

Editorial

In choosing Banjo Paterson's celebrated phrase as the theme for *Traffic* number five, previous editor Heather Benbow challenged young researchers to declare the visions motivating their work, and to share them with our readers. As this collection proves, Melbourne University postgraduates are by no means short of inspiration, and in the far-ranging articles published here they have tackled topics as diverse as substance-use intervention, virtual reconstructions of historical sites, Australian migration policy and the stories our roads tell us.

Vision is what starts the researcher on the track towards discovery, and *Traffic* was founded with the idea that the exciting, original and sometimes surprising ideas of our researchers are all-too-rarely communicated outside the bounds of a student's discipline or the requirements of the higher degree. This collection gives students a chance to articulate their ideas for those outside their area of expertise—to 'sell' their vision. The result is interesting reading which, hopefully, will inspire others with the excitement of intellectual endeavour.

To open this issue we have a bold and ambitious piece from Kiera Lindsey, who wonders what our most prominent national road—the Hume Highway—can tell us about our national identity and the story we relate of our beginnings. Drawing on standard exploration histories as well as contemporary theories of narrative, she overturns official history and challenges the elision of native voices by pulling the 'footnotes' into the 'text' of her examination of Australia's road history. Gary Presland makes a case for including the natural history of Melbourne in our current evaluations of the city, arguing that to do so not only enhances our engagement with Melbourne but can avert the ecological and natural disaster that result when our imposed constructions ignore the rhythms of the ancient landscapes beneath.

SP Koehne's timely investigation of Australian migration policy probes the underlying ideologies that informed the treatment of the German religious group known as the Templers following World War II. Investigating Government rhetoric such as 'White Australia' and 'good migrant' for their covert as well as overt implications, he suggests that contemporary debates have not necessarily travelled far from these ideas.

Helen Addison-Smith's article explores visions of nation and issues of the 'other' from a different perspective. Analysing American science fiction of the twentieth century, she argues that these novels may have prefigured in the 1950s and 1960s some of the debates that were to occupy post-colonial theorists in the late twentieth century. In another investigation of the virtual, Erik Champion writes of his exciting research into digital reconstructions of historic sites—virtual heritage environments—that aim to teach the user about the cultures of long ago. His own reconstruction of the ancient Incan city of Palenque in Mexico draws on interactivity and design features of computer games in an effort to emulate their obvious appeal.

Several authors in this volume show that vision is often the product of unlikely collisions of thought that produce a new way of seeing a problem or situation. D Bruno Starrs offers a reading of *Dracula* that argues for greater attention to the novel's submerged religious themes. Louise Fairfax investigates the possible interplay between the evolution of quantum mechanics theory and the literature of German writer Johann Goethe. Susan Hudson tackles a difficult problem with new verve by applying theories of empowerment to the intervention strategies used with illicit substances users in correctional facilities. This is a controversial and courageous approach that attempts to remind us of what we share as humans, rather than what divides us.

This year *Traffic* has changed hands, and as the new editor I aim to continue the excellent work of my predecessor Heather Benbow. *Traffic* has travelled far since its inception in 2001 due to the hard work of both Monica Dux and Heather Benbow; it is now an established interdisciplinary journal and I am delighted to be at the helm for the next instalment of *Traffic*'s history.

I hope you enjoy *Traffic*'s fifth issue and find inspiration here among the thought-provoking and encouraging ambitions that *Traffic* authors offer as their 'visions splendid'. Happy reading!


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