

## Topic I: Quest for Identity and National Beginnings

### A. American Experience

The English were not the first in America. It was the Spanish, after all, who, in 1492, had commissioned the Genoa-born Cristoforo Colombo (or known as Christopher Columbus in English) to seek out a westerly route to the East Indies. His discovery of the New World was a happy accident. The continent itself was named after the Italian navigator Amerigo Vespucci. Ironically, though, Columbus never knew what he had actually found. Until his death, he refused to accept the truth that it was 'America'. He was of an idea that all the new land he encountered was merely the outer reaches of Asia. However, this discovery marks the colonization of America by European countries.

When James I (or James VI of Scotland who had been chosen by Elizabeth to succeed her) was King (1603-1625) the Puritans were often put in prison and sometimes even killed. The conflict also assumed a political character: between parliament and King, between Liberty and Autocracy. Some of the Puritans decided to leave England to find freedom in a new country. They sailed from Plymouth in 1620 in a ship called the 'Mayflower', and these 'Pilgrim Fathers'—as they were called—started a new life in America. The service which they held to thank God for their arrival, became a traditional annual festival in America called 'Thanksgiving'.

England made its first successful colonization in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century, and the first successful colony was established in Jamestown in 1607, and these colonies finally got their independence from Britain after the war of independence between 1775—83.

The early literature in American colonial time was mainly made by immigrants from England, and, therefore, the poems that were produced were much influenced by the English writing tradition to address the subject matter confronted in a strange, new environment. As the country developed, there were also poems which discussed different aspects of American life and nature.

**Anne Bradstreet** (c. 1612 – September 16, 1672) was an English-American writer, the first notable American poet, and the first woman to be published in Colonial America. Her work was very influential to Puritans in her time.

On July 10, 1666, her home burned down in a fire along with her personal library of books. This event which left the family homeless and in poverty inspired a poem entitled "Upon the Burning of Our House July 10th, 1666". She rejects the anger and grief that this worldly tragedy has caused her and instead looks toward God and the assurance of heaven as consolation.

Much of Bradstreet's poetry is based on observation of the world around her, focusing heavily on domestic and religious themes. Despite the traditional attitude toward women of the time, she clearly valued knowledge and intellect; she was a free thinker and some consider her an early feminist. (Adapted from *Highlights of American Literature*, p.6)



#### To my Dear and Loving Husband

If ever two were one, then surely we<sup>1</sup>.  
If ever man were loved by wife, then thee;  
If ever wife was happy in a man,  
Compare with me, ye women, if you can.  
I prize thy love more than whole Mines of gold 05  
Or all the riches that the East<sup>2</sup> doth hold.  
My love is such that rivers cannot quench,

Nor ought<sup>3)</sup> but love from thee, give recompense.  
 Thy love is such I can no way repay,  
 The heavens reward thee manifold, I pray. 10  
 Then while we live, in love let's so persevere<sup>4)</sup>  
 That when we live no more, we may live ever.

**Vocabulary:**

- 1) Anne's husband was Simon Bradstreet (1603-97). They were married in England in 1628.
- 2) East Indies.
- 3) an archaic word meaning "anything whatever"
- 4) likely accented on the second syllable

**Upon the Burning of Our House,  
 July 18th, 1666**

In silent night when rest I took,  
 For sorrow near I did not look,  
 I waken'd was with thundring nois  
 And Piteous shrieks of dreadfull voice.  
 That fearfull sound of "Fire!" and "Fire!", 05  
 Let no man know is my Desire.  
 I, starting up, the light did spye,  
 And to my God my heart did cry  
 To strengthen me in my Distresse  
 And not to leave me succourlesse. 10  
 Then coming out beheld a space,  
 The flame consume my dwelling place.  
 And, when I could no longer look,  
 I blest his Name that gave and took,  
 That layd my goods now in the dust: 15  
 Yea so it was, and so 'twas just.  
 It was his own: it was not mine;  
 Far be it that I should repine.  
 He might of All justly bereft,  
 But yet sufficient for us left. 20  
 When by the Ruines oft I past,  
 My sorrowing eyes aside did cast,  
 And here and there the places spye  
 Where oft I sate, and long did lye.  
 Here stood that Trunk, and there that chest; 25  
 There lay that store I counted best:  
 My pleasant things in ashes lye,  
 And them behold no more shall I.  
 Under thy roof no guest shall sitt,  
 Nor at thy Table eat a bitt. 30  
 No pleasant tale shall 'ere be told,  
 Nor things recounted done of old.  
 No Candle 'ere shall shine in Thee,  
 Nor bridegroom's voice ere heard shall bee.  
 In silence ever shalt thou lye; 35  
Adieu<sup>1)</sup>, Adeiu; All's vanity.



Make me thy Loom then, knit therein this Twine:  
 And make thy Holy Spirit, Lord, winde quills<sup>5)</sup>:  
 Then weave the Web<sup>6)</sup> thyself. The yarn is fine.  
 Thine Ordinances<sup>7)</sup> make my Fulling Mills<sup>8)</sup>. 10  
 Then dye the same in Heavenly Colors Choice.  
 All pinkt<sup>9)</sup> with varnished<sup>10)</sup> Flowers of Paradise.

Then clothe therewith mine Understanding, Will,  
 Affections, Judgment, Conscience, Memory,  
 My words and Actions, that their shine may fill 15  
 My ways with glory and thee glorify.  
 Then mine apparel shall display before ye  
 That I am Clothed in Holy robes for glory.

**Vocabulary:**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1) housewifery; the work of a housewife. Also thrift, making the most of something | 6) cloth                                   |
| 2) fully equipped; without defect  | 7) sacraments                              |
| 3) my  | 8) mills where cloth is beaten and cleaned |
| 4) emotions  | 9) adorned, shining                        |
| 5) fill spools with thread or yarn   | 10) bright, shinning                       |

**Upon A Spider Catching A Fly**

Thou sorrow, venom Elfe.  
 Is this thy play,  
 To spin a web out of thyselfe  
 To catch a Fly?  
 For Why 05

I saw a pettish<sup>1)</sup> wasp  
 Fall foule therein.  
 Whom yet thy Whorle<sup>2)</sup> pins did not clasp  
 Lest he should fling  
 His sting. 10

But as affraid, remote  
 Didst stand hereat  
 And with thy little fingers stroke  
 And gently tap  
 His back . 15

Thus gently him didst treat  
 Lest he should pet<sup>3)</sup>,  
 And in a froppish<sup>4)</sup>, waspish heate  
 Should greatly fret<sup>5)</sup>  
 Thy net. 20

Whereas the silly Fly,  
 Caught by its leg  
 Thou by the throate tookst hastily  
 And 'hinde the head  
 Bite Dead. 25

This goes to pot<sup>6)</sup>, that not  
 Nature cloth call.  
 Strive not above what strength hath got  
 Lest in the brawle  
 Thou fall. 30

This Frey<sup>7)</sup> seems thus to us.  
 Hells Spider gets  
 His intrails spun to whip Cords<sup>8)</sup> thus  
 And wove to nets  
 And sets. 35

To tangle Adams race  
 In's stratigems  
 To their Destructions, spoil'd, made base  
 By venom things  
 Damn'd Sins. 40

But mighty, Gracious Lord  
 Communicate  
 Thy Grace to breake the Cord, afford  
 Us Glorys Gate  
 And State. 45

We'l Nightingale sing like  
 When pearcht on high  
 In Glories Cage, thy glory, bright,  
 And thankfully,  
 For joy. 50

**Vocabulary:**

- |                                   |                                   |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1) ill-humored                    | 5) destroy                        |
| 2) part of a spinning wheel       | 6) put up, preserve               |
| 3) take offense, react negatively | 7) (fray), alarm, terror; assault |
| 4) fretful                        | 8) thin, tough hempen cord        |

**Phillis Wheatley** (1753 – December 5, 1784) was the first African American poet and the first African-American woman whose writings were published. Born in Gambia, Senegal, she was enslaved at age seven. She was purchased by the Wheatley family of Boston, who taught her to read and write, and helped encourage her poetry.

In 1775, she published a poem celebrating George Washington entitled, "To his Excellency General Washington." In 1776, Washington invited Wheatley to his home as thanks for the poem, and Thomas Jefferson republished the poem in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* as a result of Wheatley's audience with Washington.



Wheatley's poetry overwhelmingly revolves around Christian themes, with many poems dedicated to famous personalities. Over one-third consist of elegies, the remainder being on religious, classical, and abstract themes.<sup>[3]</sup> She rarely mentions her own situation in her poems. One of the few which refers to slavery is " *On being brought from Africa to America*":

She is known to use three different elements to create make her poetry meaningful: Christianity, classicism, and hierophantic solar worship. The use of classicism and Christianity do not only combine to make the structure of Wheatley's work completely pagan or Christian due to a third element used in her poetry, hierophantic solar worship (Shields 103). The hierophantic solar worship is what she brought with her from Africa; this is the worship of sun gods (depicting her African culture). This idea of the sun worship is significant due to the fact that her parents were sun worshipers. This is also why she refers to the different words for sun so many times. The word "Aurora appears eight times, Apollo seven, Phoebus twelve, and Sol twice" (Shields 103). The word light is of high importance to her, because it marks her history. Therefore the significance of her writing about it alludes to the past which she has left behind. But creating these experiences for the reader gives her work an emotional appeal that captures her readers.

But remembering that the word Sun can also be written as Son is important, inflicting a pun on the son of Christ which alludes to her biblical ideas of writing (Shields 103). Other biblical references include the references to muses.

*Adapted from Wikipadea/Phillis\_Wheatley.htm*



### To His Excellency General Washington

Celestial choir! enthron'd in realms of light,  
Columbia's<sup>1)</sup> scenes of glorious toils<sup>2)</sup> I write.  
 While freedom's cause her anxious breast alarms,  
 She flashes dreadful in refulgent<sup>3)</sup> arms. 05  
 See mother earth her offspring's fate bemoan,  
 And nations gaze at scenes before unknown!  
 See the bright beams of heaven's revolving light  
 Involved in sorrows and the veil of night!  
 The goddess comes, she moves divinely fair,  
Olive and laurel<sup>4)</sup> binds her golden hair: 10  
 Wherever shines this native of the skies,  
 Unnumber'd charms and recent graces rise.  
Muse<sup>5)</sup>! bow propitious while my pen relates  
 How pour her armies through a thousand gates,  
 As when Eolus<sup>6)</sup> heaven's fair face deforms, 15  
 Enwrap'd in tempest and a night of storms;  
 Astonish'd ocean feels the wild uproar,  
 The refluent<sup>7)</sup> surges beat the sounding shore;  
 Or thick as leaves in Autumn's golden reign,  
 Such, and so many, moves the warrior's train. 20  
 In bright array they seek the work of war,  
 Where high unfurl'd the ensign<sup>8)</sup> waves in air.  
 Shall I to Washington their praise recite?  
 Enough thou<sup>9)</sup> know'st them in the fields of fight.  
 Thee, first in peace and honours,—we demand 25

The grace and glory of thy martial band.  
Fam'd for thy valour, for thy virtues more,  
Hear every tongue thy guardian aid implore!

One century space perform'd its destined round,  
When Gallic<sup>10)</sup> powers Columbia's fury found: 30

And so may you, whoever dares disgrace  
The land of freedom's heaven-defended race!  
Fix'd are the eyes of nations on the scales<sup>11)</sup>,  
For in their hopes Columbia's arms prevails. 35

Anon Britannia<sup>12)</sup> droops the pensive head,  
While round increase the rising hills of dead.  
Ah! cruel blindness to Columbia's state!  
Lament thy thirst of boundless power too late.

Proceed great chief, with virtue on thy side,  
Thy ev'ry action let the goddess guide. 40  
A crown, a mansion. and a throne that shine,  
With gold unfading, WASHI NGTON! be thine.

**Vocabulary:**

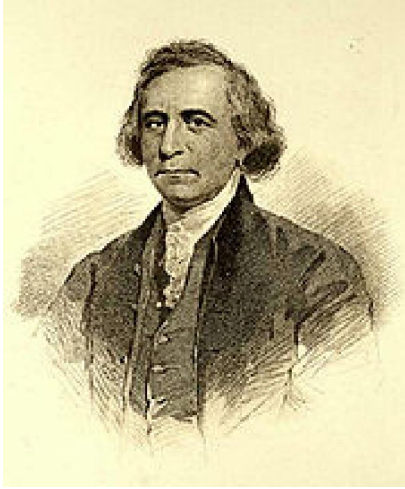
- 1) America (Columbia) is personified as a woman
- 2) efforts, refers to the war's battles
- 3) radiant
- 4) (olive branch) symbolizes peace and laurel symbolizes achievement (ancient Olympic winners received laurel wreaths)
- 5) one of the nine goddesses presiding over literature, the arts, and the sciences
- 6) in Greek mythology, the god of the winds
- 7) ebbing; flowing back
- 8) flag
- 9) you ( and thee as the object form of 'thou'), refers to not only the British, but to any power or force that might attempt to defy American Independence
- 10) French, the poet is referring to the victory of the colonists in the French and Indian War
- 11) The scales of justice (metaphor)
- 12) England

**On Being Brought From Africa To America**

'Twas mercy brought me from my *Pagan* land,  
Taught my benighted soul to understand  
That there's a God, that there's a *Saviour* too:  
Once I redemption neither sought nor knew,  
Some view our sable race with scornful eye,  
"Their colour is a diabolic dye."  
Remember, *Christians*, Negroes<sup>1)</sup>, black as Cair<sup>2)</sup>,  
May be refined, and join th' angelic train.

**Vocabulary:**

- 1) black
- 2) the slayer of Abel, see Genesis 4:1-15. The "mark" set upon Cain by the Lord was sometimes taken as the origin of the Negro.



**Philip Morin Freneau** (January 2, 1752 – December 18, 1832) was a notable American poet, nationalist, polemicist, sea captain and newspaper editor sometimes called the "Poet of the American Revolution".

Freneau was born in New York City, the oldest of the five children of Huguenot wine merchant *Pierre Fresneau* and his Scottish wife. Philip was raised in Monmouth County, New Jersey where he studied under William Tennent, Jr. He entered the College of New Jersey, now Princeton University, as a sophomore in 1768 to study for the ministry.

The non-political works of Freneau are a combination of neoclassicism and romanticism. His poem "The House of Night" makes its mark as one of the first romantic poems written and published in America. The gothic elements and dark imagery are later seen in poetry by Edgar Allan Poe, who is well known for his gothic works of literature. Freneau's nature poem, "The Wild Honey Suckle" (1786), is considered an

early seed to the later Transcendentalist movement taken up by William Cullen Bryant, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and Henry David Thoreau. Romantic primitivism is also anticipated by his poems "The Indian Burying Ground," and "Noble Savage."

"The Wild Honey Suckle" was virtually unread in the poet's lifetime, yet it deserves a place among major English and American works of poetry at that time. This nature lyric is the first to give lyrical expression to American nature. The idea for "The Indian Burying Ground" was suggested by that fact that some Indian tribes buried their dead in a sitting, instead of lying, position. This poem is marked by the use of "Reason" as an abstraction which is personified. (Adapted from Philip *Freneau-Poem and Biography by AmericanPoem.com, Wikipedia & Highlights of American Literature*, p.29)

### The Wild Honey Suckle

Fair flower, that does so comely grow,  
Hid in this silent, dull retreat,  
Untouched thy honied blossoms blow,  
Unseen thy little branches greet;  
    No roving foot shall crush thee here,           05  
    No busy hand provoke a tear.

By Nature's self in white arrayed,  
She bade thee shun the vulgar eye,  
And planted here the guardian shade,  
And sent soft waters murmuring by;           10  
    Thus quietly thy summer goes,  
    Thy days declining to repose.

Smit with those charms, that must decay,  
I grieve to see your future doom;  
They died—nor were those flowers more gay,           15  
The flowers that did in Eden<sup>1)</sup> bloom;  
    Unpitying frosts, and Autumn's power  
    Shall leave no vestige of this flower.



From morning suns and evening dews  
At first thy little being came: 20  
If nothing once, you nothing lose,  
For when you die you are the same;  
The space between, is but an hour,  
The frail duration of a flower.

**Vocabulary:**

1) Eden: garden that was the home of the first man and woman, Adam and Eva, as told in the Book of Genesis of the English Bible.

**The Indian Burying Ground**

*Published in 1788, this poem is the earliest to romanticize the Indian as a child of nature.*

In spite of all the learned have said,  
I still my old opinion keep;  
The posture, that we give the dead,  
Points out the soul's eternal sleep.

Not so the ancients of these lands— 05  
The Indian, when from life released,  
Again is seated with his friends.  
And shares again the joyous feast<sup>1)</sup>.

His imaged birds, and painted bowl,  
And venison, for a journey dressed, 10  
Bespeak the nature of the soul,  
Activity, that knows no rest.

His bow, for action read bent,  
And arrows, with a head of stone,  
Can only mean that life is spent, 15  
And not the old ideas gone.

Thou, stranger, that shalt come this way,  
No fraud upon the dead commit—  
Observe the swelling turf, and say  
They do not lie, but here they sit. 20

Here still a lofty rock remains,  
On which the curious eye may trace  
(Now wasted, half, by wearing rains)  
The fancies of a ruder race.

Here still an aged elm aspires, 25  
Beneath whose far-projecting shade  
(And which the shepherd still admires)  
The children of the forest played!

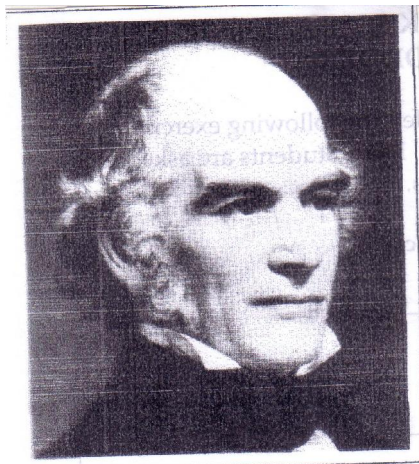
There oft a restless Indian queen  
(Pale Shebah<sup>2</sup>, with her braided hair)                    30  
And many a barbarous form is seen  
To chide the man that lingers there.

By midnight moons, o'er moistening dews;  
In habit for the chase arrayed,  
The hunter still the deer pursues,                    35  
The hunter and the deer, a shade!

And long shall timorous fancy see  
The painted chief, and pointed spear,  
And Reason's self shall bow the knee  
To shadows and delusions here.                    40

**Note:**

1. feast—"The north American Indians bury their dead in a sitting posture decorating the corpse with wampum, the images of birds, quadrapeds, etc., and (if that of a warrior) with bows, arrows, tomahawks, and other military weapons," (Freneau's note)
2. Shebah—queen of an ancient country in southern Arabia.



**William Cullen Bryant** (November 3, 1794 – June 12, 1878) was an American romantic poet, journalist, and long-time editor of the *New York Evening Post*. He was born on November 3, 1794, in a log cabin near Cummington, Massachusetts; the home of his birth is today marked with a plaque. He was the second son of Peter Bryant, a doctor and later a state legislator, and Sarah Snell. His maternal ancestry traces back to passengers on the *Mayflower*, his father's, to colonists who arrived about a dozen years later.

Bryant and his family moved to a new home when he was two years old. The William Cullen Bryant Homestead, his boyhood home, is now a museum. After just two years at Williams College, he studied law in Worthington and Bridgewater in Massachusetts, and he was admitted to the bar in 1815. He then began practicing law in nearby Plainfield, walking the seven miles from Cummington every day. On one of these walks, in December 1815, he noticed a single bird flying on the horizon; the sight moved him enough to write "To a Waterfowl".

Here, he uses the bird to reflect his personal perspective.

Bryant developed an interest in poetry early in life. Under his father's tutelage, he emulated Alexander Pope and other Neo-Classic British poets. *The Embargo*, a savage attack on President Thomas Jefferson published in 1808, reflected Dr. Bryant's Federalist political views. The first edition quickly sold out—partly because of the publicity earned by the poet's young age—and a second, expanded edition, which included Bryant's translation of Classical verse, was printed. The youth wrote little poetry while preparing to enter Williams College as a sophomore, but upon leaving Williams after a single year and then beginning to read law, he regenerated his passion for poetry through encounter with the English pre-Romantics and, particularly, William Wordsworth. (adapted from *Wikipedia*)

## To A Waterfowl

Whither, midst falling dew,  
While glow the heavens with the last steps of day.  
Far, through their rosy depths, dost thou pursue  
Thy solitary way?

Vainly the fowler's<sup>1)</sup> eye 05  
Might mark thy distant flight to do three wrong,  
As darkly seen against the crimson sky,  
Thy figure floats along.

Seek'st thou the plashy<sup>2)</sup> brink 10  
Of weedy lake, or marge oi river wide,  
Or where the rocking billows rise and sink  
On the chafed ocean-side?

There is a Power whose care  
Teaches thy way along that pathless coast—  
The desert and illimitable air— 15  
Lone wandering, but not lost.

All day thy wings have fanned,  
At that far height, the cold, thin atmosphere,  
Yet stoop not, weary, to the welcome land,  
Though the dark night is near. 20

And soon that toil shall end;  
Soon shalt thou find a summer home, and rest,  
And scream among thy fellows; reeds shall bend,  
Soon, o'er thy sheltered nest.

Thou'rt gone, the abyss of heaven 25  
Hath swallowed up thy form; yet, on my heart  
Deeply has sunk the lesson thou hast given,  
And shall not soon depart.

He who, from zone to zone,  
Guides through the boundless sky thy certain flight. 30  
In the long way that I must tread alone,  
Will lead my steps aright.

### Vocabulary:

1. hunter's

2. marshy, swampy

**Walter Whitman** (May 31, 1819 – March 26, 1892) was an American poet, essayist, journalist, and humanist. He was a part of the transition between Transcendentalism and realism, incorporating both views in his works. Whitman is among the most influential poets in the American canon, often called the father of free verse. His work was very controversial in its time, particularly his poetry collection *Leaves of Grass* (1855) with his own money, which was described as obscene for its overt sexuality.



Born on Long Island, Whitman worked as a journalist, a teacher, a government clerk, and a volunteer nurse during the American Civil War in addition to publishing his poetry. After a stroke towards the end of his life, he moved to Camden, New Jersey where his health further declined. He died at age 72 (1892) and his funeral became a public spectacle. Whitman was concerned with politics throughout his life. He supported the Wilmot Proviso and opposed the extension of slavery generally. His poetry presented an egalitarian view of the races, and at one point he called for the abolition of slavery, but later he saw the abolitionist movement as a threat to democracy. In “For You O Democracy”, Whitman shows his patriotic feelings towards his country. (Adapted from *Wikipedia*, 2009:par.1–3)

### For You O Democracy

Come, I will make the continent indissoluble,  
 I will make the most splendid race the sun ever shone upon,  
 I will make divine magnetic lands,  
     With the love of comrades,  
     With the life-long love of comrades.

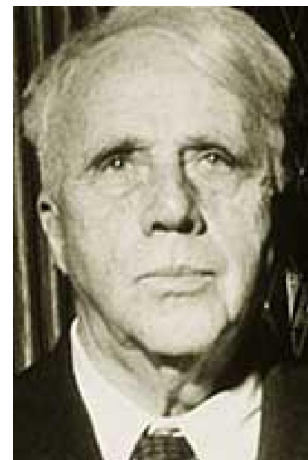
05

I will plant companionship thick as trees along all the rivers of America, and  
     along the shores of the great lakes, and all over the prairies  
 I will make inseparable cities with their arms about each other's necks,  
     By the love of comrades,  
     By the manly love of comrades.

10

For you these from me, O Democracy, to serve you ma femme!  
 For you, for you I am trilling these songs.

**Robert Lee Frost** (March 26, 1874 – January 29, 1963) was an American poet born in San Francisco, California and died in Boston. He is highly regarded for his realistic depictions of rural life and his command of American colloquial speech.<sup>[1]</sup> This makes him classified as a pastoral poet. His work frequently employed settings from rural life in New England in the early twentieth century, using them to examine complex social and philosophical themes. A popular and often-quoted poet, Frost was honored frequently during his lifetime, receiving four Pulitzer Prizes for Poetry.



Although his verse forms are traditional—he often said, in a dig at archrival Carl Sandburg, that he would as soon play tennis without a net as write free verse—he was a pioneer in the interplay of rhythm and meter. His poetry is thus both traditional and experimental, regional and universal. A sense of national feelings can be felt in “The Gift Outright”, and it was no wonder then that he chose it for the inauguration of President John F. Kennedy in January 1961. (Adapted from *Wikipedia*, 2009:par.1 & *An American Crab Bag*, 1984:1)

### Gift Outright

The land was ours before we were the land's.  
She was our land more than a hundred years  
Before we were her people. She was ours  
In Massachusetts, in Virginia,  
But we were England's, still colonials,  
Possessing what we still were unpossessed by,  
Possessed by what we now no more possessed.  
Something we were withholding made us weak  
Until we found out that it was ourselves  
We were withholding from our land of living,  
And forthwith found salvation in surrender.  
Such as we were we gave ourselves outright  
(The deed of gift was many deeds of war)  
To the land vaguely realizing westward,  
But still unstoried, artless, unenhanced,  
Such as she was, such as she would become.



The first inaugural poet, Robert Frost, recited "The Gift Outright" for John F. Kennedy in 1961.

### **B. Australian Experience**

The Industrial Revolution in Europe was marked with the invention of the steam engine by a Scottish engineer named James Watts (1736-1819). Rural populations, despite their isolation from urban centers, found themselves directly affected by the events of the Industrial Revolution. Factories brought about a decline in cottage industry and a consequent loss of vital income, especially during winter months. If previously the countryside continued to hold the bulk of the population, cities grew in size and number once the steam engine made it practical to bring together large concentration of men, women, and children to work in factories. In cities, communication and transportation were more accessible which made it easier for central bureaucracies to collect taxes

from the citizens. This overcrowded population was a menace to the city life, which was, among other things, responsible for the emergence of many crime-ridden areas. Meanwhile, laws were harsh and many people were imprisoned for trivial offences. Prisons were overcrowded and sometimes the hulks of old ships were used as gaols. The British government thought that New Holland, as Australia was then called, might be a suitable place to establish a penal settlement, and hoped that one day it might become a rich colony. In 1788, a convict fleet was sent to Botany Bay under the command of Captain Arthur Phillip.

Prior to Phillip's arrival in Australia, in 1768 the British Government sent a scientific party to the Pacific Ocean in HMS *Endeavour*, commanded by James Cook. Cook's instructions were to observe an eclipse of the sun by Venus then explore the coastlines of the south lands. For two years Cook carefully charted the islands of New Zealand. In 1770 he explored the east coast of Australia as far north as Cape York, where he claimed possession of the land for King George III. He called it New South Wales. Australia was at last to be conquered and 'civilized'

#### **Early Verse: the 1780s--the 1800s**

The following texts are 'broadside ballads' - that is poems or songs that were printed on large sheets of paper and sold very cheaply in the streets and other public places of Britain from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries. Broadside, or 'street-ballads' as they are sometimes termed, carried out many of the functions of the newspaper and, indeed, were the direct predecessors of that media form. Composed by usually anonymous literary 'hacks' writing at speed and for an audience apparently hungry for the lurid, the broadsides carried usually sensational stories in verse about murders, robberies, rapes, scandals, politics and other topical concerns. Often the seller of the broadsides would sing them to folk and popular tunes and many broadsides passed into oral circulation, still being collected from singers even in recent years. Although this does not seem to have happened to the following texts, they are good examples of the popular attitudes prevalent at the time that New South Wales was being developed as a penal settlement, from 1788.



#### **Botany Bay, A New Song** (Anonymous)

Let us drink a good health to our schemers above,  
Who at length have contrived from this land to remove  
Thieves, robbers and villains, they'll send 'em away,  
To become a new people at Botany Bay.

Some men say they have talents and trades to get bread,      05  
Yet they sponge on mankind to be cloathed and fed,

They'll spend all they get, and turn night into day,  
Now I'd have all such sots to Botany Bay.

There's gay powder'd coxcombs and proud dressy fops,  
Who with very small fortunes set up in great shops, 10  
They'll run into debt with design ne'er to pay,  
They should all be transported to Botany Bay.

The tradesmen who play at cards, billiards and dice,  
Must pay for their goods an extravagant price,  
No faith I'm mistaken such rogues never pay,  
Therefore they should all go to Botany Bay.

Many men they are married to good-natur'd wives,  
They'll run after wenches and lead debauch'd lives;  
Our wise legislature should send such away,  
To support their system in Botany Bay.

There's night-walking strumpets who swarms in each street  
Proclaiming their calling to each man they meet;  
They become such a pest that without delay,  
These corrupters of youth should be sent to Botany Bay.

There's monopolisers who add to their store, 25  
By cruel oppression and squeezing the poor,  
There's butchers and farmers get rich quick in that way,  
But I'd have all such rogues sent to Botany Bay.

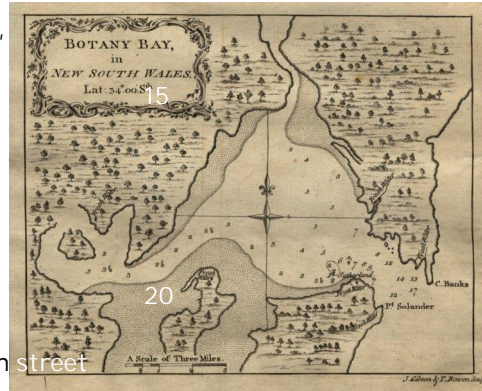
We've great men above and gentry below,  
They'll talk much of honour, and make a great show, 30  
But yet never think their poor tradesmen to pay,  
Such defaulters I'd have sent to Botany Bay.

You lecherous whoremasters who practise vile arts  
To ruin young virgins and break parents hearts,  
Or from the fond husband the wife leads astray, 35  
Let such debauch'd stallions be sent to Botany Bay.

And that we may sweep our foul nation quite clean,  
Send off the shop-tax promoters<sup>1)</sup> so mean,  
And those who deprive the light of the day,  
Should work for a breakfast at Botany Bay. 40

The hulks and the jails had some thousands in store,  
But out of the jails are ten thousand times more,  
Who live by fraud, cheating, vile tricks, and foul play,  
They should all be sent over to Botany Bay.

Now, should any take umbrage, at what I have writ, 45  
Or here find a bonnet or cap that will fit,





To such I have only this one word to say,  
There are all welcome to wear it at Botany Bay.

1) **the shop-tax promoters** - a reference to the tax on shops and windows proposed by the government of William Pitt, the younger.

**Botany Bay**  
(Anonymous)

Away with these whimsical bubbles of air  
Which only excite a momentary stare;  
Attention to plants of utility pay,  
Weigh anchor, and steer for Botany Bay.

Let no-one think much of a trifling expense,  
Who knows what may happen a hundred years hence?  
The loss of America what can repay?  
New colonies seek for at Botany Bay.

O'er Neptune's domain, how extensive the scope,  
Of quickly returning, how defiant the hope.  
The Capes must be doubled, and then bear away  
Three thousand good leagues to reach Botany Bay.

Of those precious souls who for nobody care,  
It seems a large cargo the kingdom can spare,  
To ship off a gross or two, make no delay,  
They cannot too soon go to Botany Bay.

They go to an island to take personal charge,  
Much warmer than Britain, and ten times as large,  
No custom-house duty, no freightage to pay,  
And tax free they live when at Botany Bay.

This garden of Eden, this new promised land,  
The time to set sail for will soon be at hand;  
Ye worst of land of land-lubbers make ready for sea,  
There's room for you all about Botany Bay.

For a general good make a general sweep,  
The beauty of life in good order to keep,  
With night-prowling hateful disturbers away,  
And send the whole tribe unto Botany Bay.

Ye chiefs who go out on this naval exploit,  
The work to accomplish, and set matters right,  
To Ireland be kind, call at Cork on your way,  
And take some White Boys<sup>1)</sup> unto Botany Bay.

Commercial arrangements give prospects of joy,



Sydney Cove, Port Jackson. 1788 from William Bradley's *A Voyage to New South Wales* 1786. 07



Fair and firm may be kept every national tie,  
And mutual confidence may those who betray  
Be sent to the bottom of Botany Bay.

35

## 1) **White Boys** - Irish anti-English agitators

### **Convict Poetry and Song**

The ballad "The Female Transport" takes the theme of transportation to penal settlements in NSW and Van Diemen's Land, as Tasmania was known at the time. Many such ballads were produced and a number of them are still collected from traditional singers in Australia, Britain and elsewhere.



### **The Female Transport** (Anonymous)

Come all young girls, both far and near, and listen unto me,  
While unto you I do unfold what proved my destiny,  
My mother died when I was young, it caused me to deplore,  
And I did get my way too soon upon my native shore.

Sarah Collins is my name, most dreadful is my fate, 05  
My father reared me tenderly, the truth I do relate,  
Till enticed by bad company along with many more,  
It led to my discovery upon my native shore.

My trial it approached fast, before the judge I stood, 10  
And when the judge's sentence passed it fairly chilled my blood,  
Crying, 'You must be transported for fourteen years or more,  
And go from hence across the seas unto Van Diemen's shore.'

It hurt my heart when on a coach I my native town passed by;  
To see so many I did know, it made me heave a sigh;  
Then to a ship was sent with speed along with many more, 15  
Whose aching hearts did grieve to go unto Van Diemen's shore.

The sea was rough, ran mountains high, with us poor girls 'twas hard,  
No one hut God to us came nigh, no one did us regard.  
At length, alas! we reached the land, it grieved us ten times more,  
That wretched place Van Diemen's Land, far from our native shore. 20

They chained us two by two, and whipped and lashed along,  
They cut off our provisions if we did the least thing wrong;  
They march us in the burning sun until our feet are sore,  
So hard's our lot now we are got to Van Diemen's shore.

We labour hard from morn to night until our bones do ache, 25  
Then every one they must obey, their mouldy beds must make;  
We often wish when we lay down we ne'er may rise no more  
To meet our savage Governor upon Van Diemen's shore.

Every night when I lay down I wet my straw with tears,  
While wind upon that horrid shore did whistle in our ears, 30  
Those dreadful beasts upon that land around our cots do roar,  
Most dismal is our doom upon Van Diemen's shore.

Come all young men and maidens, do bad company forsake,  
If tongue can tell our overthrow it will make your heart to ache;  
Young girls I pray be ruled by me, your wicked ways give o'er, 35  
For fear like us you spend your days upon Van Diemen's shore.

### **'Frank The Poet'**

This text is usually attributed to Francis McNamara (1811--?), (alias Goddard) transported in 1832 for 'uttering' or distributing forged bank notes. Known as 'Frank the Poet', McNamara's works were well-known amongst the convicts and ex-convicts of the 1820s and after. This ballad provide an interpretation of early colonial life from the convicts' point of view.

### **Labouring with the Hoe**

I was convicted by the laws of England's hostile crown,  
Conveyed across those swelling seas in slavery's letters bound,  
For ever banished from that shore where love and friendship grow,  
That loss of freedom to deplore and work the labouring hoe.

Despised, rejected and oppressed in tattered rags I m clad. 05  
What anguish fills my aching breast and almost drives me mad,  
When I hear the settler's threatening voice say, 'Arise! to labour go,  
Take scourging, convicts, for your choice or work the labouring hoe.'

Growing weary from compulsive toil beneath the noon-tide sun,  
While drops of sweat bedew the soil my task remains undone. 10  
I'm flogged for wilful negligence, or the tyrants call it so.  
Ah what a doleful recompense for labouring with the hoe.

Behold yon lofty woodbine hills where the rose in the morning shines,  
Those crystal brooks that do distil and mingle through those vines,  
There seems to be no pleasures gained: they but augment my woe, 15  
Whilst here an outcast doomed to live and work the labouring hoe.

You generous sons of Erin's Isle, whose heart for glory burns,  
Pity a wretched exile who his long-lost country mourns.  
Restore me heaven to liberty whilst I lie here below,  
Untie that clew of bondage and release me from the hoe. 20

### Early Bushranging Ballad

The two ballads, "Bold Jack Donahoe" and "Jim Jones at Botany Bay" concerning the activities and the fate of Jack Donahoe, an early bushranging hero.

**Jack Donahue** (1804 — 1 September, 1830), sometimes called **John Donohue**, was a famous Australian bushranger. With the exception of Ned Kelly, there have been more songs, poems and stories about him than any other bushranger. He quickly became a folk hero. Governor Ralph Darling told hotel owners they would have their hotels closed if they allowed people to sing songs about Donahue.

Jack Donahue was born in Dublin, Ireland in 1804. He was in trouble with the police for his political activities to gain independence for Ireland. In 1824, he was found guilty of "intent to commit a felony". This means he was going to do something wrong, but he had not done it yet. He was sent to Sydney on the convict ship *Ann and Amelia*, which arrived on 2 January, 1825. He was sent to work for a Mr. Pagan at Parramatta. He was soon in trouble and put to work on a road gang. Major West, at Quaker's Hill, employed Donahue to look after his pigs.

With two other men, George Kilroy and Bill Smith, he held up some carts on the Richmond Road. The police soon caught them and the court sentenced them to death. As he was being taken back to gaol (jail) in Sydney he escaped. The government offered a reward of £20 for his capture.

"**Jim Jones at Botany Bay**" is a traditional Australian folk ballad written as early as 1907. The narrator, Jim Jones, is found guilty of an unnamed crime and sentenced to transportation. En route, his ship is attacked by pirates, but the crew holds them off. Just when the narrator remarks that he would rather have joined the pirates or indeed drowned at sea than gone to Botany Bay, he is reminded by his captors that any mischief with be met with the whip. The final verse sees the narrator describing the daily drudgery and degradation of life in the penal colony, and dreaming of joining the bushrangers and taking revenge on his floggers.



Capture and Death of Ben Hall, the Bushranger, Illustrated Australian News, 17 July 1880

### Bold Jack Donahue

(Anonymous)

In Dublin town I was brought up, in that city of great fame  
My decent friends and parents, they will tell to you the same.  
It was for the sake of five hundred pounds I was sent across the main,  
For seven long years in New South Wales to wear the convict's chain.

*Chorus:*

Then come, my hearties, we'll roam the mountains high! 05  
Together we will plunder, together we will die!  
We'll wander over the mountains and we'll gallop over plains  
For we scorn to live in slavery, bound down with iron chains.

I'd scarce been there twelve months or more upon the Australian shore,  
When I took to the highway, as I'd oft-times done before. 10  
There was me and Jacky Underwood, Webber and Walmsley too,  
These were the true associates of bold Jack Donahoe.

Now Donahoe was taken, all for a notorious crime,  
And sentenced to be hanged upon the gallows-tree so high.  
But when they came to Sydney gaol he left them in a stew, 15  
And when they came to call the roll they missed bold Donahoe.

As Donahoe made his escape, to the bush he went straightway.  
The people they were all afraid to travel night and day—  
For every week in the newspapers there was published something new  
Concerning, this dauntless hero, the bold Jack Donahoe! 20

As Donahoe was cruising, one summers afternoon,  
Little was his notion his death was near so soon,  
When a sergeant of the horse police discharged his car-a-bine,  
And called aloud on Donahoe to fight or to resign.

'Resign to you - you cowardly dogs! a thing I ne'er will do, 25  
For I'll fight this night with all my might,' cried bold Jack Donahoe.  
'I'd rather roam these hills and dales, like wolf or kangaroo  
Than work one hour for Government!' cried hold Jack Donahoe.

He fought six rounds with the horse police until the fatal ball,  
Which pierced his heart with cruel smart, caused Donahoe to fall. 30  
And as he closed his mournful eyes, he bade this world Adieu  
Saying, 'Convicts all, pray for the soul of Bold Jack Donahoe!'

**Jim Jones at Botany Bay**  
(Anonymous)

O, listen for a moment lads, and hear me tell my tale  
How, o'er the sea from England's shore I was compelled to sail.

The jury says 'he's guilty, sir,' and says the judge, says he  
For life, Jim Jones, I'm sending you across the stormy sea;

And take my tip, before you ship to join the Iron-gang, 05  
Don't be too gay at Botany Bay, or else you'll surely hang -

Or else you'll surely hang,' says he - 'and after that, Jim Jones,  
High up upon th' gallow-tree the crows will pick your bones.

You'll have no chance for mischief then; remember what I say,  
They'll flog th' poachin' Out of you, out there at Botany Bay! 10

The winds blew high upon th' sea, and th' pirates came along,  
But the soldiers on our convict ship were full live hundred strong.

They opened fire and somehow drove that pirate ship away.  
I'd have rather joined that pirate ship than have come to Botany Bay:

For night and day the irons clang, and like poor galley slaves 15  
We toil, and toil, and when we die must fill dishonoured graves.

But bye-and-bye I'll break my chains: into the hush I'll go.  
And join the brave bushrangers - Jack Donohoe and Co.;



An Austral Shakespeare rise, whose living page 25  
 To nature true may charm in ev'ry age; --  
 And that an Austral Pindar daring soar,  
 Where not the Theban eagle reach'd before.  
 And, O Britannia! shouldst thou cease to ride  
 Despotie Empress of old Ocean's tide; -- 30  
 Should thy tamed Lion -- spent his former might, --  
 No longer roar the terror of the fight; --  
 Should e'er arrive that dark disastrous hour,  
 When bow'd by luxury, thou yield'st to pow'r; --  
 When thou, no longer freest of the free, 35  
 To some proud victor bend'st the vanquish'd knee; --  
 May all thy glories in another sphere  
 Relume, and shine more brightly still than here;  
 May this, thy last-born infant, then arise,  
 To glad thy heart and greet thy parent eyes; 40  
 And Australasia float, with flag unfurl'd,  
 A new Britannia in another world.

**Vocab:**

celestial = (lit. use) very beautiful poesy = (old use) poetry genial = hospitable sway = literary power to rule/control people shed = send out Arctic = the large area of land surrounding the North Pole Lapland = region in northern Norway, Sweden, Ireland, and the Soviet Union Boreal = northern; pertaining to the north Phoebus = the sun Castalia = a spring on Mount Parnassus in Greece, sacred to Apollo and the Muses and regarded as a source of poetic inspiration Hippocrene = a spring on Mount Helicon in Greece, sacred to the Muses and regarded as a source of poetic inspiration Fane = (arch) temple Pellucid = clear as water, almost transparent Rill = a small brook Warragamba = the name of a river (crossing Sydney) Twain = (old use) two Primeval = original; belonging to the first or earliest period	Gracious = kind Kindling = becoming excited Lyre = harplike musical instrument of ancient Greece; here maybe a lyric, a poem Lain = (pp, lie) Uncouth = coarse; not polished Strain = a passage/ piece of poetry Austral = Australia Pactolus = a small river in ancient Lydia (an ancient kingdom in western Asia minor); famous for the gold washed from its sands Pindar = (518-438BC) Greek lyric poet, who was a religious conservative and showed the gods as powerful, righteous forces Daring = brave; taking risk Theban = (from Thebe) a city of ancient Greece, a rival of ancient Athens Despotie = ruler with unlimited power Yield = surrender Victor = a conqueror Vanquished = defeated Relume = to light up
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**Barron Field** (23 October 1786 – 11 April 1846) , an English-born Australian judge and poet, was the second son of Henry Field, a well-known London surgeon and apothecary and a direct descendant of Oliver Cromwell, and Esther, née Barron. Barron Field was educated as a barrister. He was a great student of poetry and frequently contributed to the press. He became acquainted with Charles Lamb and his circle; at Lamb's house on 23 May 1815 he met Wordsworth, Field, and Talfourd.

In 1816 Field accepted a commission as judge of the Supreme Court of New South Wales, and arrived in Sydney on 24 February 1817. Governor Macquarie, writing to Under-secretary Goulburn in April thanked him "for making me acquainted with Mr Field's character.

In 1819 he published *First Fruits of Australian Poetry*; the first volume of verse, although it had only twelve pages, issued in Australia. Lamb reviewed it far too kindly in the *Examiner* for 16 January 1820. An enlarged edition appeared in 1823.

### The Kangaroo

Kangaroo, Kangaroo!  
 Thou Spirit of Australia,  
 That redeems from utter failure,  
 From perfect desolation,  
 And warrants the creation 05  
 Of this fifth part of the Earth,  
 Which would seem an after-birth,  
 Not conceiv'd in the Beginning  
 (For GOD bless'd His work at first,  
 And saw that it was good), 10  
 But emerg'd at the first sinning,  
 When the ground was therefore curst; --  
 And hence this barren wood!

Kangaroo, Kangaroo!  
 Tho' at first sight we should say, 15  
 In thy nature that there may  
 Contradiction be involv'd,  
 Yet, like discord well resolv'd,  
 It is quickly harmonized.  
 Sphinx or mermaid realiz'd, 20  
 Or centaur unfabulous,  
 Would scarce be more prodigious,  
 Or Labyrinthine Minotaur,  
 With which great Theseus did war  
 Or Pegasus poetical, 25  
 Or hippogriff -- chimeras all!  
 But, what Nature would compile,  
 Nature knows to reconcile;  
 And Wisdom, ever at her side,  
 Of all her children's justified. 30

She had made the squirrel fragile;  
 She had made the bounding hart;  
 But a third so strong and agile  
 Was beyond ev'n Nature's art;  
 So she join'd the former two 35  
 In thee, Kangaroo!  
 To describe thee, it is hard:  
 Converse of the camélopard,  
 Which beginneth camel-wise,  
 But endeth of the panther size, 40  
 Thy fore half, it would appear,



Had belong'd to some "small deer,"  
 Such as liveth in a tree;  
 By thy hinder, thou should'st be  
 A large animal of chace, 45  
 Bounding o'er the forest's space; --  
 Join'd by some divine mistake,  
 None but Nature's hand can make --  
 Nature, in her wisdom's play,  
 On Creation's holiday. 50

For howsoe'er anomalous,  
 Thou yet art not incongruous,  
 Repugnant or preposterous.  
 Better-proportion'd animal,  
 More graceful or ethereal, 55  
 Was never follow'd by the hound,  
 With fifty steps to thy one bound.  
 Thou can'st not be amended: no;  
 Be as thou art; thou best art so.

When sooty swans are once more rare,  
 And duck-moles the Museum's care,  
 Be still the glory of this land,  
 Happiest Work of finest Hand!

**Vocab:**

<p>Redeem = to make up for          Utter = arid          Desolation = absolute          Warrant = guarantee          Sinning = Doing wrong/committed sin          Curst = (adj) cursed          Discord = Disagreement/lack of harmony          Resolved = solved          Centaur =(Gk myth) fabulous creature half man &amp; half horse          Unfabulous = real          Scarce = Rare          Prodigious = Enormous/wonderful          Labyrinthine = (adj) network of winding paths, etc through which it is difficult to find one's way without help; (fig) entangled state of affairs          Minotaur = (Gk Myth) monster, half man &amp; half bull, fed with human flesh, kept in the labyrinth in Crete          Theseus = (Gk legend) the chief hero of Attica, son of Aegeus, said to have organized a constitutional government and united the separate states at Athens. Among his many exploits, he found his way through the Cretan labyrinth (aided by Ariadne, whom he loved but deserted), and slew the Minotaur, fought the Amazons, was one of the Argonauts, and took part in the Calydonian hunt.</p>	<p>Pegasus = (Gk myth) a winged horse, sprung from the blood of Medusa when slain by Perseus, who with a stroke of his hoof caused the spring Hippocrene to open up on Mount Helicon, from which came the modern association with the Muses and poetry          Hippogriff = mythical beast that is in part griffin, but with a horse's body and hind-quarters          Chimeras =(Gk myth) monster with a lion head, a goat body, and a serpent's tail          Squirrel = a tree-living, bushy tailed rodent having thick, soft fur          Bounding = jumping          Hart = Adult male deer          Agile = quick and light in movement          Camelopard = (obs) giraffe          Camel-wise = with reference to camel          Fore = at, in, toward the front          Hinder = at, in toward the back          Chace = (obs) chase; follow (to catch)          Anomalous = different in some way from what is normal          Incongruous = not harmonious in character          Repugnant = contrary in character          Preposterous = directly contrary to nature          Ethereal = Light &amp; delicate, esp. in neutral way          Amended = Make improvemnet in sth</p>
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**Charles Harpur** (1813–1868), born at Windsor, New South Wales, on 23 January 1813, is now recognised as the forefather of Australian poets. For nearly a century, his life and work remained largely inaccessible and underestimated. Modern critical opinion sees him as the most substantial of the colonial poets.

One of the first generation to be native-born, of emancipist parentage, Harpur believed in the virtuosity of the intellect over ingrained class prejudice. He discovered his calling in life as a boy, dreaming of becoming the ‘first high priest’ of muse, wandering through an arcadian playground of forests along the banks of the majestic Hawkesbury River. In later, less happy years, Charles wrote the nostalgic verse in ‘The Dream by the Fountain’ (1867).

His father, transported for complicity in a robbery in Ireland, was initially assigned to John Macarthur. Through his access to Marsden’s extensive library, Harpur became well versed in the classics and deeply influenced by Wordsworth and Shelley. He played a pivotal role preparing the groundwork to establish an authentic literature. He believed in the power of poetry to instruct the hearts

and minds of fellow colonists on how to appreciate the Australian landscape.

This age was for action, exploration, practicality and material gain. It was not uncommon for the natural scenery of Australia to appear repulsive and strange to the eye of many newcomers. To the native-born or ‘currency lads’, this was the only home they knew. Those few with any intellectual or literary inclinations still observed the world through, and relied on, old country conventions to provide cultural inspiration and outlook. The colonial poet was derided and faced a difficult task to find an audience in the new country.

Harpur saw poetry as one of the finer arts of man to symbolise our innermost moral being. ‘The World and the Soul’ (1847) is Harpur’s most acute effort to illustrate his philosophical beliefs. The poem considers the mystical unity of all life, creating evocative images of the spirit of man emerging from, and rejuvenated by, the ‘womb of nature’.

Through lifelong adroit contributions and dedication to his art, Charles Harpur consummated his poetic mission, attaining a symbolic place in Australian literary history. Today, the boy ‘musing of glory and grace by old Hawkesbury’s side’ is acknowledged—as he had hoped in childhood dreams 180 years ago—as the ‘First Muse of Australia’.

### A Midsummer Noon in the Australian Forest

Not a bird disturbs the air!  
There is quiet everywhere;  
Over plains and over woods  
What a mighty stillness broods.

Even the grasshoppers keep  
Where the coolest shadows sleep; 05  
Even the busy ants are found  
Resting in their pebbled mound;  
Even the locust clingeth now  
In silence to the barky bough: 10  
And over hills and over plains  
Quiet, vast and slumbrous, reigns.

Only there's a drowsy humming  
From yon warm lagoon slow coming:

'Tis the dragon-hornet - see! 15  
 All bedaubed resplendently  
 With yellow on a tawny ground -  
 Each rich spot nor square nor round,  
 But rudely heart-shaped, as it were  
 The blurred and hasty impress there, 20  
 Of vermeil-crusted seal  
 Dusted o'er with golden meal:  
 Only there's a droning where  
 Yon bright beetle gleams the air -  
 Gleams it in its droning flight 25  
 With a slanting track of light,  
 Till rising in the sunshine higher,  
 Its shards flame out like gems on fire.

Every other thing is still,  
 Save the ever wakeful rill,  
 Whose cool murmur only throws  
 A cooler comfort round Repose;  
 Or some ripple in the sea  
 Of leafy boughs, where, lazily,  
 Tired Summer, in her forest bower  
 Turning with the noontide hour,  
 Heaves a slumbrous breath, ere she  
 Once more slumbers peacefully.

O 'tis easeful here to lie  
 Hidden from Noon's scorching eye,  
 In this grassy cool recess  
 Musing thus of Quietness.



**Vocab:**

Brood = (of a bird) sit on eggs to hatch them Slumberous = sleepy Drowsy = feeling sleepy/half asleep Bedaubed = cover with/ smeared with sth dirty, wet, sticky etc Resplendently = very bright/splendid Tawny = brownish yellow Blurred = become unclear Hasty = said/made/done (too) quickly Vermeil-crusted = bright red colour-coated	Dusted o'er = Sprinkled with powder Meal = Grain coarsely ground Droning = Low humming sound Shard = (old use) a piece of broken earthenware Repose = rest/sleep; restful Bower = (summer) house in a garden (here, in the forrest) Noontide = noontime Heaves = to breathe with effort Recess = place Musing = thinking
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**Henry Clarence Kendall** (18 April 1839 - 1 August 1882 interred in [Waverley Cemetery](#)) was an nineteenth century Australian [poet](#).

Kendall was born near [Ulladulla, New South Wales](#). He was registered as Thomas Henry Kendall, but never appears to have used his first name. Another name, Clarence, was added in adult life but his three volumes of verse were all published under the name of "Henry Kendall". His father, Basil Kendall, was the son of the Rev. [Thomas Kendall](#) who came to Sydney in 1809 and five years later went as a missionary to [New Zealand](#).

Kendall was the first Australian poet to draw his inspiration from the life, scenery and traditions of the country. In the beginnings of Australian poetry the names of two other men stand with his -- Adam Lindsay Gordon, of English parentage and education, and Charles Harpur, born in Australia a generation earlier than Kendall. Harpur's work, though lacking vitality, shows fitful gleams of poetic fire suggestive of greater achievement had the circumstances of his life been more favourable. Kendall, whose lot was scarcely more fortunate, is a true singer; his songs remain, and are likely long to remain, attractive to poetry lovers.

"The Last of His Tribe" is a poignant poem-- a wonderful way to sympathetically make the reader aware of the plight of the Aboriginal people in Australia. The wonderful compassion it shows for the Aboriginal man left alone in his tribal lands which the reader should all have. (Modified from *Wikipadeia* and other relevant sources)

### The Last of His Tribe

He crouches, and buries his face on his knees,  
And hides in the dark of his hair;  
For he cannot look up to the storm-smitten trees,  
Or think of the loneliness there:  
Of the loss and the loneliness there.

The wallaroos grope through the tufts of the grass,  
And turn to their covers for fear;  
But he sits in the ashes and lets them pass  
Where the boomerangs sleep with the spear:  
Where the nullah, the sling, and the spear.

Uloola, behold him! The thunder that breaks  
On the tops of the rocks with the rain,  
And the wind which drives up with the salt of the lakes,  
Have made him a hunter again:  
A hunter and fisher again.

For his eyes have been full with a smouldering thought;  
But he dreams of the hunts of yore,  
And of foes that he sought, and of fights that he fought  
With those who will battle no more:  
Who will go to the battle no more.

It is well that the water which tumbles and fills  
Goes moaning and moaning along;  
For an echo rolls out from the sides of the hills,

And he starts at a wonderful song:  
 At the sounds of a wonderful song.

And he sees, through the rents of the scattering fogs,  
 The corroboree warlike and grim,  
 And the lubra who sat by the fire on the logs,  
 To watch, like a mourner, for him:  
 Like a mother and mourner, for him.

Will he go in his sleep from these desolate lands,  
 Like a chief, to the rest of his race,  
 With the honey-voiced woman who beckons, and stands,  
 And gleams like a Dream in his face -  
 Like a marvellous Dream in his face?

**Vocab:**

<p>Storm-smitten = Storm-hit (with powerful destructive effect)          Wallaroo = Any of a group of kangaroos of the genus <i>Macropus robustus</i>, characterized by their great size, long narrow hind feet, and thick gray fur          Grope = Search about          Tuft = bunch          Covers = woods protecting the animals          Nullah =(nulla-nulla or nullah-nullah) an Aboriginal club or heavy weapon          Sling = catapult</p>	<p>Uloola = a Dreamtime god          Smouldering = Showing suppressed sign of anger or hate          (of) Yore = Time long past          Tumble = fall          Rents = splits          Grim = gloomy          Lubra =(derog.) an Aboriginal woman          Beckon = lure; tempts          Gleam = shine          Marvelous = wonderful</p>
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**Up the Country**

(Henry Lawson, 1867--1922)

I am back from up the country—very sorry that I went  
 Seeking out the Southern poet's land whereon to pitch my tent;  
 I have lost a lot of idols, which were broken on the track,  
 Burnt a lot of fancy verses, and I'm glad that I am back.  
 Farther out may be the pleasant scenes of which our poets boast,  
 But I think the country's rather more inviting round the coast.  
 Anyway, I'll stay at present at a boarding-house in town.  
 Drinking beer and lemon-squashes, taking baths and cooling down.

'Sunny plains!' Great Scott! —those burning wastes of barren soil and sand  
 With their everlasting fences stretching out across the land!  
 Desolation where the crow is! Desert where the eagle flies,  
 Paddocks where the lunny bullock starts and stares with reddened eyes;  
 Where, in clouds of dust enveloped, roasted bullock-drivers creep  
 Slowly past the sun-dried shepherd dragged behind his crawling sheep.  
 Stunted peak of granite gleaming, glaring like a molten mass  
 Poured from some infernal furnace on a plain devoid of grass.

Miles and miles of thirsty gutters—strings of muddy waterholes



Henry Lawson  
 (State Library of Victoria)

In the place of 'shining rivers'—'walled by cliffs and forest boles'.  
 Barren ridges, gullies, ridges! where the everlasting flies—  
 Fiercer than the plagues of Egypt—swarm about your blighted eyes!  
 Bush! where there is no horizon! where the buried bushman sees  
 Nothing—Nothing! but the sameness of the ragged, stunted trees!  
 Lonely hut mid drought eternal, suffocating atmosphere  
 Where the God-forgotten hatter dreams of city life and beer.  
 Treacherous tracks that trap the stranger, endless roads that gleam  
     and glare,  
 Dark and evil-looking gullies, hiding secrets here and there!  
 Dull, dumb flats and stony rises, where the toiling bullocks bake,  
 And the sinister goanna joins the lizard and the snake!  
 Land of day and night—no morning freshness, and no afternoon,  
 When the great white sun in rising brings the summer heat in June.  
 Dismal country for the exile! Shades of sudden night that fall  
 From the sad heart-breaking sunset hurt the new chum worst of all.

Dreary land in sodden weather, where the endless cloud-banks drift  
 O'er the bushmen like a blanket that the Lord will never lift—  
 Dismal land when it is raining—growl of floods, and, oh! the woosh  
 Of the rain and wind together on the dark bed of the bush—  
 Ghastly fires in lonely humpies, where the granite rocks are piled  
 In the rain-swept wildernesses that are wildest of the wild.  
 Land where gaunt and haggard women live alone and work like men  
 Till their husbands, gone a-droving, will return to them again;  
 Homes of men; if home had ever Such a God-forgotten place,  
 Where the wild selector's children fly before a stranger's face.  
 Home of tragedy applauded by the dingoes' dismal yell,  
 Heaven of the shanty-keeper—fitting fiend for such a hell—  
 Full of wallaroos and wombats, and, of course, the 'curlew's call'—  
 And the lone sundowner tramping ever onward through it all!

I am back from up the country, up the country where I went  
 Seeking for the Southern poets' land whereon to pitch my tent;  
 I have shattered many idols out along the dusty track,  
 Burnt a lot of fancy verses—and I'm glad that I am back.  
 I believe the Southern poets' dream will not be realized  
 Till the plains are irrigated and the land is humanized.  
 I intend to stay at present, as I said before, in town,  
 Drinking beer and lemon-squashes, taking baths and cooling down.

**Clancy of the Overflow**  
 (Andrew Barton Paterson, 1864—1941)

I had written him a letter which I had, for want of better  
 Knowledge, sent to where I met him down the Lachlan, years ago;  
 He was shearing when I knew him, so I sent the letter to him,  
 Just on spec, addressed as follows, 'Clancy, of The Overflow.'

And an answer came directed in a writing unexpected



'Banjo' Paterson  
*(National Library of Australia)*

(And I think the same was written with a thumb-nail dipped in tar);  
'Twas his shearing mate who wrote it, and *verbatim* I will quote it:  
'Clancy's gone to Queensland droving, and we don't know where he  
are.'

\* \* \* \* \*

In my wild erratic fancy visions come to me of Clancy  
Gone a-droving 'down the Cooper' where the Western drovers go;  
As the stock are slowing stringing, Clancy rides behind them singing,  
For the drover's life has pleasures that the townsfolk never know.

And the bush has friends to meet him, and their kindly voices greet  
him

In the murmur of the breezes and the river on its bars,  
And he sees the vision splendid of the sunlit plains extended,  
And at night the wondrous glory of the everlasting stars.

\* \* \* \* \*

I am sitting in my dingy little office, where a stingy  
Ray of sunlight struggles feebly down between the houses tall,  
And the foetid air and gritty of the dusty, dirty city  
Through the open window floating, spreads its foulness over all.

And in place of lowing cattle, I can hear the fiendish rattle  
Of the tramways and the buses making hurry down the street;  
And the language uninviting of the gutter children fighting  
Comes fitfully and faintly through the ceaseless tramp of feet.  
And the hurrying people daunt me, and their pallid faces haunt me  
As they shoulder one another in their rush and nervous haste,  
With their eager eyes and greedy, and their stunted forms and weedy,  
For townsfolk have no time to grow, they have no time to waste.

And I somehow rather fancy that I'd like to change with Clancy,  
Like to take a turn at droving where the seasons come and go,  
While he faced the round eternal of the cash-book and the journal—  
But I doubt he'd suit the office, Clancy, of The Overflow.

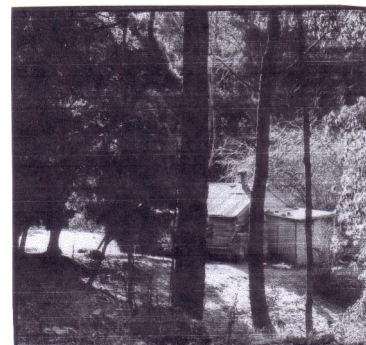
### **The Poor, Poor Country**

(John Shaw Neilson, 1872--1942)

Oh 'twas a poor country, in Autumn it was bare,  
The only green was the cutting grass and the sheep found little there.  
Oh, the thin wheat and the brown oats were never two foot high,  
But down in the poor country no pauper was I.

My wealth it was the glow that lives forever in the young,  
'Twas on the brown water, in the green leaves it hung.  
The blue cranes fed their young all day—how far in a tall tree!  
And the poor, poor country made no pauper of me.

I waded out to the swan's nest—at night I heard them sing,  
I stood amazed at the Pelican, and crowned him for a king;  
I saw the black duck in the reeds, and the spoonbill on the sky,



And in that poor country no pauper was I .

The mountain-ducks down in the dark made many a hollow sound,  
I saw in sleep the Bunyip creep from the waters underground.  
I found the plovers' island home, and they fought right valiantly,  
Poor was the country, but it made no pauper of me.

My riches all went into dreams that never yet came home,  
They touched upon the wild cherries and the slabs of honeycomb,  
They were not of the desolate brood hat men can sell or buy,  
Down in that poor country no pauper was I .

\* \* \* \* \*

The New Year came with heat and thirst and the little lakes were low,  
The blue cranes were my nearest friends and I mourned to see them go;  
I watched their wings so long until only I saw the sky,  
Down in that poor country no pauper was I .

## Topic II: Migrant Experience

### A. American Experience

**Julia Alvarez** (born March 27, 1950) is a Dominican-American poet, novelist, and essayist. Born in New York of Dominican descent, she spent the first ten years of her childhood in the Dominican Republic, until her father's involvement in a political rebellion forced her family to flee the country.



Many of Alvarez's works are influenced by her own personal experience as a Dominican in United States, and focus heavily on issues of assimilation and identity. Her diverse cultural upbringing as both a Dominican and an American is evident in the combination of personal and political tone in her writing. She is known for works that examine cultural expectations of women both in the Dominican Republic and the USA, and for rigorous investigations of cultural stereotypes. In recent years, Alvarez has expanded her subject matter with works such as *In the Name of Salome* (2000), a novel with Cuban rather than solely Dominican characters and fictionalized versions of real historical figures. (Adapted from Wikipedia)

#### Bilingual Sestina

Some things I have to say ain't getting said  
in this snowy, blond, blue-eyed, gum-chewing English  
dawn's early light sifting through *persianas* closed  
the night before by dark-skinned girls whose words  
evoke *cama, aposento, sueños* in *nombres*  
from that first world I can't translate from Spanish.

Gladys, Rosario, Altagracia—the sounds of Spanish  
wash over me like warm island waters as I say  
your soothing names: a child again learning the *nombres*  
of things you point to in the world before English  
turned *sol, tierra, cielo, luna* to vocabulary words—  
*sun, earth, sky, moon*. Language closed

like the touch-sensitive *morivivi* whose leaves closed  
when we kids poked them, astonished. Even Spanish  
failed us back then when we saw how frail a word is  
when faced with the thing it names. How saying  
its name won't always summon up in Spanish or English  
the full blown genie from the bottled *nombre*

Gladys, I summon you back by saying your *nombre*  
Open up again the house of slatted windows closed  
since childhood, where *palabras* left behind for English  
stand dusty and awkward in neglected Spanish.



Rosario, muse of *el patio*, sing to me and through me say  
that world again, begin first with those first words

you put in my mouth as you pointed to the world—  
not Adam, not God, but a country girl numbering  
the stars, the blades of grass, warming the sun by saying,  
*Que calor!* As you opened up the morning closed  
inside the night until you sang in Spanish,  
*estas son las mananitas*, and listening in bed, no English

yet in my head to confuse me with translations, no English  
doubling the world with synonyms, no dizzying array of words  
--the world was simple and intact in Spanish—  
*luna, sol, casa, luz, flor*, as if the *nombres*  
were the outer skin of things, as if the words were so close  
one left a mist of breath on things by saying

their names, an intimacy I now yearn for in English—  
words so close to what I mean that I almost hear my Spanish  
heart beating, beating inside what I say *en ingles*.

**Vocab:**

1. persianas = blinds	13. palabras =
2. cama = bed	14. el patio = an open space in front of /behind a home
3. aposento = room	15. que calor = which heat
4. suenos = sleep	16. estas son las mananitas = to be in one's last legs
5. nombres = names	17. array = collection
6. sol =sun	18. intanct = complete and in original state
7. tierra = land	19. casa = house/flat/apartment
8. cielo = sky	20. luz = light
9. luna = moon	21. flor = flower
10. frail = weak	22. en ingles = in English
11. summon up = bring to mind	
12. slatted windows = windows of which covers are made from thin narrow woods	

**The Women on My Mother's Side  
Were Known (from "33")**  
(Julia Alvarez, b. 1950)

The women on my mother's side were known  
for beauty and were given lovely names  
passed down from generations. I knew them  
as my pretty aunts: Laura, who could turn  
any head once, and Ada, whose husband  
was so devoted he would lay his hand-  
kerchief on seats for her and when she rose  
thank her; there was Rosa, who got divorced  
twice, her dark eyes and thick hair were to blame;



and my mother Julia, who was a catch  
and looks it in her wedding photographs.  
My sister got her looks, I got her name,  
and it suits me that between resemblance  
and words, I got the right inheritance.



**Naomi Shihab Nye's** (1952—) mixed heritage—her father is Palestinian, her mother is American—shapes the subjects of her poetry.

### **Blood**

“A true Arab knows how to catch a fly in his hands,”  
my father would say. And he'd prove it,  
cupping the buzzer instantly  
while the host with the swatter stared.

In the spring our palms peeled like snakes.  
True Arabs believed watermelon could heal fifty ways.  
I changed these to fit the occasion.

Years before, a girl knocked,  
wanted to see the Arab.  
I said we didn't have one.  
After that, my father told me who he was,  
“Shihab” — “shooting star” —  
a good name, borrowed from the sky.  
Once I said, “When we die, we give it back?”  
He said that's what a true Arab would say.

Today the headlines clot in my blood.  
A little Palestinian dangles a truck on the front page.  
Homeless fig, this tragedy with a terrible root  
is too big for us. What flag can we wave?  
I wave the flag of stone and seed,  
table mat stitched in blue.

I call my father, we talk around the news.  
It is too much for him,  
neither of his two languages can reach it.  
I drive into the country to find sheep, cows,  
to plead with the air:  
Who calls anyone *civilized*?  
Where can the crying heart graze?  
What does a true Arab do now?

## **Bilingual/Bilingüe**

(Rhina P. Espallat, 1932—)

My father liked them separate, one there,  
one here (allá y aquí), as if aware

that words might cut in two his daughter's heart  
(el corazón) and lock the alien part

to what he was—his memory, his name  
(su nombre)—with a key he could not claim.

“English outside this door, Spanish inside,”  
he said, “y basta.” But who can divide

the world, the word (mundo y palabra) from  
any child? I knew how to be dumb

and stubborn (testaruda); late, in bed,  
I hoarded secret syllables I read

until my tongue (mi lengua) learned to run  
where his stumbled. And still the heart was one.

I like to think he knew that, even when,  
proud (orgullosa) of his daughter's pen,

he stood outside mis versos, half in fear  
of words he loved but wanted not to hear.



lê th di m thúy (pronounced LAY TEE YIM TWEE; all words uncapitalized) is an award-winning poet, novelist, and performer. She was born in the South Vietnamese village of Phan Thi t on January 12, 1972 during the heart of the Vietnam War.

In 1978, lê left her homeland alongside her father in a small fishing boat, they were picked up by an American naval ship and placed in a refugee camp in Singapore. She would eventually resettle to Southern California with her father. They lived in Linda Vista, San Diego in decaying 1940's-1950's Navy housing which they shared with fellow Vietnamese, Cambodian and Laotian 'boat people' immigrants displaced by war. Lê's mother and sister joined them two years later via a camp in Malaysia. Two of lê's siblings drowned during her childhood; her eldest brother drowned in the ocean in Vietnam when he was six while a sister drowned in a Malaysian refugee camp. Lê adopted the name of her deceased sister after her father mistakenly reported her name when they were rescued at



sea. She has four surviving siblings, two of which were born in America.

***to my sister lê thi diem trinh***  
**shrapnel shards on blue water**

everyday i beat a path to run to you  
beaten into the melting snow/the telephone polls  
which separate us like so many signals of slipping time  
and signposts marked in another language  
my path winds and unwinds, hurls itself toward you  
until it unfurls before you  
all my stories at your feet  
rocking against each other like marbles  
down a dirt incline  
listen

ma took the train every morning  
sunrise  
from phan thiet to saigon  
she arrived  
carrying food to sell at the markets  
past sunset  
late every evening she carried her empty baskets  
home  
on the train which runs in the opposite direction  
away from the capital  
toward the still waters of the south china sea

once ba bought an inflatable raft  
yellow and black  
he pushed it out onto a restricted part of water  
in southern california  
after midnight  
to catch fish in the dark  
it crashed against the rocks  
he dragged it back to the van  
small and wet  
he drove us home  
our backs turned in shame  
from the pacific ocean

our lives have been marked by the tide  
everyday it surges forward  
hits the rocks  
strokes the sand  
turns back into itself again  
a fisted hand

know this about us  
we have lived our lives  
on the edge of oceans  
in anticipation of  
sailing into the sunrise

i tell you all this  
to tear apart the silence  
of our days and nights here

i tell you all this  
to fill the void of absence  
in our history here

we are fragmented shards  
blown here by a war no one wants to remember  
in a foreign land  
with an achingly familiar wound  
our survival is dependent upon  
never forgetting that vietnam is not  
a word  
a world  
a love  
a family  
a fear  
to bury

let people know  
VIETNAM IS NOT A WAR

let people know  
VIETNAM IS NOT A WAR

let people know  
VIETNAM IS NOT A WAR  
but a piece  
of  
us,  
sister  
and  
we are  
so much  
more



Greece, and took part in the [resistance](#), acting as a courier. In Greece, before migrating to Australia, he published two collections of poetry, one of which was printed with the help of the English writer [Lawrence Durrell](#), who met Tsaloumas on Rhodes and was impressed with his work.

He left for [Australia](#) in 1952 because of political persecution, where he earned a living by teaching. He started writing again (in [Greek](#)) and had several volumes published. He became known to English readers when a selection of his Greek poems was published in the bilingual edition *The Observatory* in 1983.

Then in 1988 his first English poems were published in *Falcon Drinking*. Since then he has published several more volumes of English poetry, gaining a considerable reputation both in Greece and Australia. He is now able to return to his homeland frequently and spends much of his time on Leros.

Among the many prizes he has received for his writing are the [National Book Council Award](#) (1983), [Patrick White Award](#) (1994) and an Emeritus Award from Literature Board of the [Australia Council](#) for outstanding and lifelong contribution to Australian literature (2002).

### **Postponement**

Where did I study, you ask—to send your son there too.  
I've thought about it and I'll tell you,  
but first let him go to a school with teachers.

*Olga Novak was born in north-eastern Poland, lived for six years in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) and, for a shorter period, in Germany. She has attended Council of Adult Education (CAE) courses in writing including play and scriptwriting. In Australia she has worked in the garment industry's factories, as a waitress and also a bookkeeper. She has been a member of the Society of Women Writers, the Victorian Association of Multicultural Writers, and of the Migrant Women's Society.*

### **Ode To My Sisters: The Foreign Sheilas**

Make a break in the wall  
Of a dreary, huge factory  
And see them: bent over machines,  
Slaving on the assembly line:  
My toiling sisters!  
The Foreign Sheilas  
Exploited and prodded  
By leeches of slime

Open the door  
In a stinking hotel kitchen,  
In a commercial laundry,  
In a steaming press:  
And there you'll find them!  
Among the grime  
And among the food scrapings:  
Just making ends meet  
In a Capitalistic mess

With the last effort  
of my sagging spirit—  
fleeing the sweatshops

with my tired, aching feet,  
flaunting the red and the black  
of social justice,  
Pleading and arguing  
in the city streets.

Why should I slave endless long hours?  
Bending my back in meek servitude!  
Till—the means of production shall be totally yours,  
Till—a radical change of attitudes



*Peter Michael Skrzynecki (often misspelled "Sheneski", among other misspellings) (IPA: [sk ezi'n ki], correct pronunciation 'skrez-nek-ki') (born 6 April 1945 in [Germany](#)) is an [Australian](#) poet of [Polish](#) origin. He came to Australia with his parents in 1949, as a refugee from "the sorrow / Of northern wars" (*Crossing the Red Sea*). This voyage—a four-week sea expedition on the General Blatchford, a converted [United States Navy](#) transport ship— was the basis for many of the poems in his 1975 collection, *Immigrant Chronicle*. Skrzynecki has taught various courses relating to [literature](#), including *English Studies*, *American Literature*, *Australian Literature* and *Creative Writing*. He has received several awards for his contributions to the [literature of Australia](#) and to [multicultural literature](#), including the [Grace Leven Prize for Poetry](#) in 1972 for *Headwaters*, the [Captain Cook Bicentenary Poetry Prize](#), the [Henry Lawson Short Story Award](#), an [Order of Cultural Merit](#) from the Polish government in 1989 and, in 2002, an [Order of Australia](#). Skrzynecki visits schools and gives lectures on the current topic area of *Immigrant Chronicle*.*

### **The Polish Immigrant**

He has grown tired  
of the clichéd  
pronunciation of his name—  
countering  
the inadvertent 'How d'yer..  
that humour  
or rudeness asks:

a few vowels  
and tooth-grinding consonants  
that must be  
phonetically rehearsed  
alone or at night,

to forestall jibes  
embarrassments, false curiosity—  
the wasted time



that a Handbook-and-Timetable  
devotee provokes.

Yes, he would argue,  
there must be places  
in history  
where land or heritage  
asks no exile  
of the children it nourishes  
and helps to breed:

where a name's  
not laughed at, reviled  
or twisted  
like some gross truth  
or as yet unnamed, imported  
European disease.

So he asks:  
tell me of Strzlecki,  
Count-turned-explorer  
beside whose name  
a creek flows  
through the deserts  
of South Australia'?

Or why a mountain, peaked  
with snow,  
should resemble a tomb  
and he named Kosciusko?  
Their eyes narrow,  
nostrils quiver—  
the seconds between them toll;

deeply breathing  
their mouths open  
darkly  
and groper-slow.



**Ania Walwicz** (born 1951) is a contemporary *Australian* poet and prose writer, and visual artist. She spent her childhood in *Poland*, coming to Australia in 1963 where she attended the *Victorian College of the Arts* (VCA) in *Melbourne*. Her writing tends toward an impressionistic, *stream of consciousness* exploration of inner states. It also exploits 'appropriative' or 'sampling' techniques of production. Apart from publication in numerous anthologies, journals and several books her work has been performed by *La Mama Theatre*, the

*Sydney Chamber Choir and more recently set to music by [ChamberMade](#). She has performed her work in [France](#), [Japan](#) and [Switzerland](#) and currently teaches creative writing at [RMIT](#) in Melbourne.*

### **Australia**

You big ugly. You too empty. You desert with your nothing nothing nothing. You scorched suntanned. Old too quickly. Acres of suburbs watching the telly. You bore me. Freckle silly children. You nothing much. With your big sea. Beach beach beach. I've seen enough already. You dumb dirty city with bar stools. You're ugly. You silly shoppingtown. You copy. You too far everywhere. You laugh at me. When I came this woman gave me a box of biscuits. You try to be friendly, but you're not very friendly. You never ask me to your house. You insult me. You don't know how to be with me. Road road tree tree. I came from crowded and many. I came from rich. You have nothing to offer. You're poor and spread thin. You big. So what. I'm small. Its what's in. You silent on Sunday. Nobody on your streets. You dead at night. You go to sleep too early. You don't excite me. You scare me with your hopeless. Asleep when you walk. Too hot to think. You big awful. You don't match me. You burnt out. You too big sky. You make a dot in the nowhere. You laugh with your big healthy. You want everyone to be the same. You're dumb. You do like anybody else. You engaged Doreen. You big cow. You average average. Cold day at school playing around lunchtime. Running around for nothing. You never accept me. For your own. You always ask me where I'm from. You always ask me. You tell me I look strange. Different. You don't adopt me. You laugh at the way I speak. You think you're better than me. You don't like me. You don't have any interest in other country. Idiot centre of your own self. You think the rest of the world walks around without shoes or electric light. You don't go anywhere. You stay at home. You like one another. You go crazy on Saturday night. You get drunk. You don't like me and you don't like women. You put your arm around men in bars. You're rough. I can't speak to you. You burly burly. You're just silly to me. You big man. Poor with all your money. You ugly furniture. You ugly house. Relaxed in your summer Stupor. All year. Never fully awake. Dull at school. Wait for other people to tell you what to do. Follow the leader. Can't imagine. Work horse. Thick legs. You go to work in the morning. You shiver on a tram.

### Topic III: Black Poems

#### A. American Experience



**James Mercer Langston Hughes** (February 1, 1902 – May 22, 1967) was an American poet, novelist, playwright, and columnist. He was one of the earliest innovators of the new literary art form jazz poetry. Hughes is best-known for his work during the Harlem Renaissance. He famously wrote about the period that "Harlem was in vogue". Langston Hughes was born in Joplin, Missouri, the second child of school teacher Carrie (Caroline) Mercer Langston and her husband James Nathaniel Hughes (1871–1934). Both parents were mixed race, and Langston Hughes was of African American, European American and Native American descent. He grew up in a series of Midwestern small towns. Both his paternal and maternal great-grandmothers were African American, and both his paternal and maternal great-grandfathers were white: one of Scottish and one of Jewish descent. Hughes was named after both his father and his grand-uncle, John

Mercer Langston who, in 1888, became the first African American to be elected to the United States Congress from Virginia. Hughes's maternal grandmother Mary Patterson was of African American, French, English and Native American descent. One of the first women to attend Oberlin College, she first married Lewis Sheridan Leary, also of mixed race. He joined the men in John Brown's Raid on Harper's Ferry in 1859 and died from his wounds.

#### Let America Be America Again

Let America be America again.  
Let it be the dream it used to be.  
Let it be the pioneer on the plain  
Seeking a home where he himself is free.

(America never was America to me.)

Let America be the dream the dreamers dreamed--  
Let it be that great strong land of love  
Where never kings connive nor tyrants scheme  
That any man be crushed by one above.

(It never was America to me.)

O, let my land be a land where Liberty  
Is crowned with no false patriotic wreath,  
But opportunity is real, and life is free,  
Equality is in the air we breathe.

(There's never been equality for me,  
Nor freedom in this "homeland of the free.")

*Say, who are you that mumbles in the dark?  
And who are you that draws your veil across the stars?*

I am the poor white, fooled and pushed apart,  
I am the Negro bearing slavery's scars.

I am the red man driven from the land,  
I am the immigrant clutching the hope I seek--  
And finding only the same old stupid plan  
Of dog eat dog, of mighty crush the weak.

I am the young man, full of strength and hope,  
Tangled in that ancient endless chain  
Of profit, power, gain, of grab the land!  
Of grab the gold! Of grab the ways of satisfying need!  
Of work the men! Of take the pay!  
Of owning everything for one's own greed!

I am the farmer, bondsman to the soil.  
I am the worker sold to the machine.  
I am the Negro, servant to you all.  
I am the people, humble, hungry, mean--  
Hungry yet today despite the dream.  
Beaten yet today--O, Pioneers!  
I am the man who never got ahead,  
The poorest worker bartered through the years.

Yet I'm the one who dreamt our basic dream  
In the Old World while still a serf of kings,  
Who dreamt a dream so strong, so brave, so true,  
That even yet its mighty daring sings  
In every brick and stone, in every furrow turned  
That's made America the land it has become.  
O, I'm the man who sailed those early seas  
In search of what I meant to be my home--  
For I'm the one who left dark Ireland's shore,  
And Poland's plain, and England's grassy lea,  
And torn from Black Africa's strand I came  
To build a "homeland of the free."

The free?

Who said the free? Not me?  
Surely not me? The millions on relief today?  
The millions shot down when we strike?  
The millions who have nothing for our pay?  
For all the dreams we've dreamed  
And all the songs we've sung  
And all the hopes we've held  
And all the flags we've hung,  
The millions who have nothing for our pay--  
Except the dream that's almost dead today.

O, let America be America again--  
The land that never has been yet--  
And yet must be--the land where *every* man is free.  
The land that's mine--the poor man's, Indian's, Negro's, ME--  
Who made America,

Whose sweat and blood, whose faith and pain,  
Whose hand at the foundry, whose plow in the rain,  
Must bring back our mighty dream again.

Sure, call me any ugly name you choose--  
The steel of freedom does not stain.  
From those who live like leeches on the people's lives,  
We must take back our land again,  
America!

O, yes,  
I say it plain,  
America never was America to me,  
And yet I swear this oath--  
America will be!

Out of the rack and ruin of our gangster death,  
The rape and rot of graft, and stealth, and lies,  
We, the people, must redeem  
The land, the mines, the plants, the rivers.  
The mountains and the endless plain--  
All, all the stretch of these great green states--  
And make America again!

**I, too, sing America.**

I, too, sing America.

I am the darker brother.  
They send me to eat in the kitchen  
When company comes,  
But I laugh,  
And eat well,  
And grow strong.  
Tomorrow,  
I'll be at the table  
When company comes.  
Nobody'll dare  
Say to me,  
"Eat in the kitchen,"  
Then. Besides, They'll see how beautiful I am  
And be ashamed--I, too, am America.



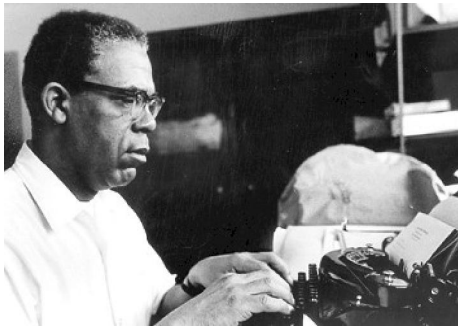
Claude McKay was born in Jamaica, West Indies. He was educated by his older brother, who possessed a library of English novels, poetry, and scientific texts. At the age of twenty, McKay published a book of verse called *Songs of Jamaica*, recording his impressions of black life in Jamaica in dialect. In 1912, he travelled to the United States to attend Tuskegee Institute. He remained there only a few months, leaving to study agriculture at Kansas State University. He published two sonnets, "The Harlem Dancer" and "Invocation," in 1917, and would later use the same poetic form to record his reactionary views on the injustices of black life in

America. In addition to social and political concerns, McKay wrote on a variety of subjects, from his Jamaican homeland to romantic love, with a use of passionate language.

### **America**

Although she feeds me bread of bitterness,  
And sinks into my throat her tiger's tooth,  
Stealing my breath of life, I will confess  
I love this cultured hell that tests my youth!  
Her vigor flows like tides into my blood,  
Giving me strength erect against her hate.  
Her bigness sweeps my being like a flood.  
Yet as a rebel fronts a king in state,  
I stand within her walls with not a shred  
Of terror, malice, not a word of jeer.  
Darkly I gaze into the days ahead,  
And see her might and granite wonders there,  
Beneath the touch of Time's unerring hand,  
Like priceless treasures sinking in the sand.

Poet, publisher, editor, and founder of Broadside Press. Dudley Randall was born 14 January 1914 in



Washington, D.C., but moved to Detroit in 1920. His first published poem appeared in the Detroit Free Press when he was thirteen. His early reading included English poets from whom he learned form. He was later influenced by the work of Jean Toomer and Countee Cullen. His employment in a foundry is recalled in "George" (Poem Counterpoem), written after encountering a once vigorous coworker in a hospital years later. His military service during World War II is reflected in such poems as "Coral Atoll" and "Pacific Epitaphs" (More to Remember). Randall worked in the post office while earning degrees in

English and library science (1949 and 1951). For the next five years he was librarian at Morgan State and Lincoln (Mo.) universities, returning to Detroit in 1956 to a position in the Wayne County Federated Library System. After a brief teaching assignment in 1969, he became librarian and poet in residence at the University of Detroit, retiring in 1974.

### **Ballad Of Birmingham**

'Mother dear, may I go downtown  
Instead of out to play,  
And march the streets of Birmingham  
In a Freedom March today?'

'No, baby, no, you may not go,  
For the dogs are fierce and wild,  
And clubs and hoses, guns and jails  
Aren't good for a little child.'

'But, mother, I won't be alone.  
Other children will go with me,  
And march the streets of Birmingham  
To make our country free.'

'No baby, no, you may not go  
For I fear those guns will fire.  
But you may go to church instead  
And sing in the children's choir.'

She has combed and brushed her night-dark hair,  
And bathed rose petal sweet,  
And drawn white gloves on her small brown hands,  
And white shoes on her feet.

The mother smiled to know that her child  
Was in the sacred place,  
But that smile was the last smile  
To come upon her face.

For when she heard the explosion,  
Her eyes grew wet and wild.  
She raced through the streets of Birmingham  
Calling for her child.

She clawed through bits of glass and brick,  
Then lifted out a shoe.  
'O, here's the shoe my baby wore,  
But, baby, where are you?'



Maya Angelou was born Marguerite Johnson in St. Louis, Missouri, on April 4, 1928. She grew up in St. Louis and Stamps, Arkansas. She is an author, poet, historian, songwriter, playwright, dancer, stage and screen producer, director, performer, singer, and civil rights activist. She is best known for her autobiographical books: *All God's Children Need Traveling Shoes* (1986), *The Heart of a Woman* (1981), *Singin' and Swingin' and Gettin' Merry Like Christmas* (1976).

### **I know why the caged bird sings**

A free bird leaps on the back  
Of the wind and floats downstream  
Till the current ends and dips his wing  
In the orange sun's rays  
And dares to claim the sky.

But a BIRD that stalks down his narrow cage  
Can seldom see through his bars of rage  
His wings are clipped and his feet are tied  
So he opens his throat to sing.

The caged bird sings with a fearful trill  
Of things unknown but longed for still

And his tune is heard on the distant hill for  
The caged bird sings of freedom.

The free bird thinks of another breeze  
And the trade winds soft through  
The sighing trees  
And the fat worms waiting on a dawn-bright  
Lawn and he names the sky his own.

But a caged BIRD stands on the grave of dreams  
His shadow shouts on a nightmare scream  
His wings are clipped and his feet are tied  
So he opens his throat to sing.

The caged bird sings with  
A fearful trill of things unknown  
But longed for still and his  
Tune is heard on the distant hill  
For the caged bird sings of freedom.



Poet and English professor emeritus Naomi Cornelia Long Madgett was born on July 5, 1923 in Norfolk, Virginia to the Reverend Clarence Marcellus Long and the former Maude Selena Hilton. Growing up in East Orange, New Jersey, she attended Ashland Grammar School and Bordentown School. At age twelve, Madgett's poem, *My Choice*, was published on the youth page of the *Orange Daily Courier*. In 1937, the family moved to St. Louis, Missouri where her schoolmates included Margaret Bush Wilson, E. Sims Campbell and lifelong friend, baritone Robert McFerrin, Sr. Madgett, at age fifteen, established a friendship with Langston Hughes. Just days after graduating with honors from Charles Sumner High School in 1941, Madgett's first book of poetry, *Songs to a Phantom Nightingale* was published. She attended Virginia State University during World War II and graduated with her B.A. degree in 1945.

### **Alabama Centennial**

They said, "Wait." Well, I waited.  
For a hundred years I waited  
In cotton fields, kitchens, balconies,  
In bread lines, at back doors, on chain gangs,  
In stinking "colored" toilets  
And crowded ghettos,  
Outside of schools and voting booths.  
And some said, "Later."  
And some said, "Never!"  
Then a new wind blew, and a new voice  
Rode its wings with quiet urgency,  
Strong, determined, sure.  
"No," it said. "Not 'never,' not 'later.'  
Not even 'soon.'  
Now.  
Walk!"



And other voices echoed the freedom words,  
 "Walk together, children, don't get weary,"  
 Whispered them, sang them, prayed them, shouted them.  
 "Walk!"  
 And I walked the streets of Montgomery  
 Until a link in the chain of patient acquiescence broke.  
 Then again: Sit down!  
 And I sat down at the counters of Greensboro.  
 Ride! And I rode the bus for freedom.  
 Kneel! And I went down on my knees in prayer and faith.  
 March! And I'll march until the last chain falls  
 Singing, "We shall overcome."  
 Not all the dogs and hoses in Birmingham  
 Nor all the clubs and guns in Selma  
 Can turn this tide.  
 Not all the jails can hold these young black faces  
 From their destiny of manhood,  
 Of equality, of dignity,  
 Of the American Dream  
 A hundred years past due.  
 Now!

## B. Australian Experience



Oodgeroo Noonuccal, (born Kathleen Jean Mary Ruska, formerly Kath Walker) (3 November 1920 - 16 September 1993) was an Australian poet, political activist, artist and educator. She was also a campaigner for Aboriginal rights. Oodgeroo was best known for her poetry, and was the first Aboriginal Australian to publish a book of verse. Oodgeroo Noonuccal (pronounced Ood-ger-rooh Nooh-nuh-cal) was born on North Stradbroke Island (also known as "Minjerribah" or "Minjerribahin") Moreton Bay (east of Brisbane). The place where Oodgeroo was born falls within the traditional land and waters of the Noonuccal people who, since the 1990s, have been more generally identified as part of a "Quandamooka" nation consisting of Nunugal (Amity Point based and affiliated with Moorgumpin or Moreton Island people), the Nughi (who speak or spoke the Guwar language) and the Goenpul (often attributed to the bayside and southern sections of North Stradbroke Island and related Bay islands and waters).

### **We Are Going** *(For Grannie Coolwell)*

They came in to the little town  
 A semi-naked band subdued and silent,  
 All that remained of their t tribe.  
 They came here to the place of their old bora ground  
 Where now the many white men hurry about like ants.  
 Notice of estate agent reads: 'Rubbish May Be Tipped Here'.

Now it half covers the traces of the old bora ring.  
 They sit and are confused, they cannot say their thoughts:  
 'We are as strangers here now, but the white tribe are the strangers.  
 We belong here, we are of the old ways.  
 We are the corroboree and the bora ground,  
 We are the old sacred ceremonies, the laws of the elders.  
 We are the wonder tales of Dream Time, the tribal legends told.  
 We are the past, the hunts and the laughing games, the wandering  
 camp fires.  
 We are the lightning-bolt over Gaphembah Hill  
 Quick and terrible,  
 And the Thunderer after him, that loud fellow.  
 We are the quiet daybreak paling the dark lagoon.  
 We are the shadow-ghosts creeping back as the camp fires burn low.  
 We are nature and the past, all the old ways  
 Gone now and I scattered.  
 The scrubs are gone, the hunting and the laughter.  
 The eagle is gone, the emu and the kangaroo are gone from this  
 place.  
 The bora ring is gone.  
 The corroboree is gone.  
 And we are going.'



Jack Davis, who is widely known as a poet and playwright, became the Western Australian state secretary of the Federal Council for the Advancement of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders (FCAATSI) in 1969, after the position had been unfilled for two years. As a child, Jack had been sent to Moore River settlement north of Perth with the promise of training in farm work but he left when this didn't eventuate. Jack's earlier protests against discriminatory practices such as curfews were as an individual but, by the 1960s, he had become active in the Western Australian Aboriginal Advancement Council, and was appointed as the manager of its Aboriginal community centre in 1967. In 1969 he became director of the Aboriginal Advancement Council.

**Aboriginal Australia**  
*(To the others)*

You once smiled a friendly smile,  
 Said we were kin to one another,  
 Thus with guile for a short while  
 Became to me a brother.  
 Then you swamped my way of gladness,  
 Took my children from my side,  
 Snapped shut thr lawbook, oh my sadness  
 At Yirrkala's plea denied.  
 So, I remember Lake George hills,  
 The thin stick bones of people.  
 Sudden death, and greed that kills,  
 That gave you church and steeple.

I cry again for Worrarra men,  
Gone from kith and kind,  
And I wondered when I would find a pen  
To probe your freckled mind.  
I mourned again for the Murray Tribe,  
Gone too without a trace,  
I thought of the soldiers' diatribe,  
The smile on the Governor's face.  
You murdered me with rope, with gun,  
The massacre my enclave,  
You buried me deep on McLarty's run  
Flung into a common grave.  
You propped me up with Christ, red tape,  
Tobacco, grog and fears,  
Then disease and lordly rape  
Through the brutish years.  
Now you primly say you're justified,  
And sing of a nation's glory,  
But I think of a people crucified—  
The real Australian story.

**Ode To The Bicentenary**  
(April Newman)\*)

You realise your mistreatment  
As you try to compensate  
You paste on plastic smiles  
And you try to hide your hate.  
The truth is you're growing restless,  
The big day is drawing near  
Two hundred years to celebrate  
You don't want us to interfere.  
You don't want any black man  
Spilling all the beans  
Showing up your stretched out truths  
And shattering your dreams.  
You think of us as victims  
Of environmental stress  
That might be true my ignorant friend  
But who got us in this mess?  
We never said 'Sure take our land.  
Kill my family, kill my tribe'  
We never said 'Sure bring your laws  
And teach us how to cheat and bribe'  
We never said 'Bring alcohol  
Teach us how to drink'  
We never said 'Here run our lives,  
So we won't have to think'.  
We never said 'We'll slave for you  
Just slap a chain around my leg'  
We never said 'Treat us like dogs and

watch us lick your boots and beg'.  
 Surely you don't expect us  
 to play your little game,  
 to say how much we owe you  
 And how glad we are you came.  
 Will you tell your children on the day  
 Why the outback soil is red  
 Will you tell how it was stained  
 with the blood of thousands dead.  
 Tell them how, when you landed here  
 and stayed to make your home  
 How you used the black man  
 as A HUMAN STEPPING STONE.  
 You stood upon his broken back  
 You kept from getting soiled and wet  
 Tell your children how highways  
 were carved out with his sweat.  
 Tell them how the battlefields  
 were strewn with bodies dying  
 Tell them what it sounds like  
 to hear orphan children crying.  
 We remember way back then  
 You and I were enemies  
 So tread carefully, young white man  
 And happy Bicentenary.

*\*) works at the Tranby Aboriginal College*



Mudrooroo was born Colin Thomas Johnson on 21 August 1938 at East Cubelling (near Narrogin) in Western Australia to Elizabeth Johnson (Né Barron) and Thomas Creighton Patrick Johnson (died 7 June 1938). Named Colin after a playmate of his brother Frank, he was the second youngest of 12 children, eight of whom had been taken into state care following the death of his father. At the age of nine, Mudrooroo and an older sister, then living in the small country town of Beverley with their mother who was a declared destitute, were charged with theft and the two children were "sent to institutions in Perth" by the magistrate. Mudrooroo was placed in Clontarf Boys' Town, a boys home run by the Christian Brothers just outside of Perth and on the Swan River. It was considered a beautiful location but life was hard and tough, though he did achieve a Junior educational Certificate as well as a strong interest in religion.

### **Song Twenty-Seven**

A youthman was found hanging in his cell  
 On Nadoc day when everywhere the Aborigines  
 Were dancing, everywhere the Aborigines were marching.  
 'They're just like us,' was the quaint refrain,  
 'They like balls and footy and songs and beer:  
 They ignored our call for Landrights!

On Nadoc day a youthman strangled in a cell:  
Who killed him; who were his murderers?  
'Not I,' said the cop, 'I only took him in.'  
'Not I' said the town 'I never spoke his name,  
It's no fault of mine that he had to die—  
We treat them as we would our own,  
There's no racism in our town.'  
On Nadoc day a youthman died while his people  
Camped nearby trying to recover stolen land.  
They daubed the town with Truth and raised high  
The Red and Black and Gold:  
The red was his blood;  
The black his skin;  
The gold his cause as bright as sun:  
We want our land and there is no turning back!

## Topic IV: the West Perception of the East

### A. American Perception

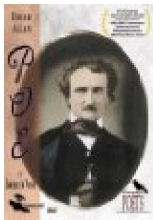


**Ralph Waldo Emerson** was born on 25 May 1803, and died in 1882, in the Puritan New England town of Boston, Massachusetts to Ruth *nee* Haskins (d.1853) and Unitarian minister William Emerson (d.1811). Young Ralph had a strict but loving upbringing in the household of a minister who died when he was just eight years old. It was the first of many untimely deaths of Emerson's relatives. While his father had died young, he was very close to his mother, siblings, and Aunt Mary Moody who had a great and positive influence on his intellectual growth. Early on young Waldo as he like to be called started keeping journals and later would base many of his essays on his thoughts and observations expressed therein. While his writings were sometimes criticised as being too abstract, he was an eloquent and popular speaker.

#### **Brahma**

If the red slayer think he slays,  
Or if the slain think he is slain,  
They know not well the subtle ways  
I keep, and pass, and turn again.  
Far or forgot to me is near,  
Shadow and sunlight are the same,  
The vanished gods to me appear,  
And one to me are shame and fame.  
They reckon ill who leave me out;  
When me they fly, I am the wings;  
I am the doubter and the doubt,  
And I the hymn the Brahmin sings.  
The strong gods pine for my abode,  
And pine in vain the sacred Seven;  
But thou, meek lover of the good!  
Find me, and turn thy back on heaven.

### **Edgar Allan Poe (1809-1849)**



#### **Israfel**

In Heaven a spirit doth dwell  
"Whose heart-strings are a lute";  
None sing so wildly well  
As the angel Israfel,  
And the giddy stars (so legends tell),  
Ceasing their hymns, attend the spell  
Of his voice, all mute.

Tottering above  
In her highest noon,  
The enamored moon  
Blushes with love,  
While, to listen, the red levin  
(With the rapid Pleiads, even,  
Which were seven,  
Pauses in Heaven.

And they say (the starry choir  
And the other listening things)  
That Israfeli's fire  
Is owing to that lyre  
By which he sits and sings-  
The trembling living wire  
Of those unusual strings.

But the skies that angel trod,  
Where deep thoughts are a duty-  
Where Love's a grown-up God-  
Where the Houri glances are  
Imbued with all the beauty  
Which we worship in a star.

Therefore thou art not wrong,  
Israfeli, who despisest  
An unimpassioned song;  
To thee the laurels belong,  
Best bard, because the wisest!  
Merrily live, and long!

The ecstasies above  
With thy burning measures suit-  
Thy grief, thy joy, thy hate, thy love,  
With the fervor of thy lute-  
Well may the stars be mute!

Yes, Heaven is thine; but this  
Is a world of sweets and sour;  
Our flowers are merely-flowers,  
And the shadow of thy perfect bliss  
Is the sunshine of ours.

If I could dwell  
Where Israfel  
Hath dwelt, and he where I,  
He might not sing so wildly well  
A mortal melody,  
While a bolder note than this might swell  
From my lyre within the sky.



**Denise Duhamel** was born in Woonsocket, Rhode Island, in 1961. She received a B.F.A. degree from Emerson College and a M.F.A. degree from Sarah Lawrence College. She is the author of numerous books and chapbooks of poetry. Her most recent titles are *Two and Two* (University of Pittsburgh, 2005) and *Mille et un sentiments* (Firewheel Editions, 2005). Her other books currently in print are *Queen for a Day: Selected and New Poems* (University of Pittsburgh Press, 2001), *The Star-Spangled Banner*; winner of the Crab Orchard Poetry Prize (1999); *Kinky* (1997); *Girl Soldier* (1996); and *How the Sky Fell* (1996).

### **Buddhist Barbie**

In the 5th century B.C.  
an Indian philosopher  
Gautama teaches "All is emptiness"  
and "There is no self."  
In the 20th century A.D.  
Barbie agrees, but wonders how a man  
with such a belly could pose,  
smiling, and without a shirt.



**Robert Kelly** has published numerous works, including *Under Words* (Black Sparrow, 1983), *Not This Island Music* (Black Sparrow, 1987), *The Flowers of Unceasing Coincidence* (Station Hill Press, 1988), and *Doctor of Silence* (McPherson & Co., 1988). He came to Buddhism in 1982 "as a way of compassionate participation in the world." He studied with Kalu Rinpoche and studies with Lama Norlha, to whom the poems here are dedicated. He teaches at Bard College in Annandale-on-Hudson, New York.

### **Maitreya**

Snow lies blue under the trees' shadows and strong where the sun  
strikes everywhere else.  
Across this snow Maitreya comes walking.  
He is walking towards us.  
He is clear red in color like ruby or garnet and seems to our eyes  
about seventy-five or eighty feet high.  
He is taller than the highest trees and his features although distinct  
are hard to see because they are as bright as the sky.  
The sky is very bright.  
These are new woods.  
I have been in places where the trees are old.  
The house down by the river is very old and the ruins away to the  
south even older.  
What stands there is the front wall of an old brick house with two  
corners intact.  
Above where the front door had been the empty arch still stands.  
The bricks are very red against the very blue sky.  
These are experiences about which it seems necessary to use a share  
of *veys*.  
How long the arch will go on standing is neither clear nor a matter  
of much hope.



Already one brick is certainly coming loose.  
We are walking north over the empty fields.  
People have passed before us on foot and on skis.  
There are the tracks of one sled.  
Perhaps a father pulled his son deep into the woods along the trail.  
The way fathers wait for their sons and then keep the sons waiting  
all the rest of their lives takes some of the keenness away from the  
vivid blue-skied red-knitted woollen capped joy in a simple image  
of a father and his son we saw a little while ago.  
A father was pulling his little son on a sled down through the  
woods.  
Maitreya comes toward us moving south to our north.  
He is red and clear and taller even than the quick-growing pines  
where last autumn we saw the fox couple out strolling.  
No one for a minute or two is afraid of anything.  
But we are waiting too.  
What he means or what it means to see him is that we accept the  
necessity of loving everything that is alive.  
We accept that as an obligation and the blue sky of clearest winter  
noon turns red and walks towards us.  
Now that he is closer we see he is really taller than we had thought  
before.  
Now that he is close it seems we can see nothing higher than he is.  
Anything that is really coming towards us is about necessity.  
Necessity means obligation.  
The obligation is to be red and walk towards everyone with love.  
He walks towards us because we are looking towards him.  
The obligation is ours.  
That doesn't mean love is easy or not easy.  
Sometimes it is sometimes it isn't.  
He walks because it is his nature to be coming towards.  
Without going from where he is not staying he is always coming  
towards.

## **B. Australian Perception**

### **Australia Shall Be Saved**

(Douglas Robertson)

January 6, 1996

When Japanese hordes once swept down from "the East"  
We arose to the task - and slaughtered that Beast

Now a sly danger threatens: we face Asianisation  
So a new force is needed to save our nation

The challenge is not for the slow, nor the weak  
Our country won't be saved by those who are meek

We call to our people - from the cities to the farms  
And they rally to our cry; of "Patriots, to arms!"

Pride, love, and honour - that is the reason  
Why we'll fight to save Australia from this underhand treason

We'll take off the chains from around our nation's wrists  
Yes, Australia shall be saved -- by the Nationalists

### **Chinese Emigration**

(George Chanson)

1869

The talk of young Australia, upon each settler's station,  
Is the evil of this mighty rush, the Chinese emigration;  
Ships from Canton, and famed Hongkong, will bring us all up standing,  
Because each day in Sydney town, more Chinamen they're landing.

If any of our bark-built towns you happen just to enter,  
Proceed along the burr-clad street, and look about the centre;  
There John has got his signboard up of "lodging for the nation",  
He charges you quite moderate, it's all through emigration.

Oh glorious feeds he'll give you then, fat poodles rich and racy,  
Rat-sausages and cat-meat pies, a Chinese delicacy;  
And bullocks which have been worked-out upon some neighbouring station  
You get your share of for two bob, it's all through emigration.

And John has got a nice young wife, some wealthy dustman's daughter,  
Who for her faults in London streets was forced to cross the water.  
She is content to stay with him, and eat his musty ration,  
One thing she's left upon the shelf - it's all through emigration.

The legislatives of our land at last poor John they're taxing,  
The quickest way to clear him out would be a good pole-axing.  
For right and left we find his hosts, upon each settler's station,  
And old hands now are out of work, it's all through emigration.

The news is mooted everywhere, and 'twill not be surprising  
Ere long if tidings come to us, "The Chinamen are rising";  
Be warned just in the nick of time, by our sad situation,  
Or Australia yet may rue the days of Chinese emigration.

### **The Ballad of the Bleeding Heart Liberal**

(Douglas Robertson)

6th July 1995

My life has been a horror,  
since I took up the liberal's art.  
But now I don't feel so guilty  
(It's great to be a "bleeding heart").

The secret of this art is easy:  
just be nice to everyone.  
Even to murderers and molesters  
(It doesn't matter what they've done).

Every guilt was on my shoulders;  
now listen to my tale:  
I'm responsible for all evil  
(I'm white, middle-class, and male).

Villains robbed my house once,  
and my family they did assault.  
But this was due to society's ills  
(I knew it was not their fault).

My daughter tried to stop them;  
they beat her with boot and fist.  
I did not try to save her  
(I'm a "born-again" pacifist).

Their actions I could not judge;  
other people, I cannot condemn.  
Even though my wife was "graped"  
(there was a "bunch" of them).

It was the same some years before,  
fighting Japs in jungle mud.  
I never shot a-one of them  
(couldn't stand to see yellow blood).

In the future, when the Asian hordes  
follow their brothers' call:  
They'll outnumber Aussies ten to one  
("We're all human", after all).

My eldest son now condemns me,  
and tells me I'm a "nong",  
because I sold my country to the Japs  
(now, how could that be wrong?).

My son thinks I'm an idiot,  
and he says I've got no hope.  
But I call myself a "liberal"  
(perhaps it should be "dope"?).

Explanation of slang:

**bleeding heart** = a guilt-ridden do-gooder ("my heart bleeds for them")

[*Webster's Dictionary* defines bleeding heart as "one who shows extravagant sympathy esp. for an object of alleged persecution"]

**dope** = a stupid person [*The Macquarie Dictionary* definition]

**Takbiran**

(John Mateer)

There is a night when all radios transmit like minarets,  
when the chanting of engines and firecrackers  
is as comprehensive as the space in any loved room.

It's the night when windows tremble like the walls of Jericho,  
when unbelievers acquiesce to the silence of their wide-screen TVs.

That night is stalked by a fasting moon and its thirsty day,  
and with vibrato and reverb is everywhere breeding voices  
like engineered wheat or a mirage in an Arabian desert.

That night is pursued by the single-eyed sun who squints  
at the field of newspapers where families have knelt,  
and squints again at them on scooters speeding to their ancestors.

On that night all is awake to the sound of the one Name.

### **Up North**

(David Campbell)

1949

Oh, Bill and Joe to the north have gone,  
A green shirt on their back;  
There are not many ewes and lambs  
Along Kokoda track.

There are not many ewes and lambs,  
But men in single file  
Like sheep along a mountain pad  
Walk mile on sweating mile;

And each half-hour they change the lead,  
Though I have never read  
Where any fat bell-whether was  
Shot, in the mountains, dead.

The only sheep they muster there  
Leap through the mind at night;  
'Twould be as red as marking time  
To change green shirt for white.

And though Bill dreams of droving now  
On the drought-coloured plain,  
There's little need to tap the glass  
Or pray for it to rain.

They have no lack of water there  
But there is a stinging tail,

For men lie dying in the grass  
Along Kokoda trail.

**Walking Down Jalan Thamrin**  
(R.F. Brissenden)  
1981

Jalan Thamrin in Denpasar  
Was made by feet—  
The feet of men, horses, dogs, pigs, cattle.  
Now we walk a narrow dusty strip  
Between the open ditch  
And the petrol-stinking bitumen  
Roaring with motorbikes, bemos, cars.

An old woman  
Delicately erect  
Balancing a pink rolled mattress  
On her head  
Threads her way towards us through the traffic.

On her left hand, in the ditch,  
Two pigs  
Root and snuffle through a heap of garbage.  
On her right  
A boy  
White shirt fresh as a photograph from *Vogue*  
Pedals a gleaming bicycle:  
On his handlebars  
A flower.

**Jeltje Fanoy's** Indonesian-born Dutch parents in 1951 left Europe fearing a Soviet invasion. They migrated to Australia in 1963 and settled in Melbourne. Fanoy has published in English and Dutch and has some knowledge of German. She has described herself as a political poet who believes that words can change society and that poetry belongs to everybody. Her poetry has been read numerous times on radio, and she has performed her work at many public venues including factories, Melbourne streets, and other similar places.

