Such detail, which includes careful descriptions of relationships and spatial activities, often thought by men to be somewhat trivial and not worthwhile reporting, can provide a wealth of information for historians today.

There were, of course, common subjects discussed by both men and women, and the isolation of the Australian bush tended to promote a sharing and commonality that is reflected in the sameness of tone and content of certain diary entries. This may be partly because the boundaries between public and private were severely challenged when men and women ventured beyond the 'comfort zones' of the more closely settled regions. To explore this further, I now examine extracts from the diary of Addy Bowler (by then Suttor), written during the 1860s when she and husband Willie lived at remote Borambil, near Condobolin. For comparison, I look at extracts from the diary of Graham Douglas Mylne from Amby Downs in Queensland, and examine, side-by-side, a selection of entries by each, almost all of which were written on the same day.[10]

To place these entries in context, I remind the reader that Addy was living in central south-western New South Wales at the time. She was a young wife who had just lost her first baby, almost losing her own life when giving birth. However, during this section of her diary, she keeps her personal problems to herself, only occasionally resorting to self-examination and self-criticism when she considers her own inadequacies might affect her husband and any future children she might have. In fact, descriptions of personal illness are noticeably absent from her writing throughout, which is more concerned with the illness of others. Whitlock notices a similar

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[8] Sara Mills, 'Knowledge, Gender and Empire', in *Writing Women and Space: Colonial and Postcolonial Geographies*, ed. Alison Blunt and Gillian Rose (New York: Guilford Press, 1994) 36.
[9] Spender, *Writing a New World* xiv–xv.
[10] Mylne, 'Diaries of Graham Douglas Mylne'.

relationally defined sense of self in the writings of Susanna Moodie, an early Canadian settler who arrived in Canada already married and with a small child. She sees Moodie's narrative as not one of female empowerment, but rather one in which the 'domestic subject is articulated through the couple and the family, through an interdependent rather than an individualist understanding of identity and subjectivity'.[11]

Graham lived just north of Roma in central-southern Queensland. (See map in Fig 8, Appendix 1.) He appears to have suffered from a multitude of illnesses, some caused by the climate, and complains constantly in his diary about his health, the weather, and the health of his wife and children. His is a more self-interested account than Addy's, although he does occasionally empathise with his wife's predicament.

Addy may not dwell upon personal discomfort to the same extent as Graham, but the two otherwise give surprisingly similar accounts of life on remote stations. Interestingly, the passages I quote below do not reflect the gender of the writer to any great extent, apart from generally situating them in their respective public and private spheres. Although there is some crossing over, in Addy's case the spatial limitations a married woman faced when living in what was essentially a man's world are obvious. Her accounts of station life beyond the homestead are mostly hearsay, whereas Graham's accounts of sheep and cattle work are based on experience – an exception being the garden space, which both he and Addy frequent, and letter-writing and reading at the homestead. Both writers, like those today on the land, continually comment on the weather, and certain rain patterns can be discerned from the entries, with rain falling at Amby Downs several days after Addy reports it at Borambil to the south. I have added some punctuation in the following extracts to assist the reader.

15 August 1865

Graham:

Went out with Bingham with a load of hurdles for Brays lambing down yard on Bendango creek, at work all day putting them up, fine day no prospect of rain.

[11] Gillian Whitlock, *The Intimate Empire: Reading Women's Autobiography* (London: Cassell, 2000) 42.

Addy

Mr. Powel came today to appraise the runs on the other side of the River. I put in melon seed today – it is still cloudy and a shower last night.

16 August 1865

Graham:

Took out rations to the men at lambing yard down the river, lovely day, bush fires in every direction brought up a load of sheep yard manure for the garden, took a walk with Lena in the evening. Fosberry came again & stayed all night. Postman came, a lot of letters but none of importance.

Addy:

Such a white frost and no sign of rain. Willie has gone out on the run with Mr. Powel – the latter goes on to Condobolin.

August 17

Graham:

Started with Arthur to go up to Pecks on the table land but saw smoke down the creek in the direction of one of the lambing yards, so went down to see where the fire was, stopped a good bit with the maiden ewes strong mob, the man in charge has got into tribulation with them rather put him right; the fire was fortunately a long way from our yards, left Arthur to finish the putting up of the last yard ... "Pathfinder" [his horse which had been caught up in a creek] died, a great loss to me. He was a first rate horse...

Addy:

Willie took me for a ride in the paddock to look for Emus but we did not see any.

18 August

Graham:

Went to the lambing stations ... no prospect of rain. [Further detail similar to above.]

Addy:

A letter from Wrunaway saying the sheep are dying fast for want of grass. My Turkey laid today.

10 September

Graham:

Hot disagreeable day again, read the service in the morng, [sic] read all the afternoon. Feels like rain but will not come down. Sky overcast early this morning – Lena [his wife] very sick, poor girl she suffers much her children ought to be good to her, if any thing happens to me after all she suffers on their account.

Addy:

Came up cloudy this afternoon and began to rain a steady rain about 8 oclock.

And the next day (*11 September)*:

Addy:

Rain continued last night until about one o'clock – and there has been a shower this morning – the aphis is spoiling all our cabbage.

One week later, *18 September*, Graham:

Thank goodness it has rained at last... nasty cold raw wind.[12]

It is the similarities in these entries, rather than the differences, that are most striking. Addy's style of writing and the content have changed considerably since she wrote as a younger woman from Wyagdon. Household and personal matters are practically ignored now, perhaps thought too mundane to be mentioned – although Addy is more likely than Graham to discuss the garden and its progress. Meanwhile Graham focuses on sheep management and things beyond the homestead. Social activity on the Lachlan was, of course, practically non-existent, as it was at Amby Downs, although travellers did drop in from time to time.

[12] Adelaide Bowler, 'Bowler (Suttor) Diaries and Memoirs 1840 –1890', (private collection, Sydney) book 1: 46–48; Mylne, 'Dairies of Graham Douglas Mylne' 24–28.

It might be construed from these extracts that differences are less likely to be found in male and female diaries when men and women lived beyond the social environment of closer settlement. In fact, greater differences can be found between both the male and female versions above and a typical entry from Addy's earlier diary. Writing as a younger self she reports:

> *1 June 1859*
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> A large party returned from Sofala today with Mr. Suttor – amongst the number Mr. Brady who I suppose had flattered and kissed all the children so much as part of his electioneering duty that he could not stop when he got here – for he said to Julia now really Mrs. Suttor I must congratulate upon your little girl she certainly is the most beautiful little creature I ever saw – look at the hand and foot quite in keeping with the face I assure you – perfect quite perfect and most elegant – unfortunately Emily was taking it all in.[13]

The difference in tone and emphasis when compared with Addy's later diary entries reflects, not only easy access to social activity as a single young woman, but also a lively interest in personalities, individuals and even politics. There is a wry joke at the expense of Mr Brady, and a suggestion too of the expectations placed upon Victorian women and their appearance. Addy shows concern that little Emily might, with praise being lavished upon her within her hearing, become inappropriately proud and conceited.

The cultural, social and even political matters raised in this short piece from Addy's earlier diary are useful in helping us better understand colonial life and behaviour in the more closely settled regions during the 1840s and 50s. They are useful too in telling us something of a young single woman's preoccupations at the time. Once married, Addy began to think (or at least to write) in a more economical and less personal way, making brief notes concerning more practical matters. Of course her increasing age may have been a factor, while isolation from the stimulation of female company could also have contributed to briefer and more practical entries. The Bathurst environment with all of its social and political activities, stimulated a younger Addy's already fertile imagination, leading to more expansive and self-reflective writing, which includes occasional suggestions of sexuality. Married life on

[13] AB book 1: 16.

the Lachlan provided no such inspiration, or even perhaps time or inclination, for imaginative diary entries – or indeed the need for the emotional release that her earlier writing appeared to provide.

Addy's passage from youthful enthusiasm to the sober responsibilities of marriage brings to mind an insightful extract from the novel *Middlemarch* (written during the 1860s and 70s), in which George Eliot's narrator explores the fictional fate of the idealistic Dorothea after her marriage to Will Ladislaw.

> Her finely-touched spirit had still its fine issues, though they were not widely visible. Her full nature, like that river of which Cyrus broke the strength, spent itself in channels which had no great name on the earth. But the effect of her being on those around her was incalculably diffusive: for the growing good of the world is partly dependent on unhistoric acts; and that things are not so ill with you and me as they might have been, is half owing to the number who lived faithfully a hidden life, and rest in unvisited tombs.[14]

As Addy found after her marriage to Willie Suttor, energetic idealism and imagination is finally channelled into practical concerns closer to home. In much the same way as Dorothea's ideals and expectations as a young girl later spent themselves in channels 'which had no great name on the earth', Addy's imagination was channelled into matters involving the garden and the day-to-day routine around the station. However, unlike the fictional Dorothea, Addy's writing has ensured that her tomb, or at least her life, *can* be revisited.

Although attempting to be a stoic and supportive wife, Addy, like Lucy Gray in north Queensland, must have been extremely lonely living so far from her family and friends. Loneliness at Borambil is revealed in a rare, self-conscious entry dated 25 February 1866, in which she questions herself and her attitudes:

> Willie has gone out to camp with the men at Wallaroy and I am quite alone the House seems so dark and desolate – perhaps this lonely and 'I had almost said' useless life is all I am fitted for – yet sometimes feel I should [be] a better and brighter woman for being knocked about amongst my fellow creatures in living so much to ourselves we are apt to think our own sorrows and pettie [sic]

[14] George Eliot, *Middlemarch*, ed. David Carroll (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990) 682.

> annoyances far greater than they are as we cannot compare them with the sorrows and troubles of others – a long continuance of it will make me harsh and impatient of the little differences and peculiar ideas of my friends – I sometimes fear I am growing hard and unlovable.[15]

This rather sombre, self-examining outburst, brought on by Willie being away overnight, is not typical of Addy, or at least not typical of her later diary entries. Nevertheless, it shows how lack of female company, or any company for that matter, could cause women to use their spare time in an examination of themselves and their circumstances. It was perhaps these feelings, together with a growing family requiring education, that finally convinced the Suttor family to move back closer to Bathurst. Meanwhile, far away to the north, Lucy Gray, with no children to take up her time, was using lonely days at Glendower as productive time in which to write her journal, sketch and paint.

Two days after the above self-examination a visitor arrives at Borambil, giving Addy some light relief from boredom. She writes: 'Mr Street came up today – we had our first salad from lettuces grown since the rain'. Pride in her garden, and the satisfaction in being able to harvest her own produce and share it with others, is a side narrative that runs throughout Addy's writing when at Borambil. In contrast, Graham Mylne mentions bringing sheep manure to the garden, but he does not dwell on the garden's progress, perhaps because it was not considered his domain. Harvesting produce from the home garden was not thought worth reporting when there were more important 'outside' issues to contend with. As such, Graham constructs his identity around matters concerning the management of sheep and men, remaining at the homestead only when necessary to 'read the service', attend to mail, or care for his sick wife. Addy constructs her identity around the homestead, but equally includes her husband's concerns and activities, thus allowing him into her discourse and promoting an interdependency that is not quite so evident in Graham's account.

The change of style in Addy's diary as a married woman cannot be attributed solely to isolation. When Addy and Willie return to live near the social hub of Bathurst her entries are still brief. The following is a little longer than most:

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[15] AB book 2: 1.

3 December 1884

> A dreadful day a strong gale blowing all day and the dust so thick the girls could not go to their lesson nor could the men work at the hay – nearly all our fruit is blown off and half the roof off my fowl house – the catapillers [sic] were thick upon the road as we came home yesterday.[16]

Much of the subjective detail of Addy's early diary that reveals so much about the cultural and social milieu of the period, and of Addy's innermost thoughts, is absent in extracts like this – although the unusually severe climatic conditions might be of interest to historians of meteorology. In most of these later entries the writer has ceased to explore personalities and life's little intricacies, and she appears to have lost the capacity, or at least the desire, to indulge her imagination. Cynthia Huff notes similar changes in her examination of the diary writing of British woman Marianne Estcourt. A single woman of twenty-seven when she commenced her diary, Estcourt was 'on a religious quest to make herself a better Christian through charity work and self-improvement'. She set high standards for herself in her diary writing as well. However, Huff notes that she wrote with concern on 21 January 1842: 'I get shorter & shorter more & more dry in this Journal'.[17]

Rather than detecting a marked difference between the writings of a man and woman of similar age and living during exactly the same colonial period in similar circumstances, a difference has emerged between the writings of a relatively independent young woman and the same woman as a responsible wife and mother. It might be useful then to look at extracts from a diary written by a single young man alongside some of Addy's earlier writings. To do this, I build upon my earlier observations of Edward Snell's diary, where I noted a distinct difference in emphasis, and in the recording of relationships between people and animals, informed by his efforts to construct an identity as a middle- or upper-class male pioneer. As I said, Snell's diary describes some of his experiences in South Australia, Victoria and Tasmania between 1849 and 1859. Like Lucy Gray, Snell was an artist, and his journal is interspersed with drawings that support and enhance the writing. While his written and pictorial texts present an interesting representation of colonial life, his

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[16] *Ibid.* book 2: 10.

[17] Cynthia A. Huff, 'Textual Boundaries: Space in Nineteenth-Century Women's Manuscript Diaries', in *Inscribing the Daily: Critical Essays on Women's Diaries*, ed. Suzanne L. Bunkers and Cynthia A. Huff (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1996) 130–31.

discourse is very much one of conquest and exploitation. Birds are there for rifle practice, Aboriginal women for amusement. This is a young man's account of his own exploits rather than of a 'self' that is relationally defined. He shows little respect for Aboriginal customs – although some of his written and pictorial descriptions may be of historical or anthropological interest today. Note the following gruesome description of Snell's discovery and treatment of an Aboriginal burial site, in the diary entry dated 19 December 1850.

> There were about 23 dead bodies on the roof, wrapped up in nets and Grass [sic] mats and all dried up to nothing, the flesh coming off the bones in long strips – a large bird was tearing away at them and flew off at our approach. There was a horrid stink about the place and Mackay and I capsized one of the bodies off the roof and tore its head off, but it was too stinking to carry away ... We went from Blackfellows' point down to the Goolwa house, shooting a spur winged plover on the road.[18]

Fig. 1 Drawing of burial site by Edward Snell. Caption reads: 'Native burying place at Blackfellow Point'. (Griffiths, ed., *The Life and Adventures of Edward Snell* 188.)

Again, I stress, it would be irresponsible of me to suggest that Snell's diary, which is full of similar (if less graphic) descriptions of his exploits, is representative of young colonial men's diaries in general. However, there is in this work an overall sense of the masterful gaze that can be seen elsewhere in male accounts. As such, it

[18] Griffiths, ed., *The Life and Adventures of Edward Snell* 187–88.

would perhaps be safe to say that, for many men, both young and old, the land and its inhabitants were seen as theirs for the taking. Meanwhile women like Lucy Gray and Addy Bowler were more accepting of the land and its inhabitants, and were happy to investigate, take part in, and record spatial events within which they did not feel the need to situate themselves as the central controlling force.

I have established that, in certain cases and under certain circumstances, the diary writings of men and women can have a similar structure and content. In the case of Addy Bowler and Graham Mylne the brief entries concerning Borambil and Amby Downs tell us little of the social and cultural milieu that informed the writers' lives and their texts. On the other hand, as I have shown by comparing the Snell diaries with the various other writings of Addy and Lucy, very different representations of colonial life can emerge which reveal much about the impact of contemporary formations of class, race and gender on lived experience. Perhaps we can conclude, again being wary of generalisations, that the diaries of young people with fewer responsibilities can be more revealing on various levels than the diaries of their elders, where less detailed and slightly more refined observations are more likely to be the norm – with perhaps ultimately a larger audience in mind.

I now move on to writing that depends upon memory in the hope that a close examination of certain texts might reveal historically significant differences in mediation based on cultural preconceptions and structures. Building upon my earlier discussion on memoir and memory in Chapter 1.1, I demonstrate that, even when discussing common subject matter in their memoirs, my male and female sources tend to place a different emphasis on certain aspects of their stories, and use different language to describe similar matters. I should stress again that Addy's memoirs tend to imitate the more expansive and imaginative discursive style of the first part of her diary, rather than the slightly laconic style of the later diary entries. It is interesting to note, also, that some of the subjects and themes discussed in the sections of Addy's writing that depend upon memory are not mentioned, or mentioned hardly at all, in her diaries. This is particularly true of events involving interaction with Aboriginal people, and it is to this interaction that I now turn.

Both Addy and her brother Adolphus (Dop), writing in the 1880s and 90s, recall relationships with Aboriginal people. However, a more compassionate understanding of Indigenous culture, and a more intense feeling for the plight of individuals' personal relationships, is evoked through Addy's writing. For example, Addy recalls a young Aboriginal boy thrown from a horse and killed when she and her husband lived at Borambil. She gives details of the burial, but the most interesting description is of the smoking ceremony that followed.

> In the afternoon of that day I was standing at the back door of my kitchen and I saw approaching two black women with pipeclay matted in their hair and plastered across forehead and chin and creeping slow[ly] with bowed heads, on tip toe and smoking boughs in their hands the Mother coming first they went into the Men's hut and wherever that boy had been they poked the smoking boughs – they then came to my kitchen and went through the same ceremony not speaking or making any sound – I of course standing aside not wishing to interrupt what I felt was to them a religious ceremony.[19]

By recalling her own part in the scene she describes, Addy is able to include her feelings as well. Sight and sound are dominant senses. The narrative is written in the first person, and the reference to the women 'not speaking or making any sound' highlights Addy's awareness of the importance of the occasion for them. She conveys the sense of a silent and mystical event in describing the women 'creeping slowly with bowed heads, on tip toe'. Her actions and feelings are made explicit when she describes 'standing aside not wishing to interrupt what I felt was to them a religious ceremony', and this gives an indication of how she respected this 'strange' ceremony. There is, too, language of the body, so common in women's writing: 'bowed heads', 'tip-toe', 'in their hands', 'in their hair' – and a mental image too, for the reader, of Addy's own body 'standing at the back door' and 'standing aside'.

Body positioning and sharing of self within women's texts are discussed by Verduyn. She refers to academic work that places a psychoanalytical focus on relational gender identity, and which points to a different sense of self in men and women. She reports on a certain feminist framework which sees in women's writing a departure from a vision of self as 'separate, unitary and autonomous', a vision

[19] AB book 2: 12.

supposedly detected in men's writing. Instead, there is a suggestion that 'women's sense of self exists within a context of deep awareness of others – the concept of women's self as relational'.[20] As early as 1987, social-science research suggested that men represent experiences of self, others, space, and time in individualistic, objective, and distant ways, while females represent experiences in relatively interpersonal, subjective and immediate ways. Discussing this, Sidonie Smith concludes that a woman's relationship to representation itself is radically different from that of a man.[21] This kind of female relationship can be detected in the above extract from Addy's memoirs.

In the same context, Australian Joy Hooton was concerned in 1990 that literary theorists were tending to ignore the gender aspects of autobiographies, and that they were concentrating on works by men. She notes that there are certain quite important differences between male and female autobiographies. Men, she says, 'are usually committed to the public duty of recording the facts of early settlement and the narrator's role in its establishment'. She says that 'accuracy, impersonality, and public spirit seem to have been the requirements of this genre', the result often being 'a humdrum guide-book flavour' in their live-writings. She sees women as 'luckier' in that they were 'allotted the more trivial genre of the supportive memoir, the record of pioneering life from the periphery'. Further, as Patricia Grimshaw points out (as cited by Hooton), the private world has now acquired a new interest, while the public has become 'as dated as its imperial frame'. It is, suggests Hooton, the immediacy of women's life writing, and the personal aspects that it contains, that make such material particularly attractive to the 'new historian'.[22]

Nor is women's life writing always purely subjective. For example, there is a lack of evaluative commentary in Addy's description of the smoking ceremony. She concentrates on the physical detail of what she observes, thus introducing a certain objectivity that is lacking elsewhere in her writing, and even in some male commentary. She refrains from drawing inferences beyond the religious significance of the women's actions, thus situating herself as a reliable and respectful recorder of

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[20] Christl Verduyn, 'Personal Papers – Putting Lives on the Line: Working with the Marian Engel Archive', in *Working in Women's Archives: Researching Women's Private Literature and Archival Documents*, ed. Helen M. Buss and Marlene Kadar (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2001) 95.

[21] Smith, *A Poetics of Women's Autobiography* 13–15.

[22] Joy Hooton, *Stories of Herself When Young: Autobiographies of Childhood by Australian Women* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1990) 9–10.

events. Earlier in the chapter I mentioned the impossibility of categorising writing as either subjective or objective. This is a good example of objectivity embedded in an otherwise subjective text, which is seemingly more direct and immediate because it is less evidently mediated through cultural preconceptions.

A relationally defined sense of self, or otherwise, as discussed by Verduyn, Hooton and Smith, can be discerned when we compare Addy's description of the smoking ceremony, with an extract from her brother Dop's memoirs. Dop has a great deal to say about the Aborigines that he encounters along the Lachlan, much of which appears to be mediated through current cultural and racial preconceptions of the space Aborigines should inhabit in relation to European progress. In describing Aboriginal behaviour, he does not situate his body within the discourse, nor does he use the same 'body' language as does his sister – language that involves sensitivity. He does, however, attempt to reconstruct actual dialogue, which she fails to do – and, unlike her, he promotes himself as very much in control of the situation.

The following extract is a good example of all these things. Dop and his brother were droving a mob of cattle down the Lachlan and were shorthanded at the time.

> A young blackfellow came that day and said he had left the lower Lachlan as a boy and wanted to get back, would I take him? I told him how Jimmy the black boy had left me with 300 head of cattle and [that I feared] he might serve me in the same way. "No fear, the blacks might kill me I been away so long. You bring gun and pistol, me good shot and fight for you". His name was Billy. While getting ready to start he made himself very useful in many ways and we all began to like him. It was from this chap I learnt the blacks [sic] language ... While camped at night he used to teach me how to talk and tell me stories of the blacks [sic] customs and habits.[23]

Note the absence of any mention, or even suggestion, of body, body parts or body positioning. For example: 'While camped at night', rather than 'while sitting together at night'. A sense of emotional attachment is suggested in: 'We all began to like him'. However, any admission of emotional attachment is qualified, or even excused, in the previous statement that the boy 'made himself very useful in many ways'. Dop is very

[23] Adolphus Chorley Robert Bowler, 'Memoirs 1834 –1899', (private collection, Sydney) 24.

much, as Hooton suggests, committed to the public duty of recording the facts of early settlement as he takes the narrator's role in its establishment.[24] Actions, rather than feelings, dominate the discourse. There is also in Dop's writing a suggestion of white male camaraderie, sense of loyalty, and willingness to take advantage of a situation for personal gain. We note, for example, that the Aboriginal boy Billy was accepted into the drovers' camp, not because the white men felt sorry for him, but because of his possible usefulness. By learning Billy's native language future negotiations between white and black people were more likely to go smoothly, thus ensuring a safer passage for the men and their cattle through otherwise hostile lands.

This 'male' style of writing can be seen too in an extract from the memoirs of Thomas Murray-Prior who ran the property now known as Hawkwood Station on the Auburn River in central southern Queensland, north-east of where Roma now stands. He writes quite affectionately about the Aboriginal men he had working with him.

> Black boys become very much attached to any one they are with. They have plenty of conversation, are intelligent, & make capital companions. On a journey, or when camping out by the campfire is the time to draw from them anything that they can tell you of the customs of their tribe.[25]

As in Dop Bowler's account, there is a one-sided Anglo-centric perspective in the above. 'Black boys' become attached to Europeans, not *vice versa*. The fact that they 'make capital companions' again situates the writer as benefiting from the companionship of the 'boys', rather than the other way around. Murray-Prior's continued dependence upon Aboriginal stockmen meant he came to know his men more intimately than station owners further south, where European help was more plentiful. The Bowler brothers appear to have used Indigenous workers on a more casual basis.

In the writings of both Dop Bowler and Thomas Murray Prior there are many aspects of bush life left unsaid. Anyone who has spent time in the bush knows that a special kind of intimacy can develop between people in isolated bush spaces. Bush riding provides a closeness that comes and goes depending upon the terrain. Riders

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[24] This trend is also noted by Amanda Nettelbeck in her investigations into foundation memoirs originating from South Australia. Amanda Nettelbeck, 'South Australian Settler Memoirs', *Journal of Australian Studies*, no. 68 (2001) 97–104.

[25] Murray-Prior, 'Thomas Lodge Murray-Prior Memoirs' 9.

are forced from time to time, due to the denseness of the scrub, to ride close together. Legs frequently brush, and even remain pressed together for short periods, as horses and riders weave their way through the undergrowth. Around the campfire hands touch, as quart pots or billies are placed on, and removed from, the fire. None of this is mentioned, or even suggested, in the texts generated by these two men from the colonial period.[26]

Sleeping in close proximity can also allow for a special intimacy, as the senses are stimulated by the sounds and smells of the bush, especially when it is raining. Personal matters, not normally discussed between men, slide more easily into conversations under such circumstances. However, when describing sleeping arrangements, Dop Bowler leaves such things to the imagination of the reader.

> The first night we camped out was a bit showery and Ernest and I slept under the dray, the two darkies, one on each side, under the edges of the tarpaulin that covered the dray.[27]

There is no language here that involves the senses, bodies, or any kind of intimacy. Evocative language involving sounds, smells, and even silences, is left out of this 'manly' discourse. Compared with Addy's description of the mourning women there is a distinct difference in discursive style and emphasis. Throughout his memoirs, Dop remains conscious of his male role and his responsibility as a narrator who has participated in the making of history and feels it is his duty to leave behind a record that participation. His language and discursive style is informed by cultural and racial attitudes considered acceptable at the time.

Language of the body can also be found in the journal of Lucy Gray. However, different ideological formations of class, gender and race appear to have informed the language and content of her text, which I discuss further in Chapter 2.3. Describing an Aboriginal girl who calls at a nearby station, Lucy writes:

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[26] Patrick White, never afraid to include sensitivity in his writing, mentions 'rubbing forward' when riding in a group in the bush, and Dame Mary Gilmore also recalls the intimacy of 'rubbin' stirrups' in an account of her own life in the bush. Mary Gilmore, *Old Days: Old Ways* (Sydney: Angus and Robertson, 1986) 45; Patrick White, *Voss* (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1958) 164–65.
[27] Bowler, 'Memoirs 1834 –1899' 9.

> She is a small black Venus. Beautifully shaped hands and feet and with slender fingers and big mournful eyes. Her dress, a blue cotton shirt, and a red blanket sets off her complexion.[28]

Here, details of hands, feet, fingers and eyes dominate the passage, just as they did in Addy's description of the smoking ceremony. There is also a suggestion of aesthetic admiration, with Lucy's artistic background encouraging careful observation of shapes, colours and form. Culturally, Lucy considers how well the colour of the girl's dress 'sets off' her complexion, just as she would have considered the colour that best suited her own. In this, the degree of difference between writer and girl is slightly diminished – although the suggestion of common humanity is dependent upon European standards of attractiveness. On the other hand, disturbingly, the term 'black Venus' may introduce a residual allusion to Saartjie Baartman, an African women known as Black Venus, who was brought to London in 1810 by a Dr William Dunlop for public exhibition, where she was treated like an animal.[29] Lucy's description in its entirety is, therefore, difficult to decode, emphasising the confusion and complexity of cross-cultural encounters, and representations of those encounters in the colonial situation.

The above extracts encourage consideration of, not only how ideas about race informed men and women's writings, and indeed their actions, but also of ways in which nineteenth-century constructs of femininity and masculinity were formulated. While common humanity is sometimes recognised in the writings of both Lucy and Addy, a concept of 'otherness' is also evident. This is especially the case in the writings of their male counterparts. To some extent, a certain attempt at objective, and even amateurishly scientific observation, supports Mills' comment that, for some female (and male) visitors to the colonies, the colonised country is constructed as simply 'a repository of unusual specimens which Europeans may explore and plunder at will'.[30] Lucy Gray, if not Addy Bowler, may have made some effort to observe Aborigines objectively, but neither women voiced any desire to 'plunder at will'. In fact, in the next chapter, I demonstrate how Lucy, unlike many of her male

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[28] Lucy Gray, 'Journal', 'Journal, Diaries, Correspondence and Fragments', *Lucy Gray Papers* (JOL OM 75–123) XXIIIc.
[29] Thabo Mbeki, 'South African President Mbeki on the subject of Saartjie Baartman: Letter from the President', http://www.nathanielturner.com/saartjiebaartman.htm [cited 12 January 2007].
[30] Sara Mills, 'Gender and Colonial Space', *Journal of Gender, Place and Culture* 3, no. 2 (1996) 136.

counterparts, became intimately involved in the natural environment in a physical, emotional and aesthetic sense and, as such, took possession 'without subjugation and violence'.[31]

So what can we discern from the above? Little difference was detected between the Mylne diary entries and those of Addy Bowler (Suttor) – entries written on the same days and in almost the same colonial context. Similarities are more noticeable, suggesting that certain married men and women, once separated from the social stimulation of closer settlement and companionship, experienced and contemplated more or less the same things, and described them in a similar way. Although the ideological division between public and private spheres is occasionally evident in emphasis on certain matters, the subject matter is generally similar. For example, while the female accounts are more inclined to include events adjacent to the house, such as turkeys laying and the progress of the vegetable garden, the male accounts focus on matters like yard building and lambing. However, the weather, something that affected everyone in the bush, is a common topic – as it still is today.

The greatest difference occurs when Addy's early diary writing from Wyagdon is compared with her later writing from Borambil. The Wyagdon entries offer a multilayered view of the social and cultural milieu that surrounded the life of a young, single, middle-class woman living within easy reach of 'civilisation'. This earlier writing is often more expansive, evocative and even questioning, whereas the later writing is somewhat stilted and sparse. As a young man, Edward Snell's diary echoes much of the male colonial discourse of the time, although he presents rather extreme examples of European dominance, control and destruction.

From an older man's perspective, Dop's memoir describes how difficult and challenging life was for men who worked together in the bush. When cross-cultural interaction is reported, it is depicted less sympathetically than by his sister. Contemporary cultural and racial expectations, both at the time of writing and at the time of the event being described, may have dictated this direction, making true objectivity problematic. In any case, 'unmanly' sensitivity was inappropriate in a

[31] *Ibid.* See also Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (London and New York: Routledge, 1992) 15–37.

male account. For example, in Dop's story about Billy, the Aboriginal boy is invited to join the droving party for what he has to offer his bosses, while the Aboriginal women in Addy's story appear to have had nothing to offer her. The female writer simply represents herself as a white woman allowing other women into her home to perform a religious ceremony. She anticipates no reward, either in a personal, emotional or material sense.

Whitlock sees this process of 'scripting the self in relation to others, through oppositions, intimacies and distinctions with and through others', as germane to colonial encounters in women's writing [32] Susan Blake, in her study of male and female travel writing in Africa has arrived at similar conclusions. Blake compares an account by Ewart S. Grogan, who was employed in the Colonial Service to investigate the possibility of putting a railroad through the 'backbone' of Africa, with an account of an unofficial trek through Africa undertaken by Frank Melland and Edward Cholmeley. These accounts are also compared with a narrative by a woman traveller, May Hall. Firstly, Blake reveals differences between the accounts of Grogan, and Melland and Cholmeley, in that Grogan's account emphasises his overbearing attitude of superiority and cruelty toward the native people, with empahsis throughout on the writer's manhood. The unofficial trek, as described by the other two men, suggests more compassion, but the issue of European superiority still lingers as an ever-present reminder of a recognised hierarchy. On the other hand, Mary Hall accepts a native African chief, with whom she negotiates safe passage, as a human being of equal status. A reciprocal agreement is reached as Hall recognises that the 'other' has a point of view and the right to express it'.[33] There are similarities, I suggest, between Mary Hall's behaviour and that of Addy Bowler where the Aboriginal women are concerned. There are also parallels between the attitude of the men in Africa and, to a lesser extent, the attitude of Dop Bowler towards the Aborignal boy.

A simple surface reading of the Bowler siblings' memoirs reveals different attitudes and discursive styles easily recognisable even by those unfamiliar with formal discourse analysis. Meanwhile, within the Bowler accounts lurk the ever-present dichotomies of public and private, male and female. For Addy, the cyclic world of the family exists regardless of cultural background, both Indigenous and

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[32] Whitlock, *The Intimate Empire: Reading Women's Autobiography* 43.
[33] Susan L. Blake, 'A Woman's Trek: What Difference Does Gender Make?', *Women's Studies International Forum* 13, no. 4 (1990) 347–55.

European women being represented by Addy as living in a world involving the senses and sensitivity towards others. Dop's less sensitive memoirs support the European concept of man as the provider and taker of opportunities. He situates himself within his writing as a central figure contributing to the development and progress of the colonial enterprise.

I now explore ways in which my primary sources represent the 'general' and the 'particular' in their writings. First, I look at an account of the employment of Kanakas,[34] or South Sea Islanders, as described by Lucy's brother-in-law, Robert Gray of Hughendon, in a book about his life in far north Queensland.

> I had obtained a few South Sea islanders, whom I had indented for when down in Bowen. They were from Kifu and Tanna. During the time they were with me (three years) they were very useful, made good shepherds, and were fairly good at lambing and bush work, but they did not thrive so well as on the coast alongside the salt water, and where a better supply of vegetables was obtainable. Several of my neighbours also employed kanakas, but eventually a law was passed restricting the employment of islanders to the coastal districts and sugar plantations,[35] and as reliable European labour became more plentiful inland, we were able to do without them.[36]

This is an historically useful account of 'Kanaka' employment in Queensland. Robert tells us something of the origins of the South Sea Islanders, and acknowledges their usefulness as shepherds. There is also comment as to their health and well-being and, finally, the reason why their employment at Hughenden and Glendower was terminated. However, individuals are not singled out, nor specific actions described. He provides the reader with generalisations rather than minute particulars.

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[34] I use the word 'Kanaka' in accordance with the terminology of the period.

[35] This was the *Polynesian Labourers Act Amendment Act* of 1877 which, among other things, stated that South Sea Islanders could not be employed more than thirty miles inland from the coastline. See Raymond Evans, Kay Saunders, and Kathryn Cronin, *Race Relations in Colonial Queensland: A History of Exclusion, Exploitation and Extermination* (Brisbane: University of Queensland Press, 1993) 153.

[36] R. Gray, *Reminiscences – India and North Queensland 1857–1912* (London: Constable, 1913) 117.

Lucy talks about the 'Kanakas' too, but in a more detailed and personal way, describing individuals, their unique personalities, their behaviour and their appearance.

> R [Robert] has a number of Kanakas (S.S. Islanders) for shepherds, etc. All those that happen to be living near the station come up in the evening to drink milk – there is a scarcity of vegetables – in fact they have none now & they are apt to get scurvy living on meat & bread only – there is a large dish of milk put outside on the ground for them. They all sit round on their heels & gravely drink pannikin after pannikin – first one & when he has finished he hands the mug to his next neighbour – til it has gone round & if there is still some left he begins again – then R talks to them about their sheep or their work whatever it is, [&] if they have any request to make – they deliberate solemnly & choose their spokesman who with great solemnity states his case. They are so fond of bright colors [sic]. They generally have some ornamental feathers or a bit of some bright stuff stuck in their hair. Not in their working times – only in the evening. One evening I had a bright crimson ribbon round my neck. Big Dick (my friend at the well) after staring at me for some time, came up & cautiously took the end of the ribbon in his fingers, gazing at it with awe. He then retreated & asked 'how much you sell me price of stuff like that'. I explained to him that I had none to sell. I gave him a piece afterwards which he wore with great pride in a tuft of cockatoo feathers in his woolly hair.[37]

Unlike Robert, Lucy includes intimate details. She notes the Islanders' love of bright colours, mentioning 'Big Dick' in particular, who fancies a colourful ribbon she is wearing. By describing the hair decorations the Islanders prefer, and the way they share the milk and discuss their problems with their boss, she adds a personal touch and a sense of mutual cooperation, which is missing in Robert's account. Through characterisation that involves the feelings and desires of the 'Kanakas' – 'fond of bright colours', 'took the ribbon in his fingers', 'gazing with awe' – rather than describing the men simply in terms of what they can offer the progress of Hughenden Station, Lucy adds an extra dimension as she vividly recreates an historical moment. This 'female' writing, informed by a Victorian background of nurturing, attention to

[37] LG, 'Journal' XIII–XV.

detail of dress, and consideration for the feelings of others, adds texture and colour to the previous more general and impersonal 'male' account.

Both narratives have something to offer and, when read together, provide a deeper understanding of one particular aspect of colonial life. By recognising this, a more enlightened picture of 'Kanaka' workers in the employ of a specific family emerges. Much has been written about cruelty to the so-called 'Kanaka slaves'. However, at the time, the civil war was raging in North America, ostensibly over the use of slave labour, and many humanitarians in Australia and overseas saw the 'kidnapping' of South Sea Islanders as little better than a new form of slavery in Australia. There is, of course, much evidence of ill-treatment. However, some employers reported that the men were 'docile, laborious, light-hearted, good-tempered and most faithful and affectionate', and 'honest and industrious workmen', leading to the conclusion that many of the Islanders were well treated and appreciated.[38] On Hughenden Station and nearby Glendower this appears to have been the case. However, as Robert says, after several years the Islanders were returned to employment nearer the coast. By then European labour was becoming more readily available and Robert and Charles were able to employ European men alongside Australian Aborigines. Even in coastal regions, there was politically motivated concern that the Islanders brought 'social contamination' and that the jobs of white working class men were being threatened by the employment of outsiders. Finally, an act was passed that Melanesian indenture was to cease after December 1890.[39]

Lucy's description of their 'Kanaka' servant Nungita cooking a meal introduces further characterisation, with again emphasis on the Islander's facial features and behaviour:

> You see Nungita calmly smoking his cigarette while cooking is in progress. He is very handsome with his black eyes, brown skin and white teeth. He takes great pains with his toilet & sits with a solemn air, his little looking glass perched on his knee, combing and arranging his hair with the greatest care and satisfaction. The river is close by which provides an unlimited number of bathes.[40]

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[38] Evans, Saunders, and Cronin, *Race Relations in Colonial Queensland* 157–66.
[39] *Ibid.* 152–56.
[40] LG, 'Journal' XXV.

Such descriptions involving an individual's appearance and behaviour evoke a special sense of space- and time-sharing not found in the male representations of colonial life I have examined, where linear telling of progress and achievement tends to prohibit its inclusion. Lucy offers a female perspective, providing details of domesticity that have, until recently, been regarded as 'unhistoric'. As time passes, such personal and spatial accounts will become more essential to a better understanding of this particular period of Australia's past, and essential too to a better understanding of some of the complex issues of racial interaction. Impersonal, objective accounts, consisting of empirical facts and figures, while necessary for a better understanding of colonial history in the traditional sense, leave little on which to base a true 'feel' for colonial conditions. Such written texts have the potential to nourish and inform the imagination, while revealing information and truths that might otherwise be lost.

Lucy also adds texture and colour by way of her pictorial texts. In the sketch below her favourite servant is depicted outside the Grays' first dwelling, a brush shelter. Here Nungita sits watching his campfire. Nearby are several cooking utensils, including a large camp-oven. A big black kettle stands by the Islander's feet. The man sits, hunched forward, seemingly deep in thought. For those who know the Australian bush bird calls can almost be heard, and the smell of eucalyptus leaves and the smoke of the fire seem to linger in the air.

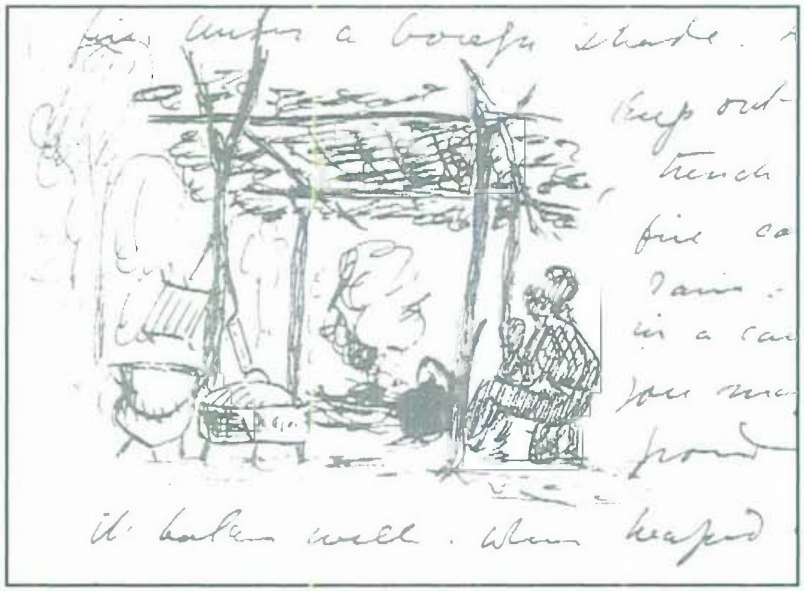

Fig. 2 Embedded in Lucy's journal is this evocative drawing of Nungita under the brush shelter that served as a kitchen. One can almost smell the eucalyptus and hear the bird calls. (LG, 'Journal' XXV, drawing slightly enlarged.)

The combination of written and pictorial illustration can be read as a multilayered text. Space seems to interact with time as Lucy captures a specific colonial moment with her pen. Although recorded a long time ago, the domestic element, with all its cyclic and timeless implications, gives the picture a real sense of place. There is tension, in this picture, between spatial and temporal separation and a kind of immediacy – but it is an elastic tension that tends to draw the past and present closer together, resulting in a shared feeling for a particular period of Australia's past.

On the other hand, Thomas Murray Prior, in the only sketch included in his handwritten memoirs telling of frontier life in central Queensland, leaves out the human and domestic element altogether (see Fig. 4). Instead, he presents us with a drawing of an early dwelling similar, he says, to the home at Hornet Bank where the Frazer family were murdered in 1857. Although this is a tiny picture, Murray Prior has, nevertheless, gone to trouble to demonstrate exactly how such a building was constructed. This is a useful record of a typical colonial building. It brings with it a depiction of European civilisation and of conquering the wilderness. As such, the house is a monument to progress. However, unlike Lucy's drawing, no human action is depicted. The house has been built, the builders have moved on – there is little sense of immediacy.

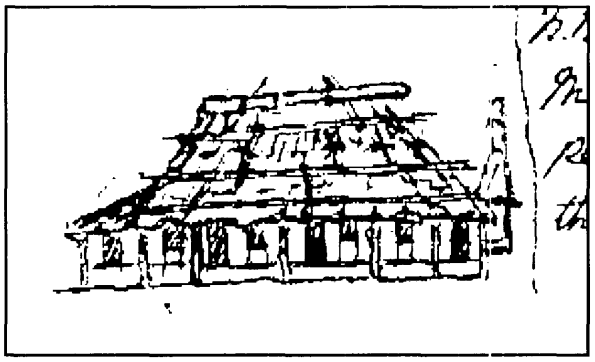

Fig. 3 Sketch by Thomas Murray Prior of a typical early Queensland homestead.

(Murray-Prior, 'Thomas Lodge Murray-Prior Memoirs' 26. Slightly enlarged.)

The subject matter in these two pictures is no doubt shaped by gender-based concerns. It should be remembered, too, that Murray-Prior almost certainly had less instruction in art than Lucy Gray, in particular with the drawing of figures. In any case, his drawing is typical of how many bush men thought of dwellings – simply as a base from which to go out and take part in men's business. Women, on the other hand, saw the homestead as an important space in which domestic action and 'real'

life for them took place. In that sense, the drawings are symbolic of two gender specific representations of colonial space. Or, in the words again of Joy Hooton in her discussion on memoirs: 'The pioneering memoir was a prescribed rhetorical structure which privileged the public, archiving self, if one was male, and the representative, supportive self, if one was female'.[41]

Through the examples above I have demonstrated that certain women left behind representations of colonial life that differed from those of their male counterparts, thus enabling historians who reference them to achieve a fuller and more comprehensive reconstruction of the past. Lucy Gray and Addy Bowler reveal through their various texts an intimate and human story, while Robert Gray, Adolphus (Dop) Bowler, Thomas Murray-Prior and Edward Snell 'rise above' domestic and sensitive personal matters, emphasising their own abilities, powers, and contributions to progress and prosperity.

With this said, Sidone Smith warns that both theorists and historians need to be aware of, and question, any underlying assumptions they might have about writing and sexual difference.[42] Gillian Whitlock supports this caution. She states that:

> Although feminist readings of women's autobiographical writing in particular tend to present autobiography as a unifying discourse where certain gendered qualities are constant, by their very nature colonial encounters highlight the inconsistencies and constructions of the self, even within the confines of the individual life.[43]

Such inconsistencies became obvious as I examined my source material. While detecting what might appear to be gender-specific discursive styles in some of the writings, in the diaries of a mature Addy Bowler (Suttor) and Graham Mylne similarities are more apparent than differences. However, within the confines of her own life Addy's construction of self, and the way she represents her surroundings, change with time.

It is important that we recognise, and attempt to explain, certain changes in an individual's writing that might reflect not only changing considerations of self, but also the changing cultural, social and even geographic environment in which that

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[41] Hooton, *Stories of Herself When Young* 21.
[42] Smith, *A Poetics of Women's Autobiography* 15.
[43] Whitlock, *The Intimate Empire* 41.

person lived and grew. However, we should be aware also that changing to a less expansive style of writing could simply reflect growing disillusionment with having to write in a creative way every day, especially when the enthusiasm of youth, and/or of experiencing things for the first time, is beginning to wane.

There are, then, many factors to take into account when analysing life writing by both men and women. The texts of Dop, Addy, Lucy, and even Graham Mylne, Thomas Murray Prior and Edward Snell insinuate and reflect the multilayered cultural meanings which Geertz says are present in even the smallest fragments of text.[44] Such meanings are embedded in gender-specific and even age-specific features of the representations I have been examining. Also, as Sara Mills suggests, it is not simply a question of the sexes writing in different ways – gender can be seen as a variable that exerts pressure on, not only the production, but also the interpretation of texts.[45] By recognising this, writers and readers of history can begin to respect the multitude of complexities inherent not only in colonial texts, but in colonial life in general. I argue that by examining women's life writing and associated pictorial texts, alongside the various texts generated by their male counterparts, the texture and colour of the colonial image is substantially enhanced.

[44] Cited by Catherine Gallagher and Stephen Greenblatt, *Practicing New Historicism* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2001) 26.
[45] Mills, *Gender and Colonial Space* 97.