



Australian Government



Australia Council
for the Arts

A Case for Literature

The effectiveness of subsidies to Australian publishers 1995 – 2005

Report prepared for the Literature Board of the Australia Council
by Dr Kath McLean and Dr Louise Poland with additional research by Jacinta van den Berg
on behalf of the Writing and Society Research Group University of Western Sydney

May 2010

The UWS Protocol Number for this project is H7046

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Executive summary and recommendations

This is a report of research that examined the effectiveness, both critical and financial, of Literature Board publishing subsidies to Australian publishers over the ten years 1995 to 2005. It was carried out by Dr Kath McLean, Dr Louise Poland and Jacinta van den Berg on behalf of the Writing and Society Research Group at the University of Western Sydney for the Literature Board of the Australia Council for the Arts.

Individual interviews were conducted with eighteen publishers who were active in Australian-based book publishing companies in the period and who had experience with Literature Board publishing subsidies. Their views on the uses of subsidies and on their efficacy were sought. Detailed case studies of sixteen books assisted into publication in the period by publishing subsidies were also prepared, to examine their reception, including critical reviews, sales, rights sales and performance in literary awards; the case studies also examine the role of the subsidised books in the literary careers of the books' authors.

In the period 1995–2005, the publication of 884 books was subsidised – 34 per cent were works of fiction; 25 per cent were poetry books; 14 per cent were non-fiction life writing titles; other non-fiction works made up 10 per cent of the total; 6 per cent were anthologies; and 11 per cent were playscripts. Sixty-four publishers participated in the subsidy scheme in the period; most were independent Australian-owned companies.

The value of the financial contribution made by subsidies to publishers depended on the size and profitability of individual companies. Subsidies were essential to the continued existence of many small publishers, and the scheme was particularly valuable to publishing companies starting up with little or no capital and no backlist. While the subsidies played a much smaller part in the economies of the larger publishing companies, they did provide an incentive, or background encouragement, for a commitment to literary titles that they might otherwise have not published.

In the interviews, publishers identified and discussed the various benefits of subsidies, chief among which was that they allowed the publishing of new, innovative and experimental writing, and encouraged the taking of risks with works for which markets were small or uncertain. Poetry in particular was not only encouraged, but also sustained as a genre by the subsidy scheme, as was the literary essay and the literary anthology. First works of fiction comprised the majority of

fiction subsidised; the majority of supported non-fiction was in the genre of life writing, in many significant cases by Indigenous and migrant authors. The benefits in this case were clearly social as well as literary.

The large number of first-time authors assisted meant that the subsidies also made an important contribution to starting literary careers, as well as maintaining the careers of those mid-list authors whose merit was widely recognised but whose books do not sell in commercial quantities. These established authors were particularly under threat during the period as the priorities of the larger publishers shifted to front-list titles with proven commercial appeal.

Of the books assisted into publication with Literature Board subsidies in the period, almost 10 per cent won major literary awards, and a further 15 per cent were short-listed. In total, almost a quarter of all of the books subsidised in the period either won or were short-listed for major awards. The full value of the subsidies in terms of critical esteem and the growth in reputation of both the author and the publishing house take time to become apparent, which is why this report sets its terminal point at 2005. The choice of case studies was determined in part by this consideration, and offers as significant examples supported titles that enjoyed both critical esteem and public acclaim.

Many of the publishers interviewed suggested ways in which the Literature Board support of literary publishing in Australia might be improved. Weighing heavily in all these suggestions was a concern that the subsidies had diminished in value – not only historically, but during the period in question – and that they should be increased, or replaced by a different and more substantial form of funding to publishers. In the light of this and their other stated concerns, we make the following recommendations:

1. That the funding to support literary publishing in Australia be substantially increased, not only to bring the funding into line with contemporary production costs, but to allow publishers to apply some part of their funds to strategic infrastructure development, including editorial capacity, conversion to digital formats, marketing and promotion. This recommendation envisages that block grants, for an extended period, made in recognition of the value of the publisher's *literary program*, would offer a more effective form of support than the present scheme of annual subsidies for individual titles.

2. That greater flexibility be built into the funding criteria to:
 - a) extend eligibility to titles by multiple authors;
 - b) allow extended timelines for the publication of particular titles;
 - c) allow variations on the 10 per cent royalty requirement; and
 - d) vary print-run requirements and conditions with respect to particular modes of publication.
3. That consideration be given to restructuring the acquittal process in order to make the acquittal form and the period of acquittal more appropriate to book publishing.
4. That the interests and expertise of Australian literary publishers be more strongly represented in the Literature Board's deliberations on its funding policies and priorities.
5. That the Literature Board undertake a campaign to promote public awareness of its support for Australian literary publishing with a focus on the use of its logo as a sign of literary quality, and on the books, authors and publishers it has assisted.

Introduction

This report describes the findings of a research project that examined the effectiveness, both critical and financial, of Literature Board publishing subsidies to Australian publishers over the ten years 1995 to 2005. The project was undertaken by the Writing and Society Research Group at the University of Western Sydney with funding from the Australia Council for the Arts' Literature Board.

Since its inception in 1973, the Literature Board has been providing subsidies to Australian-based publishers to assist with the publication of books by Australian authors – books of fiction, non-fiction, poetry, playscripts and anthologies of Australian literature. In doing so, it has carried on, and greatly expanded, the work of its predecessor, the Commonwealth Literary Fund.

In assessing Literature Board subsidies to Australian-based publishers of Australian literary works during the period in question, the project sought to establish the extent to which the Board's publishing-subsidy program had been effective in maintaining quality and creating value in its support of the publication of Australian literary titles. It is anticipated that the findings of this research will inform the continuation of the publishing subsidy program and will contribute to its ongoing appropriateness and efficacy.

The timeframe for the research – 1995 to 2005 – was selected to provide a substantial sample of assisted titles and publishers, while allowing time to assess the impact of subsidy rounds, since it often takes several years – or more – for a literary title to achieve its potential in terms of reception and sales, and to make its contribution to its author's reputation.

The research undertaken combined the methodologies of interview, case study and statistical analysis to assess the contribution that the publishing subsidy program made, in the period, to Australian literary culture, in its support of particular genres, its assistance to the publication of individual titles and its role in establishing and maintaining the literary careers and reputations of Australian authors. The research also examined the role of publishing subsidies in supporting the economies of Australian-based publishing companies, large and small.

What follows is not a comprehensive evaluation of the publishing subsidy program against its aims. The report does not examine in detail subsidies for the publication of playscripts or drama in the period, although it does include drama publications in its consideration of the total number of books assisted. It should also be noted that our assessment of the financial effectiveness of subsidies is necessarily limited due to the historical difficulty in obtaining accurate, or even in some cases estimated, sales figures from publishers. Unfortunately, from the point of view of researchers, this information is often considered commercial-in-confidence.

There have been several previous research works on the Literature Board, including two histories, the first by foundation member and former director Thomas Shapcott (1998), who detailed the work of the Board from 1973 to 1985. Irene Stevens (2004), also a former Literature Board officer, continued the history of the Board's work to the end of the twentieth century with *A Short History of the Literature Board: 1986–2000*.

In 1994, Rhonda Black, then a freelance consultant, was commissioned by the Literature Board to carry out an evaluation of the book publishing subsidies program. The evaluation sought to assess the 'efficiency, effectiveness and appropriateness' of the Program Grants system (introduced in 1991 to replace the Block Grants and Specific Title Grants systems) 'in relation to the Board's stated aims and objectives' (p. 1). The research involved a questionnaire mailed to participating publishers, personal interviews with selected publishers and a statistical analysis of titles assisted between 1988 and 1992. The evaluation led to changes in eligibility criteria for titles assisted by the program.

This report takes a different approach to the 1994 evaluation in assessing the effectiveness of publishing subsidies. Our research focused less on the administration and eligibility criteria of the program (although many publishers did mention those issues in the interviews) and more closely on the critical and commercial reception of selected assisted titles, and on the effect of the availability of subsidies on the decision-making processes of publishers and on the economies of their publishing companies.

Methodology

A combination of methodologies has been used in this research, and both empirical and non-empirical evidence has been collected and analysed. We have used statistical analysis, documentary research, personal interviews and case studies to assess the critical and financial effectiveness of publishing subsidies.

Statistics were collected on the publishing subsidy program as it functioned in the period 1995 to 2005 and on its participants, outputs and outcomes. These include, for the period, the number of publishers receiving subsidies; the number of titles assisted; the number of titles by literary genre and form; the number and nature of major awards won by assisted titles; and an analysis of the financial aspects of the subsidy program. Much of this material has been drawn from the Annual Reports of the Australia Council, commencing with the report of the 1995/96 financial year and finishing with the 2005/06 annual report. All care has been taken to ensure the accuracy of the figures reported here. There are some errors and omissions in the Australia Council annual reports, and where we have been able to obtain corrected information, we have included it here. However, as the public record of Australia Council activities, information from the annual reports is used as published. The statistical findings are presented in the section titled 'An overview of publishing subsidies, 1995–2005'.

Individual interviews were conducted in person and by telephone with eighteen prominent publishers and commissioning editors who were active in the period in Australian-based book publishing companies. In selecting these eighteen publishers, we sought to include a range of specialist and general publishers of literature, from multinational corporations to large and small independent presses, and regional and niche publishers of Indigenous, multicultural and women's voices. All interview subjects had direct experience with Literature Board publishing subsidies and were questioned on many aspects of that experience, including the extent to which the expectation of a subsidy encouraged them to take risks with their decisions to publish (see Appendix B for the Interview Schedule and Appendix C for a full list of interview subjects). Material collected from interviews is presented in the section below titled 'What the publishers say'.

Detailed case studies were prepared of sixteen books that were assisted into publication in the period by publishing subsidies. The case studies include titles in all literary genres – fiction, poetry, short fiction, non-fiction (including life writing and the essay) and the literary anthology. Some were significant as prizewinners, some as bestsellers; some were socially or culturally significant. A template was designed to ensure that the case studies conformed to a standard format and could be compared (see Appendix D for the Case Study Template). Details contained in the case studies include author, title, genre and publisher information; publication details (date of release, pagination, format, initial print run, reprints); subsidy information (amount of subsidy, other books by the same publisher assisted in the year); awards won and/or short-listed for; rights sales and other formats; a summary of critical reception; educational settings or adoptions; and details of the author's literary career (including previous work, Literature Board writers' grants, awards and reputation).

Information from the case studies, and from research on the publication and reception of other significant books assisted by subsidies, is used to examine the effectiveness of publishing subsidies in the section below titled 'What the books tell us'. This section considers the information gathered in the case studies in the context of the broader issues raised by those studies: the nature and vitality of particular genres, such as poetry, short stories, essays, fiction and life writing, and forms such as the anthology; the effect of subsidies on writers at different stages of their careers; the importance of critical recognition and awards as indicators of public or cultural esteem; the value of educational settings and adoptions; and, where relevant, the importance of sales – of both books and rights. All of these factors have an impact on Australian literary culture and are central to the assessment of the critical and financial effectiveness of publishing subsidies.

The case studies should be read as an integral part of this report since they testify to the efficacy of Literature Board publishing subsidies in a detailed and often dramatic form: they are attached as Appendix A.

The report ends with a conclusion and offers a number of recommendations arising from the research.

An overview of publishing subsidies, 1995–2005

The publishing subsidy program

Publishing subsidies are currently provided to Australian-based publishers by the Literature Board under the 'publishing and promotion' grants category for assistance with the publication of literary works by Australian authors. Administrative arrangements, eligibility criteria and funding levels have undergone minor changes over the years, but in the period 1995–2005 the publishing subsidy program remained relatively stable.

The stated purpose of the publishing subsidies also remained stable in the period, although the wording was changed from time to time. In 1995 that purpose was 'to assist the publication of books of literary merit by living Australian writers, which may not otherwise be published' (Australia Council, 1995, s. 3.24). In 1998 the purpose of the 'presentation and promotion' grant category, under which publishing subsidies then sat, was 'to promote Australian creative writers and to support the publication and appreciation of their work to a broader audience within Australia and overseas' (Australia Council, 1998b). Note that subsidies provided to overseas-based publishers to publish and promote works by Australian authors are not considered in this research.

In order to be eligible for publishing subsidies, Australian-based publishers must register with the Literature Board. Conditions of registration include that publishers must be legally constituted as an organisation, have published a certain number of books in the previous year or years (the requirement was two titles in 1995 but changed to five titles in 1998) and offer their publications for commercial sale with 'effective national promotion and distribution systems' (Australia Council, 2007–09).

Currently, publishers may apply for funding for seven titles per year, although this too has changed in the research period (until 1997 there was no limit to the number of titles as long as all were in eligible genres; a limit of ten titles was introduced in 1997; in 2003 this changed to seven). Eligible genres include fiction, general literature (now called 'literary non-fiction' and defined as 'autobiography, biography, essays, histories, literary criticism or other expository or analytical prose'), poetry, drama scripts and anthologies of Australian literature. In 1995 and 1996, only first and second works by authors of fiction and non-fiction were eligible for assistance; third works were made eligible from 1997, and from 2004 there were no restrictions on authors' works in eligible genres. Reprints of works

by Australian authors are also eligible (Australia Council, 1995, s. 3.25, 1997b; Evans, 2009).

Publishers are required to publish a minimum number of copies of subsidised books – 1,000 copies for fiction and general literature and 250 copies of poetry titles (this too has altered in recent years: in the 1995–2005 period, 500 copies of poetry titles were required). Publishers must also agree to pay a 10 per cent royalty to authors on the sale (or disposal) of subsidised books.

The level of funding per title has also changed in the period: until 1997 a per-page subsidy was paid and publishers were able to apply for additional funds for 'developmental/editorial costs or anthology fees' (Australia Council, 1995, s. 3.25). For most of the period, however, subsidies had a maximum rate according to genre: in 1997 subsidies were available of up to \$3,000 for fiction and general literature, \$1,500 for poetry and playscripts, and \$3,000 for anthologies (Australia Council, 1997b). This increased in 2003 to \$4,000 per title for fiction and general literature, \$2,500 for poetry and \$2,000 for playscripts (Australia Council, 2003b).

On publication of subsidised titles, publishers are required to acquit the grant and provide the Literature Board with five copies of each printed and bound book. This must be completed before publishers are eligible to apply for further subsidies.

In the period 1995–2005, which we have taken from the financial years 1995/96 to 2005/06, 64 Australian-based publishers received subsidies from the Literature Board to assist with the publication of works by Australian authors. The publishers were from every state and territory except Tasmania. The volatility of the publishing industry in Australia is demonstrated by the fact that only six of the 64 participating publishers received subsidies in every year of that period. In contrast, eighteen of the publishers – nearly 30 per cent – received subsidies in only one year of this period.

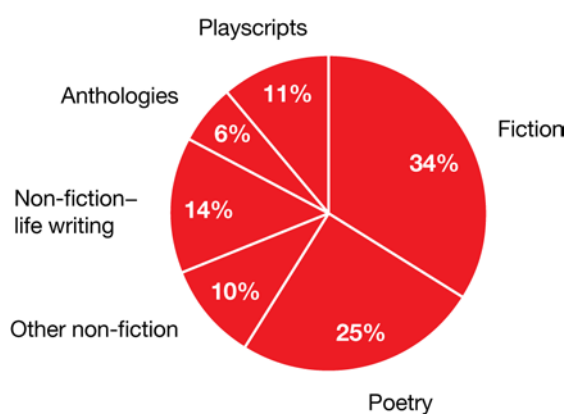
Of the 64 participating publishers, 54 (84.4 per cent) were Australian-owned companies and ten (15.6 per cent) were overseas-owned or multinational companies.

According to the Australia Council annual reports, a total of 884 titles were assisted into publication in Australia by subsidies in the period (including playscripts). The numbers subsidised each year were not consistent and ranged from a high of 120 titles in 1995/96 to a low of 49 in 2001/02. The average per year was 80 titles.

Titles assisted included fiction – first edition novels and short stories, and reprints – poetry, literary non-fiction (or ‘general literature’), drama and anthologies. Of the total number of titles assisted in the period, 297 or 34 per cent were fiction, and 219 or 25 per cent were books of poetry. Life

writing – biography, memoir or autobiography – comprised 124 titles or 14 per cent of those assisted, while other non-fiction (91 titles) made up 10 per cent of the total. There were 55 anthologies published with subsidies (six per cent), and 98 playscripts, representing 11 per cent of the total.

Titles assisted by genre 1995–2005



A total of \$2,716,699 was provided to Australian-based publishers in publishing subsidies between 1995/96 and 2005/06. Again, this was not consistent year by year and ranged from a high of \$327,362 provided to 34 publishers in 1995/96, to a low of \$164,000 to fifteen publishers in 2001/02. The average expenditure per year in the period was \$246,972.

As a percentage of total Literature Board expenditure on subsidies and grants, publishing subsidies to Australian-based publishers ranged between about 4 per cent and 7 per cent of the total throughout the period, with an average of 5.7 per cent.

What the publishers say

In July, August and September 2009, we interviewed eighteen publishers and commissioning editors who had been active in Australian publishing in the 1995–2005 period, and who had both decision-making roles in publishing and experience with Literature Board publishing subsidies. A list of the publishers who were interviewed is attached as Appendix C. The publishers interviewed represent the range of Australian-based companies eligible to apply for publishing subsidies – from the Australian branches of large multinational corporations to the small one- or two-person companies – and many in between. Most of those interviewed were long-term publishing industry participants and knew the industry, its economies and markets well. All were very familiar with – and had varying views on – the role and effectiveness of publishing subsidies.

An interview schedule (see Appendix B) was used in all interviews so that all of those interviewed were asked standardised questions (and additional questions, where appropriate). In most cases, the interviews were between 30 and 60 minutes in duration and all were recorded with the permission of the subjects.

Information from the interviews is gathered below to illustrate perceptions of the uses, effectiveness and status of publishing subsidies, and presented largely in the form of quotes, with linking and explanatory commentary. This allows the publishers to speak for themselves. Also included are the publishers' suggestions for changes to improve the effectiveness of the publishing subsidy program.

The contribution of subsidies to publishing economies

The contribution made by publishing subsidies to the economies of Australian publishing houses varies widely, and depends on the size, nature, turnover, profitability and income sources of individual companies. There is a very wide range of participants in the Australian publishing industry. For instance, there are a small number of very large and profitable businesses, most of which are Australian branches of overseas-owned or multinational corporations; these include Penguin Books Australia, HarperCollins and Random House Australia. Like these multinationals, the large independent company Allen & Unwin holds a significant market share. There are several medium-sized independent publishing companies that publish fewer than 250 titles per year and are generally successful and well-financed businesses. Some smaller companies enjoy the support of state governments and/or institutions in addition to income earned from publishing; these include

Wakefield Press in South Australia and Fremantle Press in Western Australia (formerly Fremantle Arts Centre Press or FACP), as well as the larger University of Queensland Press (UQP). Others in this category are university presses such as Central Queensland University Press and the University of Western Australia (UWA) Press (note that university presses such as University of NSW Press and Melbourne University Press did not receive publishing subsidies in this period), and the specialist Indigenous publishers, Magabala Books, IAD Press and Aboriginal Studies Press, all of which are partially supported by institutions and other organisations.

The majority of Australian publishers, however, are small, independent companies whose income from publishing activities needs to be supplemented by funding from other sources, such as Literature Board and state-government grants and subsidies. These small publishers also rely on in-kind support, unpaid labour, and, in some cases, on the use of home-based offices and personal financial contributions.

Given this range of company structures and financial circumstances, it is no surprise that the estimation of the value of publishing subsidies differs from company to company. For the smallest and least commercial companies, subsidies provide the lifeblood without which publishing would not be possible:

As far as the grants system goes ... it's been very supportive of us ... we couldn't do it without it ... we would have to shut the door if we didn't have those grants ...

Gail Hannah

Literature Board subsidies were a very important part [of the business] – I applied for specific titles but in reality what that meant was that the money I got from the Australia Council supported the whole program ...

Ron Pretty

I wouldn't have started without the subsidy as the subsidy is essential to us as an additional source of income, and without it I couldn't keep going.

Ivor Indyk

The subsidies are particularly important in the early life of a company, even those which later grow to considerable size or commercial success:

They [publishing subsidies] have been a consistent part of the landscape; they were more important for us when the business was smaller for obvious reasons and they are particularly important when

you're publishing debut Australian writers or Australian writers where it is going to be harder to find a market for whatever reason ... Text in 1995 was a baby company, only one or two years old, and had a very small list, and we were very conscious of applying for grants. Grants, obviously now that the company is much bigger, are just as important for individual titles but obviously a much smaller part of the whole picture.

Michael Heyward

We've been aware of them since day one ... we were a struggling two-person company so any funding we could lay our hands on, we were laying our hands on ... and that's obviously a role the Literature Board plays ... when you are a start-up it's about your only source of income. You don't have any backlist ... it's a pretty important part of your publishing income.

Stephanie Johnston

For all small publishers, who always scrape for financial and human resources, it's crucial.

Clive Newman

[Publishing subsidies are] absolutely vital for companies that are privately run or not boosted by profits from overseas ...

Jane Palfreyman

While all of the publishers interviewed valued the contribution that publishing subsidies made, not all Australian-based publishers choose to participate in the scheme. Pan Macmillan, for instance, a subsidiary of the large German-based multinational Verlagsgruppe Georg von Holtzbrinck, received only three publishing subsidies in the ten-year period. Rod Morrison, the present Picador Publisher at Pan Macmillan, explained:

From the outset, Pan Macmillan's focus on both commercial and literary titles has ensured that the one allows us to invest in the other. While we have no formal subsidies policy per se, as a mid-sized trade publisher with a large and varied list our position has generally been that ... [Australia Council] publisher grants are better utilised by smaller, independent houses.

Though not formally committed to the principle of cross-subsidisation, some of the larger publishers cross-subsidise the publication of potentially less profitable or literary books with the profits from commercially successful books within their own budgets. This can be seen as a kind of internal subsidy that renders Literature Board subsidies unnecessary. It is a common practice in publishing but one that has apparently diminished within larger publishing houses as each title is generally expected to make its own way in the market.

Penguin Books Australia was a regular recipient of publishing subsidies throughout the period until 2005, when the company decided no longer to

apply. Penguin's Australian Publishing Director, Bob Sessions, explained:

We have never been particularly in favour of [government] funding the publishing process. Our view has always been that we would prefer that any monies that are available to support publishing go to authors. So much so that we decided to quit the program a few years ago when we realised that the amount of money we were getting made almost no difference to what we were doing, and that we were not making publishing decisions based on [the] grant; we were instead saying, there's a grant available, how should we spend it? It was at that moment that we really thought that we would rather this money went to authors. Now, I understand that's not necessarily true of other publishers and I can imagine being a different kind of publisher and having a different view. I'm making it clear that that's our view and it's the reason we chose not to be part of the scheme.

Sessions went on to say:

Penguin has a multimillion-dollar annual turnover and can afford to take risks and make some mistakes –the taxpayer should have no role in that.

For other companies with multiple funding sources, such as Magabala Books, subsidies have been useful but not vital:

At Magabala ... it [Literature Board subsidy] wasn't the crucial factor because we were getting funds from Western Australia, ATSIC and the ATSI Arts Board, so the Lit Board funding was five books ... virtually only one a year for the time that I was there.

Bruce Sims

We also sought information on the significance of subsidies at the production level. We asked how substantial the contribution made by a subsidy was to the overall production cost of a title. The responses varied widely, again, depending on the size and nature of the publishing enterprise – and on particular books. For several publishers it contributed about 10 per cent of the cost of each title, while one publisher – in a very small company which relies on voluntary labour and a home office – maintained it covered 100 per cent of the production costs of their short-print-run books. Most, however, estimated the contribution to be around 30 per cent of the title's costs. The majority considered this a difficult question to answer, given the number of variables such as format, print run, paper quality, production values – as well as the question of what should be taken into account when calculating production costs (for instance, editing, design, overheads, promotion and so on).

Most of those interviewed agreed that the contribution that the subsidies made had diminished over the period due to the relatively static value of the subsidies. This is discussed in more detail below.

The subsidy as defence against the uncommercial aspects of literary publishing

The principal and intended use of publishing subsidies is to *make literary publishing possible* and support its development in Australia. Although there was some discussion in the interviews about what differentiates the 'literary' works eligible for subsidies from works that might be designated as 'non-literary', it was generally accepted that literary works focus on the quality of the writing and on the form of the work, rather than on commercial appeal. In fact, literary works may be regarded as essentially non-commercial, in that they are not created with a market in mind, but in response to the imperatives of the author's creativity and imagination. It was generally agreed that literary works have an aesthetic and therefore a cultural value that has no necessary relation to their market or commercial value.

The fact that the subsidy's there and we know there's a good chance of us getting \$15–20,000 towards our literary publishing, encourages us to do that sort of publishing.

Patrick Gallagher

[Subsidies are] ... for literary works – definitely – those defined by a focus on the writing.

Jane Palfreyman

I think that is what the grant system is still intended to support ... the evolution of the literary flavour of publishing across the board.

Michael Heyward

I think at the extremely literary end that [publishing] would just drop off without Board support, and even with Board support I think it has diminished quite markedly ...

Bruce Sims

Interestingly, the question of what is 'literary' seemed to occupy publishers of fiction and non-fiction more than it did poetry publishers, whose output is considered unquestionably 'literary', and fundamentally uncommercial for this reason. For many publishers, literary works are associated with innovative and experimental writing, as well as with non-commercial publishing – and the subsidies are intended to encourage just this kind of publishing.

I'd see the Literature Board as really only coming in on something innovative or experimental ... I'd see that as being their role, in fact, I'd see that as their role rather more than it has been ... one would hope that in a normal climate that run-of-the-mill publishing would exist and continue, and that the Board's function would be to encourage innovative and more literary or experimental publishing – the stuff that isn't necessarily commercially viable.

Bruce Sims

I think it [the publishing subsidy scheme] has helped some riskier fiction get out there ... making cutting-edge or risky writing publishable is important ...

Susan Hawthorne

The discussion of literary publishing also highlighted for some the vexed issue of the relation between the cultural and the commercial responsibilities of publishing.

To be honest ... I'm a bit nervous about saying this ... I think it was something that publishers took for granted to help underwrite their costs but it didn't necessarily mean that they focused more on literary titles.

Sophie Cunningham

[Literary titles were put up for subsidy] without any doubt ... but even then you'd get into that discussion about 'literary titles' which we've all had so many times ... I think I'd prefer to use some other word ... like 'experimental' or 'challenging' or even 'not particularly commercial'! ... [however] there [are] of course plenty of very commercial literary books around.

Bob Sessions

Literary fiction is only literary fiction until something gets taken up and it becomes popular, then it's no longer literary fiction ... it's a relatively new marketing term that didn't come in until about the early eighties ... I don't think what we're publishing is literary fiction, I think it's just fiction.

Kevin Pearson

We usually looked for titles that first of all had literary and cultural value, and then we looked at titles which might benefit from the subsidy in terms of the economics of the particular title ... Literature Board subsidies should be for non-commercial publishers and non-commercial titles.

Craig Munro

[W]e were looking at subsidies as ... a way of publishing something that we thought was worthwhile publishing but we knew wouldn't sell many copies ... to make the costing look a bit more healthy ...

Jane Palfreyman

Jane Palfreyman gave the example of Beth Spencer's *How to Conceive of a Girl* (Vintage/Random House, 1996), an experimental novel that included fragments of memoir, poetry, short stories:

[W]e thought that it would be difficult to find the kind of market that we would need to make an economic print run of it ... it was such a great book ... it was quite groundbreaking ... and so the subsidy certainly helped get that one off the ground.

Most publishers felt that support was needed for non-commercial publishing in Australia.

[I]t's reasonable that [for] publishers publishing books that are not commercial ... there should be some reward for those that are ... never going to make much money, frankly.

Patrick Gallagher

[W]riting and publishing must be supported and celebrated – otherwise it's just the market and survival of the fittest; you lose an awful lot in that model ... you lose all the interesting stuff ... a little

bit of interesting stuff still comes up through the cracks because that's always the way, but you lose the possibility of there being more than what just comes up through the cracks.

Susan Hawthorne

Ivor Indyk of Giramondo Publishing, explaining his sense of literary publishing, joked, 'Well, I could define it in terms of low sales.' Before he started publishing he was an academic and a critic:

I always judge books by my critical sense, that is ... I only publish books I believe should be classics ... I'm publishing books that I hope will be part of the canon of Australian literature ... I see my publishing work as a form of criticism, criticism which produces the book rather than sitting back and discussing it.

This long-term perspective assumes that success will not be immediate:

Time is the literary publisher's best ally ... I publish books that I hope will be in print in 50 years time, but they tend to go out slowly ... they'll be selling slowly over that time ... bubbling along ... and because they'll be selling for a long time, they'll encounter new technologies about which we know very little now ... I have a hope that they'll come into their own with the new technologies

Ivor Indyk

Veronica Sumegi of Brandl & Schlesinger expressed a similar view.

[W]e base the books ... more on the quality of writing, the ideas rather than ... what I believe is the saleability ... We're hoping that in the ultimate sense the books would become classics in some way ... books that have a long shelf life, because they're books that are very literary and they're not books that go out of fashion very soon.

These expectations necessarily make literary publishing a risky proposition from a commercial point of view. Publishers were asked 'To what extent did the expectation of a subsidy make you more inclined to take risks as a publisher or editor?' This raised the possible value of publishing subsidies as an encouragement to risk-taking – both cultural and commercial.

I think the fact that the grants system exists encourages publishers to take risks ... For us it's not a major part of the equation but I maintain it's a critically important part because it serves as generalised support and encouragement for publishers who are committed to Australian work to take risks.

If you are successful [in getting a subsidy] then there are certain things that you'll be able to do with the book more easily, but I think the fact that you're eligible, that you know you can apply, I think that encourages you to think: alright, let's take a crack at this book.

Michael Heyward

The Lit Board was part of that armoury if you like, of ways of making it [the risk] work so it was definitely part of the climate of the Lit Board subsidies ...

it wasn't a large number of books each year but it made a crucial difference to the general atmosphere of being able to say 'Yes, we can do those books, we can do first-time authors' ... it also had the background effect of creating an atmosphere where you could say 'It might be risky but we've got that subsidy as a back-up'.

Bruce Sims

I think it does [encourage you to take risks] ... especially if you are committed to a particular title that you think is very worthy of publication ... knowing that there's a subsidy just sort of tips you over ... saying: if we get a subsidy then we will publish.

[There are] ... quite a few books ... that we tell the author that if we get a subsidy we will publish it ... particularly the rather quirky books that we do.

Veronica Sumegi

It does [encourage you to take risks] ... Benang is one ... we said: this is going to be a groundbreaking book, it's going to be expensive to publish, it's sure to get a Literature Board subsidy. [This] was the in-house talk ...

Clive Newman

[I]t's about risk ... it's about economics more than about risk in a way ... I don't think it changed our opinion of the project... I don't think it changed our print run, I don't think it changed the way we marketed it ... I don't think it changed any of those things, although I do think it made us feel better about how much money we lost. Because of course we lost less on those risky titles.

Bob Sessions

Sometimes you see something that's really worthy ... and it really needs that hand up to make it vaguely financially viable ... but most of the time you're just signing things up because you know they deserve to be published.

... having an extra \$2,000 or \$3,000 on that bottom line can ... be the difference between making something an abject failure and just making it pay for itself ...

Jane Palfreyman

CAL [Copyright Agency Limited payments for photocopying] makes a very welcome contribution to our academic publishing ... that's a ... sort of underpinning of the academic list. Similarly with the Literature Board subsidies, we don't take any books on saying: Oh, it's marginal but might get a Literature Board subsidy so that makes it okay, but we know that some of our less commercial ... literary fiction and non-fiction will get that little bit of underpinning from the subsidies. So if the subsidies went away tomorrow, would it change our publishing? Not directly, but indirectly, yes, I think it would. I think it would make it even harder to publish first novels and quality work.

Patrick Gallagher

At Penguin it [the expectation of a subsidy] certainly did make a crucial difference in what kind of fiction we did do ... because, unlike Magabala, at Penguin we were chasing – well, we were at Magabala too but it wasn't quite as stringent – a gross margin for every book of 50 per cent ... and to make that margin you would often need a Lit Board subsidy ... I don't think there were many cases, but there were one or two in which the decision to publish specifically was based on whether we got a Lit Board grant or not ... it wasn't always like that, but that thinking was always in your mind so that you thought: Okay, that might be a bit dodgy in commercial terms but we will be able to get a grant and therefore we can do it.

Bruce Sims

Some publishers noted that they took risks anyway and that the subsidies were useful to underwrite the normal risks of their kind of publishing.

[T]he books I feel most passionate about are generally the riskiest ... so it's more like: Well we're going to take this risk anyway, let's see if anyone will go along for the ride with us!

Susan Hawthorne

We take risks anyway ... it certainly allows us to take a risk because we couldn't do it ... absolutely ... because most of the books we publish, none of the big publishers would be interested in doing ... they wouldn't generate enough sales for them ... so they just wouldn't be published if we didn't do them.

Gail Hannah

In a general way [subsidies encourage us to take risks] ... Just about everybody we publish is unpublishable by a major publisher, however good their reputations ... in fact, that would be another definition of Giramondo ...

Ivor Indyk

Stephanie Johnston objected to the notion that publishers take 'big risks', but noted that Literature Board subsidies help 'cover your bases':

I don't see us as necessarily taking big risks, we like to cover our bases ... from the perspective of the outside world, people always think that publishing is taking a risk on things ... but that's not how I see it ... I see it as a calculated risk – these days you can print 500 copies if you want, it's not like you're printing 50,000 – I think there's risk if you're printing 50,000 but that doesn't often happen in Australia. I think most publishers here make sure that they've got their bases covered somehow ... That way you're minimising your potential losses.

The subsidy's role in sustaining the less commercial literary genres

In the interviews we discussed the value of subsidies in sustaining the publication of genres such as poetry, the essay and the short story, that had cultural and literary significance but that were difficult to make viable in a commercial sense.

Indeed, most of those interviewed felt that for poetry publishing in particular, subsidies were vital.

Poetry was, even for well-known, award-winning poets, totally sub-commercial. Print runs and sales in the nineties of poetry at UQP rattled around 200 to 400–500 copies ... UQP began at that time to print poetry books using print-on-demand technology. So any subsidy at all was of value.

Craig Munro

The only titles we made contingent on getting a subsidy were a few poetry titles because making them viable without a subsidy was almost impossible ...

Susan Hawthorne

[W]e never publish poetry without assistance ...

Veronica Sumeji

[P]oetry has always had a small market so we couldn't possibly do it without Australia Council assistance ...

Gail Hannah

I think for poetry it's been just essential.

Sue Abbey

It [the publishing subsidy scheme] certainly sustains poetry, there's no question of that, and it would play a very large part in drama publishing, which wouldn't exist without Board support.

Bruce Sims

It [the subsidy scheme] always has and always will play a role ... poetry is a good example, not a lot of poetry would get up without either Literature Board or SA [state government] support ...

Stephanie Johnston

[F]or the smaller publishers and for poetry publishers I imagine they're completely vital ... it's so hard to make money out of short stories and poetry especially.

Jane Palfreyman

It makes poetry a no-risk proposition ... even though poetry sells very little – with the publishing subsidy close to covering print costs, if it can't make money it can't lose much money either ... for poetry it [the subsidy] is absolutely essential ...

Ivor Indyk

[W]ithout the subsidy it was impossible ... with direct sale and Australia Council subsidies, the thing becomes viable – marginally. Without the subsidy, without direct sales, you couldn't do it.

Ron Pretty

I'd love to be able to publish poetry but it's just not commercial – it's very important, so is drama publishing ... I think that kind of specialist publishing should be supported ...

Patrick Gallagher

The anthology was identified by many as a genre of publication that is supported, and probably sustained, by publishing subsidies. Sophie Cunningham, a former publisher at Allen & Unwin, describes anthology publishing as 'borderline' from a financial point of view, given the need to pay royalties to the editor and to pay what is often a large number of contributors. She believes that the expectation of a subsidy 'did make a difference as to whether they got published.' Others agreed.

Anthologies are almost impossible to do without a Board subsidy (or other funding) especially if you intend to pay ASA [Australian Society of Authors] rates.

Bruce Sims

[Y]ou can never actually make them work, which is one of the reasons why we hardly ever see anthologies out any more. The ASA rates for anthologies make it almost impossible for them to be published. I really very much doubt whether anyone publishes anthologies these days paying the recommended ASA rates, because you just couldn't do it ... And certainly as far as anthologies go ... there's no doubt that they [subsidies] made them much more viable than they would have been otherwise.

Jane Palfreyman

Jane Palfreyman noted the important role that anthologies play in Australian literary culture by providing an opportunity for new writers to be published and their work exposed to the public, often for the first time. The subsidies' role in supporting new and emerging writers is discussed in further detail in the next section.

Other genres, including young adult fiction, the literary essay and the short story collection – even fiction, normally the most commercial of the genres – were singled out as having particularly benefited from the subsidy program.

Fiction is notoriously hard to get right so we would often apply for a fiction title ... but we would basically only apply for a fiction title if we were completely over the moon about it.

Susan Hawthorne

Most of the fiction we publish would never be published without the Australia Council grant.

Stephanie Johnston

Indigenous authors have also benefited from publishing subsidies and former UQP publisher Craig Munro believes that Literature Board subsidies have sustained Indigenous life writing in particular. Certainly the list of books assisted by subsidies bears that out – across a number of Australian-based publishers, including UQP, Fremantle Press, Penguin Australia, Magabala Books and Aboriginal Studies Press. Indigenous life-writers assisted include Doris Pilkington, Hazel Brown and Kim Scott, Herb Wharton, Banjo Clark and Morndi Munro. This is discussed in more detail in the following section.

Sue Abbey, former editor of the UQP Black Australian Writers series, stressed the importance of subsidies to Indigenous life writing:

I ... always had a gut feeling that memoir was extremely important ... that it should never just fall out of favour ... I was always after some way to keep it on the list ... I figure that with a lot of readers, the only Indigenous people that they knew were the books by these people, they never sat with an Indigenous person or listened to their story, but the number of people that were so stirred by the books and who wanted to pass these books on and to have others read them. The dissemination of culture through the books just couldn't be done by the individual author so in that sense it was an amazing service it was providing ... but I still say very much that it also is a literature ... the narrative ... so many of the writers had that natural sense of drama in memoir with all the tensions and things that make a good short story ... it was all there, all that drive, so for that reason I thought it would be wrong just to look for fiction writers [for the subsidy application].

The relationship between publishing subsidies and literary careers

In many cases, a publishing subsidy has offered a 'break' for new writers, providing them with the opportunity to have their work published for the first time. Many of the publishers we spoke with noted that work by new writers was assisted – and in some cases made possible – by subsidies.

It's really important ... the grant system, as small as it is ... I think it is really important for the encouragement of the publication of debut Australian writers, whether or not a book by a debut writer gets a grant or not, because the grant then becomes part of the mix of the money that's available for whatever books are on a publisher's list.

Michael Heyward

Speaking of his experience at Penguin in the early and mid-1990s, Bruce Sims remembers that subsidies 'certainly had an effect':

Penguin had a policy to try to ramp up the list with numbers of new authors and I don't think it would have been possible without the Lit Board assistance.

Bruce Sims

Five Islands Press ran an important 'new poets series' with the assistance of Literature Board subsidies. Publisher Ron Pretty said of the new poets involved, 'without those subsidies they would have been struggling, really struggling [to be published].'

In discussing books by new novelists, Clive Newman from Fremantle Press spoke about these as being 'hard sell, small print runs' which was 'why it was so important for titles in our program ... to receive that sort of subsidy.'

Subsidies are also useful in sustaining the careers of mid-career and older writers, especially at a time when so much emphasis is placed on new books by commercially successful writers, to the detriment of mid-list and backlist authors with a more modest selling power. Stephanie Johnston from Wakefield Press put it this way:

[A]t the other end when they've been chewed up and spat out by the larger companies, we pick up the more mature writers who aren't selling enough for the big companies to keep them on board, so at either end of the fiction scale (emerging and established writing) certainly the Australia Council support plays an important role.

Ron Pretty expressed a similar sentiment: 'I was also prepared to publish books by older poets whose publishers had gone out of business and were left stranded'. Juno Gemes from poetry publishing company Paper Bark Press also noted their focus on older writers, most of whose work was assisted into publication by subsidies:

Our intention was to publish poets of the highest quality and we made it known that we were not a press for first-up poets, we were a press for mid-career poets. We started with a publication by Dorothy Hewett – Alice in Wormland – that had been rejected by several publishers.

Ivor Indyk highlighted the role of Giramondo in picking up mid-career writers and gave the example of Brian Castro who 'found himself in mid-career without a publisher in spite of his critical success'. He also mentioned Antoni Jach, Nicholas Jose, Beverley Farmer and Gerald Murnane, whose new books, alongside Brian Castro's, were assisted into publication by Literature Board subsidies in 2004/05. The publication of Murnane's essay collection *Invisible Yet Enduring Lilacs* is instructive – it led to Giramondo's republication of Murnane's out-of-print first novel *Tamarisk Row* in 2008, and to the publication in 2009 of *Barley Patch*, Murnane's first new work of fiction in fourteen years (both with Literature Board subsidies) – an example of how the subsidy scheme can work not only to maintain, but to restart, an author's career.

The subsidy and the determination 'to publish well'

Amongst the financial benefits offered by the Literature Board subsidies, several publishers believed that the subsidies were intended to – and in fact did – keep the retail price of assisted books down in order to increase their competitiveness.

The ... effect of Literature Board subsidies is that the whole idea of them in the seventies was to reduce the retail price. There was a perception that in order to compete, Literature Board subsidised titles had to have price reductions and that was so much the primary aim ...

Craig Munro

[A]t worst it would do what I often claimed it would do anyway and it did, was reduce the retail price ... the aim was to make good writing more accessible.

Bruce Sims

The Literature Board subsidies have been very important in terms of making it possible to be able to sell books at a slightly cheaper rate than you otherwise could, just because you get a little bit to help you balance those figures at the end.

Susan Hawthorne

What it did ... if we weren't able to apply the Literature Board subsidy to the editorial costs, the retail price of the book would go up beyond the market acceptance point, that was always the concern ... so it enabled us ... by applying a subsidy against those specific costs, to keep the retail price ... within market expectations, so it could compete against the tons of other books that are out there.

Clive Newman

As Clive Newman's remarks suggest, some publishers used subsidies for specific purposes, rather than for general production costs. Chief among these were editorial costs. As mentioned earlier, until 1997 publishers could apply for a subsidy for assistance with 'developmental/editorial costs' in addition to the then per-page subsidy. After 1997, one production subsidy was available and publishers could apply that to any or all costs associated with production.

If we identified or assessed a manuscript as needing, in our view, extended editorial time then that was one that was put on the long-list ... for possible Literature Board support ... and then we worked through those titles that were most in need of extra support and that's what formed the basis of ... our application. ... That gave us \$3,000 to apply towards ... editorial expenditure, so it was crucial for bringing those titles up to a level to where we were ... able to take them to the market ... we specifically used the Literature Board subsidies towards the editorial costs ...

Clive Newman

On occasion UQP also assigned publishing subsidies to editorial costs, especially for winners of the David Unaipon Award.

One of the problems with the winning entries was that all of them needed development and that's costly – [we] tried to keep the editorial development in-house lest it spill over and become more costly.

Sue Abbey

Another use for subsidies is, in part, a contentious one: to improve production values or, as some put it, 'to publish a book well'. A number of publishers spoke of this as a valuable role for subsidies.

We will make the decision whether or not to publish a book without thinking that a grant is essential, that's really important. We will agree amongst ourselves that we want to take the risk but then

our ability to publish the book well will depend on the success or failure of the grant application.

Michael Heyward

Michael Heyward was asked to expand on the meaning of 'to publish the book well'. He replied:

[T]he kind of resources that the company can give to the book will be affected by the sorts of budgeting that we can do around the book, and if part of that budgeting involves a production subsidy it's easier because that production subsidy will then encourage publishers such as Text to free up money to promote the book or send the author on a tour or whatever it might be....

Michael Heyward

Rhonda Black from Aboriginal Studies Press also mentioned subsidies assisting the way a book is published:

What a subsidy could do ... [is] make the difference ... [to] the way you publish, to be able to do things properly ... that funding could ... make the difference between someone here going up to a community, sitting down, checking it with elders ... [to check content and cultural appropriateness].

Another view of 'publishing well' involves improving the look and feel of the book with high quality artwork, paper and/or binding.

[W]ithout the support of the Literature Board, publishing would be virtually impossible. I am a great believer in the beautifully crafted book ... especially for poetry because it has longevity. Those titles we produced will pass on for generations, I hope, because they are designed to last.

Juno Gomes

[We used subsidies] ... to enable something that we were publishing to be produced in a better way ... to up the production standards of it; for instance, Judy Cassab's diaries ... we did use that money to put more photo sections in and just make it a beautiful hardback. ...

I know that these subsidies aren't to make beautiful books but ... they still have to honour the writing.

Jane Palfreyman

An alternate view of this practice was expressed by Bruce Sims:

I've been a bit alarmed, as a customer ... [certain books] are in quite handsome [hardback] editions with Literature Board acknowledgement in them and I think: To what extent is this vanity publishing? ... I'm worried that Board funding has been used to ... pretty-up a book rather than just get it out there.

The subsidy as a mark of quality or status

There were varying views expressed in response to our question regarding the status of the Australia Council logo on subsidised books – and more broadly, the status of the publishing subsidy scheme. It is a requirement of the Literature Board

that all books assisted with subsidies must display the Australia Council logo and the accompanying words: *This project has been assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body.*

Of the logo, former UQP editor Sue Abbey said that it was important to both authors and the press as it represented government and public acknowledgement of UQP's participation in literature as an artform:

The Press wanted to have that acknowledgement ... that public acknowledgement ... in many ways it wasn't about the money, [especially] for poetry ... [although] it was a big help ...

Both Sue Abbey and Susan Hawthorne pointed out the positive impact of a subsidy on authors:

The authors were hugely pleased when the grants would come through ... it was a real boost to the poets in particular ... and the novelists, especially the first-time writers ... it meant for them that they were included in the serious business ... the career of writing.

Sue Abbey

If an author knows that their book has received a subsidy by the Australia Council – that's a tick ... because writers are battling their own demons out there mostly on their own, all the ticks that happen are a plus.

Susan Hawthorne

A contrary view from some authors was reported by Sophie Cunningham:

Occasionally authors would request that there not be Literature Board grants put against their books ... in the couple of times it happened they didn't want to have to have the Australia Council logo on their book or the implication that it had been subsidised ... in one case in particular, it was a political point of view ... that it was not appropriate that commercial publishers use government funding.

According to Craig Munro, formerly of UQP, the subsidy-related association between UQP and the Literature Board worked both ways:

It gave us a certain amount of cachet ... I think ... our publishing gave the Literature Board a certain amount of cachet ... the fact that our list was for so long strongly supported by the Literature Board was a benefit to us.

Ivor Indyk, publisher at Giramondo, likes the logo and thought authors also liked it since it is a symbol of literary quality.

To me it's ... a badge of pride ... they've [the Literature Board] been good to us. It's clear, in both the case of HEAT and Giramondo, that they're willing us to publish these books ...

Brandl & Schlesinger publisher Veronica Sumegi believes the Australia Council logo 'has a certain kudos'. She thinks the logo on books, especially on books by first-time authors, gives increased credibility.

Authors who know that they're sponsored by the Australia Council feel that they're quite special, unique and their book has a certain quality. I think that would be certainly beneficial, rather than just that the publisher is asking for the money – that there is some reason that the Australia Council sponsored this book.

In fact, Veronica Sumegi sees potential in increasing the promotion of the Australia Council logo on books as a symbol of quality:

If the Australia Council could spend some time and effort in ... promoting their logo [as a signifier that] this is a book worth reading ... but they don't seem to do ... any kind of promotion of their imprimatur in books ...

The diminishing value of subsidies

A number of publishers pointed out the diminished financial value of Literature Board subsidies in the period, arguing that this reduced both the significance of the subsidies and their effectiveness.

I think the biggest problem is that they [subsidies] barely changed in terms of the amount over that ten-year period ... so they became less and less useful – to the point where I have almost stopped applying for them because ... the amount of time put in to apply for them for the piddling amount of money that one got, or that one gets now, has reduced the value of the subsidy ... So instead of doing that, we did things like reduce our print runs and tried to make the figures work in other ways.

There hasn't been any indexation for ... really over a ten-year period. And there have been huge changes in costs ... [the subsidy] doesn't take account of the cost changes, the costs in paper price, let alone the cost of a person's work ... they were much more viable in 1995, they were much more useful back then, than they were in 2005.

Susan Hawthorne

Ron Pretty, former publisher at Five Islands Press, believes that in spite of an increase in the subsidy level, the reduced number of titles that could be assisted each year meant an overall diminution of funds to his press. He maintains that, in real terms, the value of the publishing subsidies almost halved in the period.

Craig Munro worked with UQP from the early 1970s and is familiar with the Literature Board subsidies since that time. He spoke of the relative value of publishing subsidies in the 1970s and 1980s and in the 1995–2005 period:

With those couple of exceptions – poetry and the Black Writing list – the publishing subsidies had diminished significantly in importance – for UQP anyway. And the context for UQP of course is that UQP was, for about 20 years, the largest recipient of publishing subsidies ... it certainly started to diminish in the early 2000s, it was rattling around \$18–20,000. ... From 1998/99 – you see a dramatic reduction in the value of the Literature Board grants [to UQP] ... from an average of around \$35–40,000 it suddenly drops down ... UQP was in fairly desperate financial straits in that

period and ... it certainly would have suited UQP for Literature Board subsidies to have continued to increase ... but not decrease ... in real terms in that period after 98/99 ... if the Literature Board funding had been more in the region of \$60–70,000 a year, that would have made a significant difference to UQP but increasingly it was not of much help, unfortunately ...

According to Craig Munro, the diminishing value of the subsidies had an effect on morale:

[I]t was demoralising to see those subsidies really staying very static, reducing [and] increasing limits put on how much you could apply for per title and seeing these huge commercial companies putting their hand out for scarce resources was very demoralising, very demoralising.

Most of the publishers we interviewed commented on the relatively low level of subsidies and the need to increase them to keep up with the rising costs of book production.

The obvious thing to say is that grants aren't enough ...

Gail Hannah

Obviously the subsidies are really important to us, but they're not large ... they could be bigger, I think ... The danger with a subsidy of this kind is that it is enough to encourage you to publish, but not enough to cover you for the losses you are almost inevitably going to bear as a result of making that decision to publish.

Ivor Indyk

Veronica Sumegi of Brandl & Schlesinger welcomed the news that subsidies would increase in 2010 as she believes that the low level of subsidies has meant to her that 'it was ... hardly worth applying'.

Moreover, at least four publishers pointed to the higher level of government funding offered to publishers under the Canadian system, where this support has contributed to the development of a thriving Canadian publishing industry. According to Craig Munro, who undertook a small study of Canadian book publishing within the context of the North American book trade in 1991, Canadian grants were 'ten to twenty times more ...[and] only to Canadian-owned companies'.

Eligibility

A number of publishers noted that the relatively small budget for publishing subsidies was exacerbated by the competition among publishers for assistance. Some commented on the fact that eligibility for subsidies is not limited to Australian-owned companies and that large and highly profitable multinational companies received subsidies that they clearly did not need. Some referred to – and favoured – the Canada Council subsidy system in which only independent Canadian-owned literary publishers were eligible to apply for subsidies.

Several of those interviewed either worked for, or had previously worked for, Australian branches of multinational publishing companies and shared their insights on this issue in the interviews. Bob Sessions of Penguin Australia, for instance, believes that the amount of money available for subsidies is not enough to make a difference to large publishers but understood that for smaller publishers it could be crucial. He suggested that a type of 'means test' be introduced whereby only publishers with an annual turnover below a set amount be eligible to apply for subsidies.

In fact, many of the large multinationals operating in Australia did not participate in the scheme in 1995–2005, received subsidies for only a few titles, or were active participants but deliberately stopped applying for subsidies during the period. For instance, Pan Macmillan, Oxford University Press and Hodder Headline received only a few subsidies each during these years; Penguin and Random House appear to have stopped participating after 2004/05 and HarperCollins participated only in 1996/97 and 2000/01.

Jane Palfreyman, a former publisher at Random House Australia and now with Australian-owned company Allen & Unwin, noted:

The reality is that the multinationals are often much more ruthless with what gets published ... much more careful with money in an accountant's kind of way ... I think after talking with a couple of other publishers I thought: No, that's actually right, why should Random House be getting this money from the government when we've got all these resources. ... really I think a big company should just have faith in what they sign up and not need those subsidies.

Jane Palfreyman believes the Canada Council model is a good one and that it's fair to 'put Australian money back into Australian businesses'.

Bruce Sims, who worked for Penguin Books for many years, believes that Penguin stopped applying for subsidies because of the view within the publishing industry that multinationals should not accept government assistance. He suggested that the company 'might have decided that it didn't want to wear the opprobrium of that any longer', and went on to say:

There are a small number of publishers who battle away, nobly ... and any mechanism for publishing subsidies needs to take account of smaller publishers who often tend to be at the coalface of new stuff ... we need a system that will accommodate them and encourage them.

Veronica Sumegi from the small independent Brandt & Schlesinger agrees that subsidies should be limited to Australian publishers only – and only those with an annual turnover below a set amount. Although she is unsure of what that amount should be, she thinks it should be 'something that eliminates all the big multinationals'.

Craig Munro, formerly of UQP, is quite clear in his opposition to the current eligibility criteria that allows large, overseas-owned companies to participate.

I just think it's outrageous ... I thought it was outrageous then and I still do, and I think it's interesting that, belatedly, if you look at the last few years of publishing subsidies, the multinationals made their own decision not to do that.

I just think it ... shows a total failure on the part of the Australia Council and the Literature Board that it [continued to fund multinationals] ... and finally they decided for themselves.

Craig Munro noted that at one point Penguin was receiving more in publishing subsidies than UQP. 'I think the whole notion of supporting large, foreign-owned multinationals and actually giving them money indicates the total lack of a cultural policy rationale.'

Former poetry publisher Ron Pretty holds a similar view and believes that Literature Board support for overseas publishers 'has been misguided'.

Stephanie Johnston from Wakefield Press also commented on this issue:

Obviously, from our perspective we would rather we followed the Canadian system where government support only goes to the Canadian-owned publishers, independents – and certainly they have a thriving independent publishing industry as a result.

Administrative arrangements and grant conditions

Interview participants were asked several specific questions about administrative aspects of the publishing subsidy program. In relation to their experiences with substitutions and delays of titles put up for subsidy, there was unanimity in response – when publishing delays occurred or when it became necessary to make substitutions, the publishers said that there was rarely a problem and that Literature Board staff were very understanding, accepting and helpful. This informal flexibility in the administration of the scheme is very valuable, in view of the fact that the publisher's application may be made twelve to eighteen months in advance of publication, when the form of the work in question has yet to be finalised, and when extensive editing and revision may be required.

There were more varied responses when publishers were asked about applications and acquittals. They were asked, 'How difficult or onerous were the processes of applying for and acquitting subsidies?' and 'Was the difficulty sufficient to discourage your application?' A range of views was expressed in response to this question; some found both processes onerous, while others did not mind them.

Acquittals are a lot worse [than applications] – sometimes you think: Oh, is my time worth all this? ... it's a lot of work to do an application ... and the acquittals mathematically are beyond me ... I have to get our bookkeeper to help us ... That's the worst part of the subsidy ... I realise you have to put in effort to get money but sometimes the amount of work involved is a lot.

Veronica Sumegi

A number of respondents argued that the generic 'all arts' acquittal form used by the Literature Board was not clearly relevant to publishing and that it made it difficult to provide a meaningful acquittal. In addition, the timing of acquittals was problematic because there was insufficient time to assess a book's critical and financial performance before the acquittal was due.

The acquittals are all modelled on a generic visual arts model – not specifically designed for publishing ... also, they come too early in the process and [are] often inappropriate to publishing. It takes a full day at least.

Gail Hannah

There's no way that you can get a sense of sales or reception within the acquittal period ...

Ivor Indyk

A number of publishers complained about the lack of feedback from the Literature Board in relation to their acquittals.

We would always labour over those ... we often wondered if anyone ever read them ...

Juno Gemes

I know this sounds petty and pathetic but I did put effort into responding ... but you just get no feedback whatsoever ... I'm sure they're pleased that you acquitted it from a bureaucratic point of view ... but there's no sense really that they cared ... or that it was valuable or that what you were doing and the information you provided fed into any other kind of process of knowledge and understanding about the industry ... and because we're a different kind of publisher, there is actually information in there that's relevant [to the Literature Board].

Rhonda Black

Director of Aboriginal Studies Press from 2003, Rhonda Black's comment suggests the subsidy scheme raised particular issues for those involved with Indigenous publishing companies. Bruce Sims was concerned that the eligibility criteria for books precluded the subsidising of works by groups of people or communities, as is common in Indigenous publishing:

[Books] ... had to be ... single-author books or at most a collaboration of two people and at Magabala a lot of the books were community histories and they didn't qualify. In fact, in a whole range of ways they didn't qualify ... they didn't qualify for Public Lending Right ... I thought it was most unfair that books that were probably the most needy in some ways didn't qualify ... I mean, books that were straight histories ... didn't qualify. There were a lot of books that wouldn't have qualified anyway.

The required timelines for publication are also often difficult in Indigenous publishing:

Predicting what books are going to be ready to roll eighteen months ahead is quite difficult because you just don't know what the editorial process is going to involve, and how much re-writing there's

going to be, and how much books will be thrown off schedule.

Bruce Sims

Well, the biggest constraint at Aboriginal Studies Press is that our timelines are quite different and I can't always bring in a manuscript within the required period.

Rhonda Black

Rhonda Black also noted that the Literature Board requirements for minimum print runs and for payment of 10 per cent royalties to authors aren't always appropriate to Indigenous publishing. She expressed concern about the inflexibility of this requirement, arguing that 'there's no capacity to look at what the circumstances are.'

Suggestions for change

While all of the publishers and editors we interviewed valued the support they received from the Literature Board, many offered suggestions to improve the effectiveness of the scheme in relation to its systems, priorities and scope. They also offered suggestions for other activities that the Literature Board could initiate to further – and better – assist Australian publishers and literature.

An issue raised by several publishers was the make-up of the Literature Board and its consequent effect on Board priorities and programs. Craig Munro believes that the Literature Board, having been established primarily to assist authors and with authors on the Board, has been suspicious of providing funding to publishers. In his view, publishers have also been under-represented on the Literature Board. This, he believes, has resulted in a lack of understanding of the context in which publishers work and of the nature of their work – and has resulted in a continuing bias in favour of authors.

Bruce Sims believes that there has been a long-term absence of commercial expertise on the Literature Board: '[The Literature Board has] quite good expertise on literary matters, but not on commercial matters.' He maintains that the Literature Board should be encouraging publishers to take risks and it should therefore better understand the nature of risk in publishing. He believes that representatives on the Board with an appreciation of the commercial realities of publishing could facilitate this kind of understanding.

Perhaps the most common suggestion was for a change to a block-grant type system that provided a greatly increased fixed amount of subsidy to publishers to spend on their literary publishing as they see fit. A number of those interviewed believed that the title-by-title system of subsidy was unnecessarily restrictive and limited publishers' flexibility in planning and implementing their publishing programs. One publisher described the current system as unnecessary 'micro-management', which contributed to increasing layers of administration within the Literature Board. An alternative was suggested independently by

several publishers: that is, to replace the title-by-title system with longer-term general support for publishers' literary publishing programs.

You certainly wouldn't want to have a system that rewards failure, that says: Okay, you put up any old impossible or esoteric work and we'll fund it and nobody will read any of it ... which is a bit self-defeating. But the other end of the scale is to simply reward success ... to only subsidise things which are by people who are quite well established ... and who don't really need any subsidy ... Another way of looking at it would be to say: Okay, we're going to give a number of publishers, including some small ones, some amounts of money towards their literary publishing program and they can spend it how they like and ... we don't want to micro-manage it ... They could look at their program, their whole program over the last year or three years ... [and evaluate it and consider the grant for the next period] ... That has the benefit of reducing the amount of paperwork ... and possibly achieves the same effect... If publishers were given money and encouraged to find the unknown authors with talent with the backing of the Lit Board, it might be a better system.

Bruce Sims

Susan Hawthorne from Spinifex Press expressed similar views:

I think, if I were to suggest a change ... it might be helpful ... to think about who the publisher is, what they're doing, what their overall publishing strategies are, how do various bits of the list integrate with one another and whether the publisher itself is contributing to the publishing culture within Australia and internationally.

The title-by-title system is based on guesswork – it's an estimate of averages which is never right ... because if you put in for what you thought was real, you'd have to double or treble the subsidy.

It would be much more useful to be able to apply for a certain amount of money and then put that towards the books that you think ... really need it or put that towards some activity ... there would obviously have to be guidelines but I don't think it's [title-by-title application] a particularly good way of doing it ... it's time-consuming.

Former Allen & Unwin publisher, Sophie Cunningham suggested that publishers could be asked to lay out their vision for their literary list and to demonstrate their commitment to it. She said:

[The title-by-title application system is] an okay approach but I think you could argue that there should be a lump sum subsidy [so that it could be used more flexibly] ... you might decide to put \$15,000 against a real punt and nothing against other books ... and then I could see ... that it would make a real difference to whether or not you published a book.

Sophie Cunningham believes 'that ... having to spread the money dissipated the impact of it.'

Stephanie Johnston from Wakefield Press argued for certainty in the amount of subsidy

that publishers receive each year. Certainty would allow publishers to plan and to use the subsidies more effectively. She would prefer a system that provided a base grant of a known amount each year for independent Australian-owned publishers and then the opportunity to apply for additional subsidies on the basis of a publisher's proposed literary publishing program.

Patrick Gallagher from Allen & Unwin suggested:

It might be an idea just to get publishers to submit their literary programs for the year and see what's submitted and how much money they've got and distribute it among the publishers according to their plans – it might have the same effect.

Several publishers suggested that support should be directed towards maintaining and developing the infrastructure of Australian literary publishing. This was expressed in a number of ways.

According to Michael Heyward of Text Publishing:

We need encouragement for new publishers to come into the arena because with an increase in the number of publishers you get an increased diversity of books being published – every publisher has its own character or point of view or flavour or set of interests. And I am all for systems of subsidy which would help to kickstart an increased number of publishers in this country ... I'd want to broaden it out from: Right, well, the subsidy for each title should be more money or there should be more titles subsidised, to how do we get more publishers in the field who can then make the legitimate claim that the books that they are going to publish are worthy of subsidy? I think that's the key debate that we have to have – we're not really having it now and if I were in the Australia Council I'd be very interested in sorting out, how do you get the seed money to get more books published?

Heyward goes on to suggest a focus on building editorial skills:

What we have never ever thought about is: How do we fund publishers, how do we support publishers, how do we encourage publishers to elevate editorial as a skill in their houses, to train their editors better? Because with an increase in the quality of editing, in the level of editing – and I'm not being critical or saying our editing is not good – I'm saying you can always get better at it; we need more editors and we need more focus on editing as a vocation, and as a career. And I'd be wanting to have a conversation about how we could connect subsidies for specific titles which we all agree are worthy of publication, how can we connect that with making sure that those books are edited absolutely as well as they can be.

He concluded, 'We don't have enough publishers in Australia, and we don't have enough independent publishers, and we don't have enough small publishers. We need more.'

Craig Munro expressed a similar concern:

I think that there needs to be an appreciation in future that it's almost counterproductive to be putting so much money into new work and not looking at the publishing infrastructure which that work depends on ... it just doesn't make sense.

He used the analogy of opera funding, saying that it would be like giving the vast majority of opera funding to composers and only a bit to opera companies to produce it. As he noted, *'The infrastructure that is required by authors is a very healthy, active, adventurous group of book publishers.'*

Ivor Indyk from Giramondo Publishing would like to increase the number of books he publishes, but would need to employ additional staff to do so:

I couldn't find the wages for someone from our sales ... so if the Literature Board was to encourage publishers like Giramondo to increase our output, they would have to provide money for infrastructure as well as for production costs ... that is, for editorial staff, and then it would have to be a much larger subsidy.

He argued that funding for editorial support would be very useful and could take the form of a separate infrastructure grant independent of the subsidy for individual titles, although there could be a condition that a publisher must publish a minimum number of titles in order to receive the grant. Eligibility could be based on the literary reputation of the publisher.

Craig Munro believes that, given the concentration of Australian publishing in Sydney and Melbourne, assistance with publishing infrastructure is especially required in regional areas of Australia. He identified a need, for instance, for assistance for a specialist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander publishing enterprise in North Queensland. It would appear also that no Tasmanian-based publisher was supported during the period covered by this report.

Support for the promotion of books was an issue raised by some of those interviewed. Small publishers in particular have problems with promoting the books they publish and thought that the Literature Board could help in a number of different ways. Former poetry publisher Ron Pretty suggested that the Literature Board could subsidise spinning display stands (known as 'spinnners') for Australian poetry books in bookshops.

Gail Hannah and Kevin Pearson of Black Pepper suggested that the Literature Board could provide grants for publicity in addition to production subsidies. Gail Hannah added, *'It's heartbreaking to bring out a book and put it out there and know it's wonderful quality but nobody knows about it ... it's something that I've had to come to terms with.'*

Patrick Gallagher from Allen & Unwin suggested that any money provided to publishers for promotion 'would be money well spent'. He went on to suggest that the Literature Board could provide money for promotion of a certain kind; for instance, it could fund advertisements in the *Australian Book Review* or *Meanjin*, and this would be a way to both support those journals and promote Australian authors, books and publishers.

Some believed that the Literature Board's relationships with Australian publishers and fine writing could itself be better promoted in order to draw attention to the books and publishers they

support. Veronica Sumegei believes that since recipients of publishing subsidies are required to acknowledge Australia Council assistance, the Australia Council should also acknowledge the good work of supported publishers through advertisements or notices in newsletters and other media. As mentioned earlier, Veronica Sumegei also suggested that the Australia Council could promote its logo on books as a symbol of literary quality, thereby benefiting readers, authors, publishers and the Australia Council itself.

Paper Bark Press partner Juno Gemes also believes that the Australia Council could make more of its association with award-winning books and successful publishers:

If they had some way of reporting back to the literary community through their advertisements ... the successes of the presses [they support] ... they could get even more mileage out of it.

Ron Pretty also identified effective distribution as a serious problem for small poetry publishers, and one which could be addressed by the Literature Board:

For me the central issue that has got to be tackled is a more effective method of distribution and maybe, maybe ... if you can find a more efficient way of distributing the books so that they actually got out there in the marketplace and people knew about them ... then you wouldn't need the individual subsidies. Subsidies I think are an alternative to a good distribution system and that's something I think that the Lit Board has really not taken on ... I think what they do is important in terms of supporting individual authors and in terms of keeping publishers publishing poetry books, but unless we can solve this problem of distribution, it's always going to be very much a minority ...

Changing technology is an issue that concerns Susan Hawthorne of Spinifex Press. She suggested that small publishers in particular will need financial assistance with adapting their businesses to new technologies and that the Literature Board could play an important role in this. She noted that much of the work required – for instance – converting texts to digital formats is relatively simple and inexpensive but time-consuming. Assistance could be provided in the form of project or salary support for digitising print books and e-media promotion.

A number of small publishers wanted increased flexibility with some of the Literature Board requirements, including those concerning minimum required print runs. One publisher suggested that the Literature Board could allow publishers to reach the minimum print run over a period of time and believed that the requirement as it stands can be wasteful and is not always appropriate, especially in view of the increasingly widespread use of print-on-demand technology. More flexibility was also called for regarding the requirement that publishers pay a 10 per cent royalty to authors. Some publishers thought that there should be a mechanism for particular circumstances to be considered and that increased flexibility on this requirement could assist small publishers who are working at the margins.

What the books tell us

In this section we look at specific books published with the assistance of Literature Board publishing subsidies in the 1995–2005 period. We examine the role of subsidies in supporting the publication of particular genres, as well as their role in launching and maintaining literary careers and reputations. We also consider the reception of the books – that is, how they have been received by critics, book buyers and others with an interest in Australian literature – and how they have fared in major literary awards. Where information is available we look at print runs, sales, sales of rights for other markets and formats, and educational adoptions or settings of the books.

As it is not possible to examine closely all of the books assisted in the period in depth, we have prepared detailed case studies of sixteen titles to illustrate these concerns. These books include first works of fiction and non-fiction, second and subsequent books, mid-career collections by poets, life writing of several kinds, authors whose successful careers were started with subsidies, anthologies, books that have been adapted as films, award-winning books, and books with high – and low – sales.

We have selected three first novels by authors previously unpublished in book form: *Loaded* by Christos Tsiolkas, which was published by Random House; *Plains of Promise* by Alexis Wright, published by UQP; and *The Goddamn Bus of Happiness* by Stefan Laszczuk, published by Wakefield Press. The former two authors have gone on to establish successful literary careers and Stefan Laszczuk appears to be on his way to doing so. In addition, the film rights for *Loaded* were sold and a successful film made, which greatly increased the sales of the book. We have also prepared a case study on a first work of non-fiction, *Stasiland* by Anna Funder (Text Publishing). It is a commercially successful book, which sparked international interest and multiple rights sales. In the commercially marginal genre of short fiction, we have prepared a case study of the prize-winning *White Turtle: A Collection of Short Stories* by Merinda Bobis (Spinifex Press).

Life writing is represented with case studies of Jacob Rosenberg's *East of Time* (Brandl & Schlesinger), an autobiographical holocaust memoir by a post-war migrant to Australia written when he was in his eighties; Doris Pilkington's *Follow the Rabbit-Proof Fence* (UQP), a biographical story drawn from the life of the Indigenous author's mother and also the basis for a successful feature film; and *Rose Boys* (Allen & Unwin) by Peter Rose, a well-known Australian poet and editor, which

combined autobiography with the biography of his brother, Robert Rose.

Poetry publishing is illustrated by case studies of Judith Beveridge's third collection, the award-winning *Wolf Notes*, published by Giramondo; *Empty Texas*, a second collection by a young poet, Peter Minter, published by small specialist poetry publisher Paper Bark Press; Susan Hampton's *The Kindly Ones*, published by another specialist poetry publisher, Five Islands Press; and *The Lovemakers: Book One*, a verse novel by established poet Alan Wearne, published by Penguin Books Australia.

We have also selected as a case study *Benang: From the Heart*, the second novel by Indigenous author Kim Scott, published by Fremantle Arts Centre Press (FACP). *Benang* was the joint winner of the Miles Franklin Literary Award in 2000, the first book by an Indigenous Australian to win that prestigious award. In addition, FACP was the first small independent Australian publisher to publish a Miles Franklin Award winner.

Three anthologies are also presented as case studies, two of fiction – *Blur* and *Risks* – and one anthology of essays: *Seams of Light*. These display the characteristic features of literary anthologies, including unifying themes, works from multiple authors with common characteristics, opportunities for first publication and the bringing together of previously published works under one cover.

The case studies are presented in full at the end of this report and we draw on information from them – and from details of other books and their authors assisted in the period – for the following discussion.

The genres assisted:

Fiction

The majority of fiction titles assisted in the period 1995–2005 were first novels by new and emerging authors. Many of the publishers we interviewed stressed the difficulty of finding a market for new authors. A subsidy therefore assists with making publication into an unknown market a less financially risky enterprise. In fact, until 1995 *only* first works of fiction were eligible for publishing subsidies. This was expanded to second works in 1995 and later to third, and in 2004 to all works in eligible genres.

As mentioned earlier and demonstrated by publishers' comments, a subsidy may provide the 'break' needed by a new author by tipping the balance of a publisher's decision in favour of publication. A short paperback novel is a relatively

inexpensive publishing venture and, if underwritten by a subsidy, can be an attractive prospect for a publisher.

In fact, former Random House Australia publisher Jane Palfreyman said just that in relation to the 1995 publication of *Loaded*, the first novel by Christos Tsiolkas. Random House received a subsidy of \$2,718 for the publication of *Loaded*, and the novel of 151 pages was published relatively cheaply as a B-format paperback with an initial print run of 6,000. This was a large print run for a first novel due to the fact that its publisher, Jane Palfreyman, was looking to a then very active market for gay-themed books in Australia. Her decision was vindicated with sales of 10,000 'after a year or two'. After the film rights were sold, the film *Head On* was produced and a film tie-in book published, sales went up to over 30,000.

Loaded, as a first novel, is without doubt a success story in more than financial terms. Its author, Christos Tsiolkas, has gone on to become a successful novelist and winner of the Commonwealth Writers' Prize, among other major awards, and was recently described as 'one of the most important writers in Australia' (Brennan, 2008).

Many first novels are published as the result of competitions for unpublished manuscripts held regularly in various parts of the country. While not all of the competitions are specifically for works of fiction, they have played an important role in starting the careers of a number of significant Australian novelists, including Tim Winton, Brian Castro, Kate Grenville, Gail Jones, Mandy Sayer and Gillian Mears. These competitions are discussed in more detail below.

Plains of Promise by Alexis Wright is another important first novel subsidised by the Literature Board in this period. It was published in 1997 by UQP after its author submitted it for consideration for UQP's Black Australian Writers Series. UQP editors entered the manuscript for the David Unaipon Award, an annual literary award for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander writers, and former UQP editor Sue Abbey recommended it for publication before it was judged (Abbey, 2009). It was a highly commended runner-up in the David Unaipon Award and was subsequently published with the assistance of a Literature Board publishing subsidy.

Critics and awards judges welcomed *Plains of Promise*. It was short-listed for the Commonwealth Writers' Prize, Best First Book Award in the South-East Asia and Pacific Region, 1998; the Age Book of the Year Award and the New South Wales Premier's Literary Awards. It also sold relatively well: its initial print run of 2,500 sold out in the first year and it has been reprinted three times. The total Australian sales to date are around 6,000 copies.

Although Alexis Wright had also published a number of non-fiction works, including the influential *Grog War* (Magabala Books, 1997 and 2009), it was the publication of *Plains of Promise* that established her reputation and career as a

novelist. She went on to write the very successful *Carpentaria*, which was the recipient of a Literature Board subsidy in 2005 and was published by Giramondo in 2006. *Carpentaria* won the 2007 Miles Franklin Literary Award, as well as the Australian Literature Society Gold Medal, the Victorian Premier's Literary Award for Fiction, the Queensland Premier's Literary Award for Fiction and the Australian Book Industry Awards Literary Fiction Book of the Year Award, and was short-listed for the NSW Premier's Literary Award for Fiction, the Age Book of the Year Award and the Commonwealth Writers' Prize. It sold in excess of 30,000 copies.

In the 1990s, the publishers that were participating in the subsidy program called for second works of fiction (and general literature) to be made eligible for assistance. This occurred in 1995 as a result of Rhonda Black's evaluation of the book publishing subsidies program in 1994. Publishers interviewed for that research argued that it took time for some authors to develop a readership and for their works to become commercially viable; continued assistance was therefore needed. Kim Scott's Miles Franklin Award winning novel, *Benang*, published by Fremantle Arts Centre Press with Literature Board assistance in 1999, was a second work of fiction. Kim Scott's first novel, *True Country*, was previously assisted into publication with a publishing subsidy in 1993.

The reprinting of a number of significant Australian novels was also made possible by publishing subsidies in this period. These included novels by Brian Castro and Gerald Murnane, as well as *Sugar Heaven* by Jean Devanny (Vulgar Press, 2002); *The Passage* by Vance Palmer and *Distant Land* by Judah Waten (both published by Halstead Press, 2001); *All That False Instruction* by Kerryn Higgs (Spinifex Press, 2001); *The Pea Pickers* by Eve Langley; *Come in Spinner* by Dymphna Cusack and Florence James; *Mermoid Singing and Peel Me A Lotus* by Charmian Clift; and *Clean Straw for Nothing and Cartload of Hay* by George Johnston and *Ride On Stranger* by Kylie Tennant (all published by HarperCollins in the Angus & Robertson Classics Series, 2001). Many reprints were subsidised in 2001 to 2003 with funding from the federal Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts, administered by the Literature Board, as part of the Australian Government's Centenary of Federation 'classic reprints' initiative.

Publishing subsidies have also supported the publication of a significant number of novels and other works of fiction for young adults and children. Notable examples in the 1995–2005 period include works by authors Nick Earls, Steven Herrick, James Roy, Anthony Eaton, Melina Marchetta and Romyne Weare, many of whom were first published in this period. Some children's picture books were also assisted, including several from Aboriginal Studies Press.

Poetry

Publishing subsidies are particularly important to the publication of Australian poetry, with one quarter of assisted books in this period being works of poetry. As many of the publishers we interviewed confirmed, poetry publishing in Australia is not generally a commercial enterprise and almost all poetry books require assistance of some kind. It should be noted, however, that much Australian poetry is published by very small locally based presses without the national distribution capacity to enable their eligibility for Literature Board subsidies. Most of the poetry published by companies that do have national distribution networks is assisted.

Even very well known and established poets such as Judith Beveridge, Joanne Burns, Robert Adamson, John Kinsella, Gig Ryan, Sarah Day, Lee Cataldi, Alan Wearne and Peter Rose continue to be assisted with Literature Board publishing subsidies and, in some cases, with individual writers' grants throughout their careers.

Judith Beveridge, for example, is a successful mid-career poet who has produced four collections of poetry, two of which have won major literary awards. In the period, her third collection, *Wolf Notes*, was published by Giramondo Publishing (2003). Her poetry is studied at upper secondary school level in several states, and in tertiary courses. She is probably one of the better selling poets in Australia, yet her work continues to require subsidy. Peter Rose is another example. Also a well-known poet, all three of Rose's collections published in Australia have been assisted with Literature Board publishing subsidies, as has his British publication by UK-based Salt Publishing.

There is little doubt that Literature Board subsidies play a vital role in sustaining the publication of Australian poetry. In his interview, Giramondo publisher Ivor Indyk expanded on the nature of Australian poetry publishing, its importance to the development of poets' careers, and the important link between those careers and subsidies:

[There are] two kinds of poetry publication ... individual collections and ... selected/collected ... Individual collections rarely sell more than 500 copies ... the selected, if it hits ... the educational market, can sell 5,000–10,000 copies. But it's the individual collections that mark out the stages of a career and that are essential to the poet's development ... and they are fundamentally uneconomical without a subsidy. So, in poetry, the relationship between the subsidy and the career is absolute and direct.

As Indyk notes, the educational market is important to poetry publishers. *Wolf Notes* has been set for the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE), and is now in its third print run. Acknowledging the significance of this market, a number of the publishers we spoke with mentioned the use of photocopies in the study of poetry in schools. Schools often buy only two copies of an original book, one for teachers' use and another for the school library, and students use photocopies in the classroom. This has an obvious impact on book

sales and on the economics of poetry publishing, unless the photocopying is picked up by the Copyright Agency Limited.

Selected and collected works, that is, re-published works by poets in new collections, were ineligible for assistance by the Literature Board between 1995 and 2003. The Literature Board rationale for this was that most poetry would have been assisted into publication originally – either by publishing subsidies for individual collections or by support for the literary magazines that regularly publish poetry – and further assistance for selected or collected works was seen as 'double-dipping' (Black, 1994). The exclusion of selected or collected works from eligibility was lifted in 2003. Since then several selected works have been published with subsidies including David Brooks's *Walking to Point Clear: Poems 1983–2003* (Brandl & Schlesinger, 2005) and Andrew Sant's *Tremors: New and Selected Poems* (Black Pepper, 2007).

A number of companies specialising in the publication of poetry were active in the period 1995–2005; all were independent Australian-owned companies. These include Five Islands Press, Friendly Street Poets, Island Press and Paper Bark Press. In addition, a number of companies published significant amounts of poetry along with other genres. Such publishers include Black Pepper Press, Brandl & Schlesinger, Giramondo Publishing, Hale & Iremonger, Spinifex Press, UQP and Wakefield Press, also all independent Australian-owned companies.

Penguin Books Australia was once a major publisher of poetry in Australia – with Literature Board support – but closed its Australian Poetry Series in 1998 due to its uneconomic nature. While large publishers may release a poetry anthology or collection from time to time, in spite of the availability of subsidies, few, if any, have a commitment to the regular publication of individual collections by Australian poets.

Non-fiction

Literary non-fiction is another genre that received significant assistance from publishing subsidies in the period. The Literature Board defines literary non-fiction (which it once called 'general literature') as 'autobiography, biography, essays, histories, literary criticism or analytical prose'. An early funding guide details the types of work that are not eligible for assistance. These included 'local histories, military studies, books aimed at the educational market (primary, secondary or tertiary), instruction manuals, university theses, bibliographies, guide books, dictionaries, reprints or new editions, personal growth manuals and other how-to books, and books which are primarily transcribed interviews' (Australia Council, 1995, s. 3.26).

The majority of the literary non-fiction assisted by the Literature Board in this period is 'life writing', that is, autobiography, memoir and biography. This is a popular genre published by many Australian-based publishers. Those with significant life writing

lists that have been assisted by publishing subsidies in the period include Fremantle Press, Allen & Unwin, Penguin Books, UQP and Wakefield Press.

Literature Board subsidies have been particularly helpful in supporting the publication of life writing by Indigenous Australians; indeed, they may be said to have underpinned the establishment of this literary genre. Such works assisted in this period include Doris Pilkington's *Follow the Rabbit-Proof Fence* (UQP, 1996) and *Under the Wintamarra Tree* (UQP, 2002); Ruth Hegarty's *Is That You, Ruthie* (UQP, 1999); Herb Wharton's *Where Ya Been, Mate?* (UQP, 1996) and *Yumba Days* (UQP, 1999); *Kayang and Me* by Hazel Brown and Kim Scott (FACP, 2005); *Saltwater Fella* by John Moriarty (Penguin/Viking, 2000); *Wisdom Man* by Banjo Clark and Camilla Chance (Penguin/Viking, 2003); and *Kick the Tin* by Doris Kartinyeri (Spinifex, 2003).

Publishing subsidies have assisted the publication of other significant Australian life stories, some by writers of other genres. Consider, for example, *Rose Boys* by poet and editor Peter Rose: *Rose Boys* is part autobiography and part biography of Peter Rose's brother, cricketer and Australian Rules footballer, Robert Rose, who was seriously injured in a car accident at the height of his sporting career. He lived another 25 years as a quadriplegic. The book sold very well – over 20,000 copies – due to Australian book buyers' love of life stories, and to the renown of the Rose family in sporting circles and of Peter Rose in literary circles. In addition, the book told a frank and moving story of a family's tragedy. *Rose Boys* was joint winner, with Don Watson's *Recollections of a Bleeding Heart* (Knopf, 2002), of the National Biography Award 2003. It was short-listed for the NSW Premier's Literary Awards, Douglas Stewart Prize for Non-Fiction 2002, and won the 2001 Colin Roderick Award from the Foundation for Australian Literary Studies.

Two other noteworthy examples of Australian life writing assisted by subsidies in the period are John Hughes's collection of essays *The Idea of Home* (Giramondo, 2005) and Jacob Rosenberg's *East of Time* (Brandl & Schlesinger, 2005), both autobiographical works by writers of migrant background with sources in Eastern Europe. *The Idea of Home* won both the NSW Premier's Award for Non Fiction and the 2006 National Biography Award. *East of Time* is a lyrical work that details the early life of its author, including his working-class upbringing in pre-war Poland, incarceration in the Lodz Ghetto after the German invasion of Poland, transportation with his family to Auschwitz–Birkenau concentration camp and the deaths there of all of his immediate family. Rosenberg has been described as 'Australia's most accomplished Jewish autobiographer and a world-class figure in Holocaust literature' (Freadman, 2007, p. 87).

East of Time has sold relatively well – about 6,000 copies to date. It also won the National Biography Award in 2007 and the NSW Premier's Literary Award for Non-Fiction. It continues to sell, with a fifth reprint produced in late 2009.

Several important political biographies and memoirs were assisted in the period, including former Labor

minister John Button's *As It Happened* (Text, 1996); *Taking a Stand: Land Rights to Reconciliation* by former minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Affairs Robert Tickner (Allen & Unwin, 2001); and *The Man Time Forgot: The Life and Times of John Christian Watson, Australia's First Labor Prime Minister* by Al Grassby and Sylvia Ordonez (Pluto Press, 1999).

Other notable subsidised life writing of the period includes historian Inga Clendinnen's *Tiger's Eye: A Memoir* (Text, 2000); poet Judith Wright's autobiography, *Half a Lifetime* (Text, 1999); novelist Brian Castro's personal essays in *Looking for Estrellita* (UQP, 1999); artist Mirka Mora's *Wicked But Virtuous: My Life* (Penguin/Viking, 2000); former television presenter Patricia Newell's *The Olive Grove* (Penguin, 2000); actor and director John Bell's *John Bell: The Time of My Life* (Allen & Unwin, 2002); and artist Judy Cassab's *Judy Cassab: Diaries* (Random House, 1996).

The remainder of the non-fiction assisted in the period – around 90 titles – includes literary criticism, political and cultural studies, essays, history and travel writing.

Text Publishing was a particularly active publisher of non-fiction in this period, and the company received assistance from the Literature Board for the publication of works of history and natural history, and books on media and politics. One of these titles was *Stasiland*, by first-time author Anna Funder. Through the stories of both victims and perpetrators, this non-fiction work examines the operations of the East German secret police, the Stasi, in the period when Germany was divided into West and East German states (1949–1989). *Stasiland* is an unusual work, described as 'part journalism, part travel story' (Eltham, 2002) that provided insights into the hitherto mysterious Stasi. The book and its author received wide media coverage in Australia and overseas, and rights were sold in a number of overseas markets. In Australia *Stasiland* sold better than its publisher expected. Its initial print run was 3,000 copies and, according to the imprint page of a 2003 edition of the book, it was reprinted three times in 2002 and a second edition was published by Text in 2003, and reprinted three times in 2003. It was short-listed for the Age Book of the Year Award, the Queensland Premier's Literary Award and the South Australian Festival Award for Literature, and won the Samuel Johnson Prize for Non-Fiction in the UK.

During this time Giramondo instituted a series of essay collections by individual authors, all of which received Literature Board subsidies. In addition to John Hughes, *The Idea of Home*, the series included Louis Nowra's *Women, Chihuahuas and Me* (2005), Beverley Farmer's *The Bone House* (2005) and Gerald Murnane's *Invisible Yet Enduring Lilacs* (2005). Though the topical essay has been enjoying a certain vogue (for example Black Inc.'s *Quarterly Essay*) the genre of literary essay is less familiar. Sales for these titles were between 500–1000 copies (except for the Hughes, which had won two major prizes), prompting publisher Ivor Indyk to suggest they should be considered in the

same category as poetry titles, with the genre just as dependent on support as poetry. (See also the discussion of the essay anthology *Seams of Light* below.)

Other significant non-fiction titles assisted into publication in the period include Raimond Gaita's *A Common Humanity: Thinking about Love and Truth and Justice* (Text, 1999); *The Dig Tree: The Story of Burke & Wills* by Sarah Murgatroyd (Text, 2002); Penny van Toorn's *Writing Never Arrives Naked: Early Aboriginal Cultures of Writing in Australia* (Aboriginal Studies Press, 2006); *Ngarrindjeri Wurruwarrin: A World That Is, Was, and Will Be* by Diane Bell (Spinifex Press, 1998); and *Holding Yawulyu: White Culture and Black Women's Law* by Zohal de Ishtar (Spinifex, 2005).

Assistance to anthologies

As indicated in the interviews with publishers, anthologies are notoriously difficult for publishers to make work financially. In most cases, contributors to an anthology are paid a fee for the inclusion of their work, and the editor receives royalty payments. The costs of anthologies are substantially higher than for works by a single author, since they have the significant up-front or before sales costs of contributor fees and/or permission fees. Publishers are generally unable to recoup these additional costs through increased cover prices. In recognition of this, the Literature Board has for a long time provided a discrete publishing subsidy for anthology costs.

In spite of the difficulties, anthologies continue to be published. In the period, about 55 anthologies were assisted into print with subsidies; these were anthologies of short fiction, poetry, essays and other non-fiction by Australian writers. Many anthologies are organised around themes or have some common element. The 1996 anthology *Blur*, for instance, was published by Random House Australia and comprises short works of fiction by 31 Australian authors under the age of 35. It received a Literature Board subsidy of \$4,600 which included a specific 'anthology subsidy' of \$3,100, the remainder being a production subsidy. While a number of the contributors to *Blur* had previously published novels and poetry, many were new writers with little or no publication history. The anthology offered these young writers an early career opportunity for publication and exposure among other young and more experienced authors.

Many of the contributors to *Blur* have established successful literary careers. These include its editor, James Bradley, as well as Nick Earls, Luke Davies, Tegan Bennett, Mandy Sayer, Bernard Cohen, Mireille Juchau, Chloe Hooper, James Roy, Elliot Perlman and Christos Tsiolkas.

Risks is another anthology of short fiction – short stories and extracts from larger works in progress – also published in 1996 and assisted by a Literature Board subsidy. It was edited by Brenda Walker and published by Fremantle Arts Centre Press, which received an anthology subsidy of \$6,000 to assist with the costs of its publication. The theme of the

collection is 'risk' in a broad sense, and editor Brenda Walker writes in her introduction that she 'was hoping less for stories about acts of audacity, or characters in physical jeopardy, than for a sense of the riskiness which so much strong writing carries, whether it is traditional or experimental in form' (1996, p. 7).

In addition to its editor, Brenda Walker, contributors to *Risks* included Gail Jones, Brian Castro, Sara Dowse, Joan London, Gillian Mears, Kim Scott, Marele Day, Tom Flood, Beverley Farmer, David Brooks, John Scott, Simone Lazaroo and Carmel Bird.

Most were established, early to mid-career writers at the time that *Risks* was published; however, several, including Kim Scott and Simone Lazaroo, were relative newcomers. While most of the contributors were successful short story writers and novelists, the common element in their work is its experimental, innovative – or perhaps literary – nature. The publisher's back cover 'blurb' pitches the collection as 'new stories from fourteen of Australia's most exciting fiction writers'.

An example of another kind of anthology assisted by subsidies is *Seams of Light: Best Antipodean Essays*, a collection of essays edited by Morag Fraser and published by Allen & Unwin in 1998. The publisher received a \$3,000 anthology subsidy to assist with contributors' fees and other costs.

The unifying elements of this anthology are both the literary form, the essay and the 'antipodean' perspective of the writers. Many of the essays had appeared previously in other publications, including literary journals and newspapers. So rather than showcasing new writing, like the anthologies *Blur* and *Risks*, the function of this anthology was to bring together a selection of essays by Australian authors on a range of topics.

Other anthologies assisted in the period include collections of Australian gay writing – *Hard: Stories about Gay Men and Sex* (Allen & Unwin, 1997) and *The Penguin Book of Gay Australian Writing* (Penguin, 2002); short story anthologies, including *Penguin Summer Stories 2* (Penguin, 2000), *30 Australian Stories for Children* (Random House, 2004) and *The Gift of Story: Three Decades of UQP Short Stories* (UQP, 1998); poetry anthologies such as *Landbridge: Contemporary Australian Poetry* (FACP, 1999); and mixed works of prose and poetry, such as *Picador New Writing 3* (Pan Macmillan, 1995), *Picador New Writing 4* (Pan Macmillan, 1997) and *Fresh Cuttings: A Celebration of Fiction and Poetry from UQP's Black Writing Series* (UQP, 2003).

The authors assisted:

Publishing subsidies have assisted authors in many ways: by providing opportunities for first publication of new authors; by allowing previously published authors to build a readership over time and over a number of books; by ensuring that authors of culturally significant but not necessarily commercially successful books continue to be published; and by giving a voice in print to

Indigenous Australians and those who have come to Australia as refugees and migrants. In assisting authors, the subsidies have also assisted readers and Australian literary culture by making new, challenging, interesting and diverse books available to them.

New authors

Former UQP publisher Craig Munro remembers receiving Literature Board subsidies in the 1970s and 1980s for assistance with the publication of first books by now very successful and well-known Australian authors including David Malouf, Peter Carey, Nicholas Jose, Murray Bail and Kate Grenville. This tradition continued in the period 1995–2005 with various publishers receiving subsidies to publish first works by writers such as Christos Tsiolkas, Mireille Juchau, Linda Jaivin, Catherine Ford, Tom Gilling, Fiona Capp, Dave Warner, Alexis Wright, Georgia Blain and Melissa Lucashenko, as well as successful young adult and children's writers James Roy and Anthony Eaton.

A valuable source of new literary talent is unpublished manuscript and writers' competitions. Publishers involved with such competitions tend to rely on Literature Board subsidies to assist with the publication of the winning works and, often, of the runners-up. In fact, the connection between Literature Board publishing subsidies and the various competitions for unpublished manuscripts has been important in Australian literary culture as a means for new writers to achieve both recognition and publication.

Perhaps one of the best known competitions of this kind is the annual *The Australian/Vogel* Literary Award for an unpublished manuscript of fiction, history or biography by an Australian writer under the age of 35. Allen & Unwin guarantees publication of the winning entry, and often also publishes runners-up and other entries. In the period 1995–2005, a number of winning entries and runners-up were published with the assistance of subsidies. These include the 1995 winner, *Kindling Does for Firewood* by Richard King; the 2001 winner, *Skins* by Sarah Hay; the 2002 winner, *The Alphabet of Light and Dark* by Danielle Wood; and runners-up, *Listening for Small Sounds* by Penelope Trevor; *No Safe Place* by Mary-Rose MacColl; *The Spotted Skin* by Rowena Ivers; *The Salt Letters* by Christine Balint; and *The Water Underneath* by Kate Lyons.

The annual David Unaipon Award for unpublished Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander writers of works in any genre is supported in the same way by UQP, which also relies on Literature Board subsidies to fulfill its obligation to publish the winning entry. UQP also often uses subsidies to publish runners-up. Craig Munro told us that he thought the David Unaipon Award has 'turned up some fantastic writers'. These writers include Doris Pilkington (also known as Nugi Garimara) who won the David Unaipon Award in 1990 with her first novel, *Caprice: A Stockman's Daughter*, before going on to establish a successful literary career with *Follow the Rabbit-Proof Fence* (1996), *Under the*

Wintamarra Tree (2002), and a children's book, *Home to Mother* (2006). Doris Pilkington was made a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) in 2006 and was awarded the Australia Council's Red Ochre Award in 2008.

Wakefield Press has a similar relationship with the unpublished manuscript award which is part of the biennial Festival Awards for Literature in South Australia. Entries must be unpublished manuscripts of book-length works of fiction, non-fiction or poetry by South Australian writers. Part of the prize includes publication by Wakefield Press. Award-winning books have been assisted by publishing subsidies since the inaugural award in 2002. The author of the winning entry in 2004 (*The Goddamn Bus of Happiness*), Stefan Laszczuk, went on to win *The Australian/Vogel* Literary Award for his second novel, *I Dream of Magda*, in 2007.

In Western Australia, Fremantle Press has an agreement to publish the winning entry in the biennial T. A. G. Hungerford Award for Fiction (for unpublished manuscripts). The winning manuscripts, as well as some runners-up, have also been assisted into publication with Literature Board subsidies. Kim Scott, author of *Benang* (FACP, 1999), had his first novel, *True Country* (FACP, 1993), short-listed for the Hungerford Award in 1993 and published as a result. This marked the beginning of his literary success as an author.

UQP in particular appears to have used publishing subsidies to introduce new writers of young adult and children's fiction and thereby to maintain its strong and successful list in this area. In this period, authors Steven Herrick, Laurine Croasdale, James Roy and Anthony Eaton had their first two or three books subsidised and established a readership. Thereafter, in most cases, UQP continued to publish their works without subsidy.

Mid-career authors – and most poets

While Literature Board subsidies tend to be largely employed to assist early career authors into publication, many mid-career authors are also assisted.

A significant cohort of older authors relies on subsidies for continuing publication. These include authors whose work is critically acclaimed – indisputably literary and often innovative – but which does not sell in commercially viable numbers. Examples include Brian Castro, Gerald Murnane, Beverley Farmer, Gerard Windsor, Arnold Zable and, until recently, Alex Miller. Subsidies have been used to reprint works by some of these authors as well as to publish new works, for instance; Brian Castro's 1991 novel *Double-Wolf* (Allen & Unwin) was reprinted with the assistance of a subsidy by Lythrum Press in 2005, after the success of *Shanghai Dancing* and *The Garden Book*. Another example is Gerald Murnane's 1982 novel *The Plains*, which has been reprinted three times in Australia under different imprints. Originally published by Nostrilia Press in Melbourne, it was

later published by Penguin in 1984, McPhee Gribble (then owned by Penguin) in 1990, and most recently by Text Publishing in 2000, the last-mentioned with the assistance of a Literature Board subsidy.

A notable use of publishing subsidies in this period is the support for mid-career and established writers who produce works in a new genre; that is, those who change their literary focus. An example is Inga Clendinnen, a former academic historian who had published on Aztec and Mayan history and who in 1998 produced *Reading the Holocaust*, an exploration of holocaust experiences as recorded in memoirs, histories, poetry and film. This book was published by Text with the assistance of a Literature Board publishing subsidy. In 2000 Text published – also with assistance from a subsidy – Inga Clendinnen's *Tiger's Eye: A Memoir*, an autobiographical work that deals not only with her early life but also with her serious illness and its effect on her notion of identity. Both books were critically successful and helped to establish Clendinnen's reputation as a literary author and 'public intellectual'. Also with the assistance of a subsidy, in 2003 Text published *Dancing with Strangers*, Clendinnen's account of the first encounters of white settlers and Aboriginal people. Inga Clendinnen's shift to literary non-fiction – both autobiographical and historical – was well supported by the Literature Board and made a significant contribution to Australian literary, cultural and intellectual life.

Jacob Rosenberg, whose work was mentioned earlier, is another example. Previously a poet and writer of short prose in both Yiddish and English, he wrote his memoir *East of Time* when he was 83, and the book was assisted into publication with a Literature Board subsidy. It has also made a significant contribution to Australian literary culture, not only as a title in its own right, but in its contribution to the genres of holocaust memoir and migrant autobiography.

Another example is Peter Rose, who was an established poet by the time he published *Rose Boys* in 2001 and then his first novel, *A Case of Knives*, in 2005. Subsidies to Allen & Unwin assisted the publication of both books and supported Rose's move from poetry to both biography and fiction. Australian authors do not move between genres with the ease shown by authors in the US, for example, so that support for this kind of flexibility in mid-career authors is an important outcome of the Literature Board subsidies.

Many poets also continue to be assisted with publishing subsidies throughout their careers. Even poets as well-known and respected as the late Gwen Harwood had collections published with the assistance of subsidies in the period (*The Present Tense*, ETT, 1995). Since most individual poetry collections are not commercially viable, Australian poets are generally unable to make a living from their publications alone. Furthermore, most poets, by mid-career, have had several different publishers as commitment to poetry publishing, and the

resources supporting it, wax and wane in Australian literary culture. The constant is Literature Board support.

In Judith Beveridge's publishing career so far, for instance, she has had three different publishers for her four collections. The poet Robert Adamson, whose first collection was published in 1970, has had almost a dozen different publishers since, with many of his works assisted by publishing subsidies. Another established poet, Fay Zwicky has had eight poetry collections published by seven publishers, again with a number supported by the Literature Board. While poet Alan Wearne's two verse novels were published by Penguin Books and another by ABC Books, his three poetry collections were each published by a different publisher – Makar Press, UQP and Giramondo – the last and the first two verse novels at least, with Literature Board support.

It is clear that without the assistance of Literature Board subsidies, Australian poetry would be very much poorer. As former UQP publisher Craig Munro told us,

[Publishing subsidies] ... certainly helped poetry, there's absolutely no doubt that without the old CLF [Commonwealth Literature Fund] grants and without the Literature Board, the poetry area would be mainly self-publishing and very fugitive kinds of publishing.

Indigenous authors

The literary careers of many Indigenous authors have been greatly assisted by publishing subsidies, often in both the early and later stages of their careers. This is evident in the books subsidised in the 1995–2005 period. We have already mentioned the David Unaipon Award and its link with publishing subsidies that sees many of the winning entries and runners-up reach publication. The subsidy scheme has also supported the works of other Indigenous authors released by Australian publishers.

As mentioned previously, Kim Scott's novels *True Country* (FACP, 1993) and *Benang* (FACP, 1999) were both assisted by Literature Board subsidies, as was *Kayang and Me* (FACP, 2005), which Kim Scott co-wrote with Hazel Brown, a Wilomin Nyoongar Elder. Both of Alexis Wright's novels, *Plains of Promise* (UQP, 1997) and *Carpentaria* (Giramondo, 2006), were also subsidised, as were all three of Doris Pilkington's adult works.

Other Indigenous authors who were assisted with publishing subsidies in this period include Melissa Lucashenko, Lisa Bellar, Jackie Huggins, Herb Wharton, Vivienne Cleven, Tara June Winch, Fiona Doyle, Terri Whitebeach, Bruce Pascoe and Philip McLaren.

Subsidies assisted many other Indigenous Australians to record and publish their personal, community and family stories, adding to the enduring record of Indigenous Australian experience and enhancing non-Indigenous Australian and international understanding. Indigenous people whose stories have been recorded and published in this period with the

assistance of subsidies include Ruth Hegarty, Connie Nungulla McDonald, Banjo Clarke, Charlie McAdam and family, Florence Corrigan, Hilda Jarman Muir, Mundara Koorang, Morndi Munro, Edie Wright, Warrigal Anderson, Rosalie Medcraft and Valda Gee, Robert Lowe, Ali Drummond and Yuwali.

Authors of migrant background

Subsidies have also allowed personal stories and other literary works from migrant authors to be published and made available to the Australian reading public. In fact, quite a number of titles assisted in the period were from migrants to Australia or from first-generation Australians. Two works by Greek-Romanian migrant Antigone Kefala, *Alexia: A Tale of Two Cultures* and *The Island*, were re-published with Literature Board assistance by Owl Publishing as part of its 'Writing the Greek Diaspora' series. The young adult novella *Alexia* was first published in English in 1984 and re-published in a combined English and Greek edition in 1995. *The Island* was published originally by Hale & Iremonger in 1984 and re-published in an English-French-Greek edition in 2002. Owl Publishing also received subsidies in this period to assist with the re-publication, in English translation, of *Mery Sydney* by Dimitris Tzoumaccas (2004; first published 1988) and a collection of poetry in both English and Greek, *The Bird, the Belltower: Poems* by Peter Lyssiotis (2005).

Mention should also be made of Catherine Rey's *The Spruiker's Tale*, a prize-winning novel published originally in French in 2003 (as *Ce que racontait Jones*). Rey has dual French and Australian citizenship, and the publication of the book, in a translation by author and critic Andrew Riemer, was supported by both a French government translation grant and a Literature Board publishing subsidy. Rey had already published five novels in French when *The Spruiker's Tale* was published by Giramondo in 2005: it established her as an Australian writer, an identification later consolidated with the publication of *Stepping Out* (Giramondo, 2008), which was supported by Literature Board grants under both the publishing subsidies and LOTE (Languages Other than English) funding schemes.

Among the many other significant works of migrant Australian authors assisted by subsidies in this period are Jacob Rosenberg's *East of Time and Loaded* by Christos Tsiolkas, as well as *Playing Madame Mao* by Lau Siew Mei (Brandl & Schlesinger, 2000); *White Turtle* by Merlinda Bobis (Spinifex Press, 1999); *No* by George Papaellinas (Random House, 1997); *Mortal Divide: The Autobiography of Yiorgos Alexandroglou* by George Alexander (Brandl & Schlesinger, 1997); *Last Walk in Naryshkin Park* by Rose Zwi (Spinifex Press, 1997); *Behind the Moon* by Hsu-Ming Teo (Allen & Unwin, 2005); *The Year the Dragon Came* by Sang Ye (UQP, 1996); *The Harbour*, poems by Dimitris Tsaloumas (UQP, 1998); *Dora B: A Memoir of My Mother* by Josiane Behmoiras (Penguin, 2005), and

The Rooms in My Mother's House by Olga Lorenzo (Penguin, 1996).

The publication of such works relies on Literature Board assistance, and publishers are encouraged by the subsidy program to publish writing of this kind. The writers are generally new to Australian readers and may therefore not have an established market; some have unfamiliar and possibly challenging voices and approaches to storytelling. The published works by migrant writers enrich and extend Australian literary culture significantly by contributing to its diversity, inclusiveness and richness.

Women's writing

Although rarely singled out for special consideration by Australian publishers in the ten-year period 1995–2005, women's writing as a category also warrants mention. We estimate that 48 per cent of the titles subsidised in the period were by women writers. This represents a significant shift from the status of women's writing in the 1970s and 1980s, when it was notoriously difficult for women writers to find publication outlets, and literary anthologies rarely included the voices of women.

The contribution of Spinifex Press to the publication of women's voices is notable in this respect. Active for nine of the ten years in applying for subsidies, Spinifex Press published women's writing across a wide range of genres in the period, particularly in the categories of poetry, fiction, short fiction, young adult fiction, autobiography and non-fiction. Its non-fiction titles tackled a wide range of subjects, from the politics of medical eugenics to white culture and Black women's law, to pornography and domestic violence, to ecofeminism and biodiversity. Supported titles included several books by Indigenous authors: *Kick the Tin*, by Doris Kartinyeri, the story of a member of the Stolen Generation who was institutionalised in Colebrook Home, and *Trauma Trails: Recreating Song Lines* by Judy Atkinson on the problems of generational trauma, particularly that caused by abuse, alcoholism and drug dependency.

Critical reception and success

There are a number of ways to judge a particular book's success when this is taken as a measure of the effectiveness of publishing subsidies. The most obvious indicators of commercial success are sales figures. However, these figures do not necessarily indicate critical success, quality or the literary significance of a book. For this we look to book reviews and critical reputation – that is, the opinions of informed literary critics and scholars – and the performance of books in literary awards.

Sales

Sales figures are not always made available by publishers. For our case studies, we sought sales information but have not received it for some books. In those cases where no sales figures are

available, we have provided publicly accessible information on print runs to indicate the possible extent of sales (assuming that publishers only print more books when their supply is exhausted). This is obviously not an accurate gauge of sales but goes some way to indicating commercial success.

In addition, sales figures as indicators of commercial success are relative and differ from publisher to publisher, depending on their scale, the nature of their publishing, and their expectations. Small independent companies may consider success to be sales of, say, 2,000–3,000 copies of a book, while larger more commercially orientated publishers would regard that number of sales as moderate, or even unsuccessful. Sales as an indicator of success also differ according to genre – poetry sales for all publishers, for instance, are usually relatively low, often under 500 or at best 1,000 copies, while sales for novels and non-fiction are expected to be higher. Sales are therefore not an objective measure of commercial success, applicable equally to all Australian publishers or to all genres.

The most commercially successful books among our case study subjects are those which became the basis for feature films: *Loaded* by Christos Tsiolkas, on which the film *Head On* was based, and *Follow the Rabbit-Proof Fence*, by Doris Pilkington from which the film *Rabbit-Proof Fence* was made. Both films enjoyed commercial success, and film tie-in versions of the books were produced and contributed to the very high sales of both books: over 60,000 copies were sold in the case of *Follow the Rabbit-Proof Fence* and over 30,000 copies of *Loaded* sold.

In relation to sales of poetry books among the case studies, Giramondo publisher Ivor Indyk informed us that Judith Beveridge's collection *Wolf Notes* has been the company's bestselling single poetry collection to date with 2,000 copies sold and a third print run recently ordered. This has been due to its adoption for study for the VCE in 2008–2012. Ivor Indyk also mentioned that Giramondo's single-author poetry collections usually sell between 300–600 copies. In the case of Peter Minter's *Empty Texas* (Paper Bark Press, 1999), the initial print run of 1,000 copies has sold out, and the book is no longer available for purchase. Susan Hampton's *The Kindly Ones* (Five Islands Press, 2005) had a typical print run of 500 copies, which sold but, despite multiple prize listings and a wide range of reviews, was not reprinted. Alan Wearne's verse novel *The Lovemakers: Book One* (Penguin, 2001) fared poorly in the market, despite the success of his earlier verse novel *The Nightmarkets*, and with only 1,200 copies of its 2,600 print run sold, the book was pulped shortly after it won the NSW Premier's Award.

Success in literary awards can also make a significant difference to sales of winning and/or short-listed books. In the case of Kim Scott's novel *Benang* (FACP, 1999), sharing the Miles Franklin Literary Award in 2000 had a significant impact on its sales. The initial print run was 3,000 copies; it was reprinted three times in 2000, has sold about

18,000 copies to date and the book remains in print. Alexis Wright's first novel, *Plains of Promise* (UQP, 1997), although it won no awards, was short-listed for several and sold relatively well. It is also likely that the success of Alexis Wright's second novel, *Carpentaria*, sparked an interest in her work and had an impact on the sales of her earlier novel. The Miles Franklin Award is recognised by publishers as the only Australian literary prize capable of boosting the sales of a winning title by tens of thousands of copies. The state Premier's awards and regional prizes have a more modest effect – in the hundreds rather than the thousands – and often have no influence on sales beyond their regional boundaries. Several of the publishers we spoke with believed that the proliferation of book awards has lessened their positive impact on sales.

The anthologies for which we prepared case studies had lower sales than most of the novels mentioned above. *Seams of Light* (Allen & Unwin, 1998), for instance, sold slightly over 2,000 of the 3,000 copies printed (though publisher Patrick Gallagher regarded it as having 'done well'). *Risks* (FACP, 1996) sold 2,700 of its first and only print run of 3,000 and was considered 'a modest success' even though its publisher thought it 'did not do quite as well as we had hoped' (Newman, 2009). Although 4,000 copies of *Blur: Stories by Young Australians* were printed it has not been possible to confirm sales figures.

Reviews

Not all books published are reviewed, in spite of the efforts of publishers. Reviews are both a means of publicising the release of a book and having a book evaluated publicly, usually by an informed critic. Even a poor review, one that is negative about an aspect or aspects of a book, can function to promote interest and curiosity. However, most publishers hope for positive critical reviews in order to encourage higher sales and to build the author's – and the publisher's – reputation. Notwithstanding the promotional function of reviews, even very positive reviews do not necessarily result in increased sales. In other words, critical success does not always produce commercial success, and vice versa.

In general, the major public review sites in Australia are national and capital city newspapers, and specifically the weekend editions of those newspapers, as well as *The Australian Review of Books* (issued monthly with *The Australian*) and the *Australian Book Review*. Book reviews also appear in magazines and journals – popular, literary, specific interest and academic – and online.

So limited are the number of book reviews published in Australia that it is likely that many of the books assisted by publishing subsidies did not receive any reviews. However, all of the books we have selected for case studies were reviewed and each case study includes an overview of the critical reception of the book concerned. This aims to demonstrate the importance of taking critical

recognition into account in assessing the efficacy of Literature Board subsidies, regardless of whether this recognition has commercial consequences.

Literary awards

Literary awards provide an indication of the esteem in which a prize-winning or short-listed book is held, and reflect a particular kind of critical or literary achievement. Most awards are judged by established and respected critics, writers, academics or others with literary expertise. This helps to maintain the credibility and prestige associated with the major awards. This prestige is encouraged and sustained by many participants in the literary world, including authors, publishers, booksellers and arts funding bodies, many of whom benefit directly from awards – through cash payments, the potential for increased sales and enhanced reputations.

As a measure of the effectiveness of Literature Board publishing subsidies, we have examined the number of major awards won by books assisted with subsidies in the period 1995–2005. While there is a plethora of literary awards in Australia, we have assembled a list of what we consider to be the major Australian – and relevant international – literary awards. The major awards include the Commonwealth Writers' Prize, the Miles Franklin Literary Award, the state Premiers' and other state-based awards, and a number of other specialist awards, including those discussed earlier for unpublished manuscripts and authors (for a full list, see Appendix E).

As well as identifying the number of major award-winning books assisted in the period, we have also tried to identify those assisted books that were short-listed for major awards (this includes runners-up, finalists or highly commended entries). This is more difficult to assess as short-lists for previous years' awards are not generally maintained on award websites; we have used *AustLit: The Australian Literature Resource* as an additional source of information for awards. However, the short-listing information we present here may be incomplete.

Of the 884 books assisted into publication with Literature Board publishing subsidies in the period, 88 – or almost 10 per cent – won major literary awards. A further 132 (about 15 per cent) were short-listed for those awards. In total, almost a quarter of all of the books subsidised in the period – 220 – either won or were short-listed for major awards. This is strikingly similar to the findings of research carried out in 1994 by Rhonda Black, and referred to earlier. The 1994 research found that of the books subsidised by the Literature Board between 1988 and 1992, 11 per cent won state or national literary awards and fourteen per cent were runners-up.

In 2000, the subsidised book *Benang: From the Heart* by Kim Scott was co-winner (with Thea Astley's *Drylands*) of the Miles Franklin Literary Award, arguably the most prestigious Australian award. In the period 1995–2005, twelve subsidised

books won NSW Premier's Literary Awards, while seventeen were short-listed for those awards. Twelve subsidised books won Queensland Premier's Literary Awards and a further seven were short-listed. In the Victorian Premier's Awards of the period, six assisted books won and eleven were short-listed; and the biennial Festival Awards in South Australia had seven subsidised winners and eighteen runners-up. Three subsidised titles won the National Biography Award in the period.

It is not surprising that subsidised poetry titles did very well in all of the major awards since much Australian poetry is assisted into publication by subsidies.

While no assisted titles won major international awards in the period, eight were short-listed for the Commonwealth Writers' Prize in the South-East Asia and Pacific Region; and four were 'long-listed' for the International IMPAC Dublin Literary Award.

Rights sales: overseas markets, translations, other formats

Rights trade is another indication of the critical and commercial success of a book. This can include the sale of overseas rights to English-speaking markets, translation rights and/or the sale of rights for reproducing a work in other formats. Limited rights can also be sold for the use of an author's work in a radio or television broadcast and in an anthology. Rights sales can be negotiated either by a book's publishers or by an author or an author's agent, and can result in significant additional income for an author and agent or publisher.

While rights have been sold for many of the books assisted by publishing subsidies, this is often difficult to ascertain unless other versions or formats of the book have been produced and are listed in literary databases (such as *AustLit*), bibliographies or catalogues. We have tried to identify the sale of rights for each of the case study books (see the case studies for full details).

In terms of overseas rights sales, the most successful book among the case study subjects is Doris Pilkington's *Follow the Rabbit-Proof Fence*. This book sold into markets in the US, China, Turkey, Germany, the Netherlands, France, Italy, Japan and Sweden – and was translated into the languages of those markets. In fact, the book proved so popular that its original publisher, UQP, could not manage the demand and licensed the rights to Miramax and Hyperion in the US.

Anna Funder's *Stasiland* also sparked significant international interest and overseas market rights sold widely. The book was published in the UK, the Netherlands, Germany, Denmark, Portugal, Slovenia, Italy, Poland and Spain.

Other books among the case study subjects for which international rights were sold include Jacob Rosenberg's *East of Time*, which sold into the US, Israel and Poland; *Loaded* by Christos Tsiolkas sold into the UK, Germany, Greece and the Czech Republic; *Benang* by Kim Scott sold into France; the Netherlands and Germany; *Plains of Promise* by

Alexis Wright was published in France; *White Turtle* by Merlinda Bobis was published in the US; and *The Lovemakers* by Alan Wearne has been published in the UK.

A number of the case study books were produced as audiobooks in Australia, either by ABC Books or Louis Braille Audio. These include *East of Time*, *Follow the Rabbit-Proof Fence*, *Stasiland* and *Rose Boys*.

Stasiland was also produced in Australia as a Reader's Digest condensed book in 2006.

Loaded and *Follow the Rabbit-Proof Fence* both had film rights sold. Several other books assisted with Literature Board subsidies in the period were adapted for film or television, including Shane Maloney's *The Brush-Off* (Text, 1996), which was made into a mini-series of that title for television in 2004, and Georgia Blain's first novel *Closed for Winter* (Penguin, 1998), which was the basis for a 2009 film of the same name.

The poetry books among the case studies – *Wolf Notes* by Judith Beveridge, *Empty Texas* by Peter Minter, *The Kindly Ones* by Susan Hampton and *The Lovemakers Book One* by Alan Wearne – all had individual works or extracts anthologised, recorded or broadcast. Poems from both *Wolf Notes* and *The Kindly Ones* were recorded on CD by River Road Press. *The Kindly Ones* was recorded in full and released as a CD of the same title in 2008, while some of the poems from *Wolf Notes* were incorporated in *Cut by Stars* (2007), a spoken word CD that includes selected works from all of Judith Beveridge's published collections. Both were recorded and produced by Carol Jenkins for River Road Press (River Road Press, 2006).

Educational adoptions and reading groups

The extent to which books are adopted or set for study in educational institutions may be regarded as another indicator of esteem or success. Again, educational settings are difficult to identify since all

Australian states and territories have different primary and secondary school curricula, and universities and other tertiary education institutions have varied text settings. NSW Higher School Certificate (HSC) and Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) settings have the greatest impact in terms of numbers of students reached and of sales of books. While details of current and recent HSC and VCE settings are readily available, past settings are unavailable. It is likely, therefore, that our information on these educational settings is incomplete.

Several of the case study subjects were studied in part or full by HSC and VCE students. These works include *Wolf Notes* by Judith Beveridge; *Stasiland* by Anna Funder; *Benang* by Kim Scott and *Rose Boys* by Peter Rose. *Follow the Rabbit-Proof Fence* by Doris Pilkington and the film *Rabbit-Proof Fence* have both been studied extensively throughout Australia at upper secondary level.

Those works studied at tertiary level include *Benang*, *Rose Boys*, *Plains of Promise* by Alexis Wright and *Loaded*.

Many of the case study books have also been popular choices for both formal and informal book discussion groups. Stefan Laszczuk's *The Goddamn Bus of Happiness* was selected for inclusion in South Australia's 'The Advertiser Big Book Club' (part of a national joint initiative of the Australia Council, state governments and private sector companies to promote literature, reading and book discussion). Reading group notes have been published by the Victorian Centre for Adult Education for *Stasiland* and for *Rose Boys*, and publisher Allen & Unwin has also posted *Notes for Reading Groups: Rose Boys* on its website. According to its publisher Veronica Sumegi, *East of Time* by Jacob Rosenberg has also been a popular choice for book discussion groups. Book club and discussion group selection expand both the readership and sales of selected books and enhance the literary reputations of authors and publishers.

Conclusions

This research demonstrates that the provision of publishing subsidies by the Literature Board in the 1995–2005 period played a significant role in Australian literary publishing during that time and made an important contribution to Australian literary culture. Australian-based publishing companies applied subsidies to books that otherwise might not have been published, and many of those books were critically and financially successful. The subsidies sustained a number of small publishing companies, the publishing of poetry and other commercially marginal literature and authors. Subsidies also encouraged the publication of first-time authors and a variety of literary works with uncertain markets.

The publishers interviewed were unequivocal about the positive value of publishing subsidies in encouraging or making possible the publication of literary titles, including poetry, which did not have a substantial or known commercial market. All of the publishers interviewed expressed their support for the subsidy program. Even those who represented companies that did not participate regularly, or had stopped participating in the scheme, valued the existence of subsidies and recognised the continuing need for them.

The financial value of the contribution, or the financial effectiveness of the subsidies to publishing companies, depended on the size and nature of the company. For small publishers with relatively few resources, low turnovers and profits, subsidies were essential to their ability to continue publishing. It was noted that the subsidy scheme was particularly valuable to publishing companies starting up with little or no capital and no backlist. While larger companies did not depend on subsidies for their publishing program, the subsidies provided an incentive, or at least encouragement, to publish literary books that might otherwise not have been released.

Subsidies functioned to alleviate some of the financial pressures on publishers of all kinds. The result was increased diversity among Australian publishing companies. In particular, subsidies made it possible for a range of small publishing enterprises to continue to publish in their particular areas of interest, and for others to emerge and begin publishing books in the period.

All of the publishers interviewed agreed that subsidies allowed them, at least to some extent, to weigh their publishing decisions differently, to focus less on commercial criteria, and to publish unknown or first-time authors, innovative literary forms and styles, and books with small target audiences.

The titles assisted during the period included works by emerging authors, regional authors, Indigenous and migrant authors. Subsidies have allowed for the representation in book form of minority and non-mainstream interests and, in some cases, have given a voice in print to those without previous access to resources to have their stories told. In the period, subsidies supported, in particular, the publication of a significant amount of life writing and other works by Indigenous authors and by those who have come to Australia as refugees and migrants.

Australia does not have the population to support large and commercially viable niche publishing as exists in the United States. Therefore works that appeal to non-mainstream interests – whether they be migrant, Indigenous, gay and lesbian, regional or rural – require continuing assistance. This support not only meets various community needs, but also contributes to maintaining a rich and diverse Australian literary culture.

It is clear that subsidies played a major role in sustaining the publication of poetry at a national level. That a quarter of the books supported by subsidies in the period were works of poetry demonstrates the significance of subsidies to Australian poetry publishing. Few Australian poets are able to build a market for their works to enable publication independent of subsidy. Most poets, including those who enjoy significant critical success, require the continuing support of publishing subsidies throughout their careers.

Publishing subsidies have also sustained the publication of short fiction, essay collections, works of an explicitly experimental nature and literary anthologies.

The Literature Board subsidies played an important role in starting literary careers. That the majority of the works of fiction subsidised in the period were first novels demonstrates this. As many publishers noted, and the case studies demonstrate, a subsidy can underwrite the risk of publishing unknown authors with no established market and can provide the foundation on which their reputations as Australian authors will be built.

Subsidies also helped maintain the careers of established authors who had considerable literary reputations, but who were not commercially successful. In this role subsidies ensured the continued publication of high-quality and original writing, irrespective of its short-term commercial potential.

Subsidised books in the period performed well in major literary awards. Almost a quarter of the total

number of assisted books won or were short-listed for awards. These listings are an indication of the literary quality of the titles subsidised by the scheme. The success of subsidised books in awards in the period 1995–2005 is almost the same as for the 1988–1992 period studied in previous research (Black, 1994) suggesting that this 25 per cent success rate may be a benchmark or a continuing expectation for the future. The critical response to these and other titles, as portrayed in the case studies, is a further indication of the contribution made by the scheme to the continuity of Australian literature.

While the subsidies were effective in the period, it is apparent from the research that with a number of changes the publishing subsidy program could be more effective, both critically and financially, and could make a greater contribution to Australian literary culture than it has to date.

In view of the contribution made by the supported publishers to Australian literature during the period it should be noted that the actual support given in the form of subsidies was very low. In 2005 for example, the maximum amount a publisher could apply for was \$28,000 for seven titles. In practice, publishers generally received less than this amount. This was roughly the same as the maximum subsidy offered twenty years earlier, in 1985. Production costs during this time have risen in the order of 300–400%. The static nature of the subsidies over a long period, and their diminution in value, was widely noted.

The publishing subsidy program is also very small in relation to the Literature Board's total funding budget: in the 1995–2005 period it represented an annual average of 5.7 per cent of its total funding budget, or slightly less than \$250,000 per annum. As one of the interviewed publishers, Craig Munro, pointed out, there is a sense in which the Literature Board's primary aim is to serve authors, through direct funding to them. Authors largely constitute the membership of the Board itself. The importance of the publishing infrastructure, which ensures that authors find a readership, might be recognised more fully if there was a stronger representation of literary publishers on the Board.

Most of the publishers we interviewed believed that the level of subsidies should increase – and increase significantly. Some also argued that the value of subsidies had declined appreciably in the period under consideration and that their effectiveness was therefore lost or seriously reduced to the point where they were barely worth applying for.

A significant number of publishers felt constrained by the title-by-title system of allocating subsidies and suggested that the subsidy scheme would be more effective if publishers were to receive a block grant to support their literary publishing programs rather than individual titles. This would allow publishers to act strategically in their use of Literature Board funding, and to put part of their grant towards infrastructure development and promotion. To be effective, these block grants would have to be substantially larger, and

administered over a longer period of acquittal, than is the case under the present system of annual subsidies.

A number of small publishers argued for a review of the eligibility criterion restricting subsidies to single-author titles. The majority of these respondents published Indigenous literature, where collaboratively or communally authored works are common. The publishers who raised this issue maintain that such works were ineligible for subsidy because eligibility for Literature Board subsidies is limited to one or a maximum of two authors, except in the case of anthologies. (No mention of this restriction is made in the current Literature Board guidelines, but this could be an issue that requires clarification.)

The need for flexibility was also emphasised with respect to timelines (again in relation to Indigenous publishing), the mandatory royalty rate of 10 per cent, and the size of minimum print runs, especially in view of the increasing use of print-on-demand as a mode of publication.

Some publishers were frustrated by the all-art-forms approach to the administration of subsidies by the Literature Board, and believed that the acquittal process and form should be more suited to literary funding. Acquittals, for instance, were generally due before a book had had the opportunity to sell or be reviewed or judged in literary awards.

It was widely felt that the effectiveness of publishing subsidies could be improved by the Literature Board actively promoting its association with successful books and publishers, and in this way publicising the success of its funding scheme as a whole. Publishers and authors generally regard the application of the Australia Council logo to their books as a mark of quality, and would support a campaign to promote the logo to the wider public as such. This would add value to the funding relationship and would benefit the supported books, their publishers and authors, the Literature Board, and the Australia Council more broadly.

The fact that all Australian-based publishers are eligible for subsidies, irrespective of their ownership, was an issue raised by many of the publishers interviewed. Small independent publishers in particular expressed resentment that multinational companies remained eligible for this kind of funding. Given the limited budget allocated to publishing subsidies, many publishers felt that multinational and non-Australian owned companies should be excluded from the program. Several referred to the Canadian practice of limiting subsidies to Canadian-owned companies, and to what they saw as the resulting vigour and pride of Canadian literary publishing.

It is possible that this contentious issue will be resolved by the multinational companies voluntarily withdrawing from participation in the subsidy scheme, as has occurred with Penguin Books, Pan Macmillan and Random House in recent years. On the other hand, the fact that an Australian publisher is foreign-owned doesn't necessarily

mean that it can or should do without Literature Board support if it has a publishing program that is clearly of benefit to Australian literature, nor does it necessarily imply that its commitment to the 'difficult' literary genres of Australian literature will be less than that of its Australian-owned counterparts.

This report doesn't make a recommendation in relation to the funding of foreign-owned Australian publishing companies, but would suggest that the quality of the publisher's program, and the means at its disposal to implement this, should be the primary considerations for funding.

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Appendix A.

Case studies

Benang (fiction)
East of Time (non-fiction)
Empty Texas (poetry)
Follow the Rabbit-Proof Fence (non-fiction)
Loaded (fiction)
Plains of Promise (fiction)
Rose Boys (non-fiction)
Stasiland (non-fiction)
The Goddamn Bus of Happiness (fiction)
The Kindly Ones (poetry)
The Lovemakers: Book One (poetry)
Three Anthologies: Blur, Risk, Seams of Light
White Turtle (short stories)
Wolf Notes (poetry)

Benang: From the Heart

Published in 1999 by Fremantle Arts Centre Press, Kim Scott's novel *Benang: From the Heart* tells a story of Aboriginal identity and survival in Western Australia in the face of official and other efforts to 'breed out' the Aboriginal race. The novel focuses on one man, 'the first white man born' from Aboriginal and European forebears.

In the 1998/99 financial year, Fremantle Arts Centre Press received \$19,500 from the Literature Board in publishing subsidies. Of this, \$3,000 was earmarked for *Benang*. The total subsidies assisted with the production costs of six titles including the poetry anthology *Landbridge: Contemporary Australian Poetry*, edited by John Kinsella; a biography of John Fawcett, *Water from the Moon* by Scott Bevan; *The Prowler*, a novel by Marion Campbell; *Grappling Eros*, a short story collection by John Kinsella; *Watersky*, a novel for young adults by Terry Whitebeach; and *Benang: From the Heart* (Australia Council, 1999, p. 140).

Fremantle Arts Centre Press (FACP, now known as Fremantle Press) was established in 1976 to publish and promote the works of Western Australian authors and artists. It has expanded over the years and is now a major Western Australian independent publishing company producing around 25–30 new titles each year. In the 1990s FACP introduced the Sandcastle

imprint for children's picture books and in 2007 it was restructured and became Fremantle Press. Fremantle Press is supported by the WA government through a general purpose grant from ArtsWA.

Benang: From the Heart was released in April 1999 in a B-format paperback of 502 pages with an initial print run of 3,000. It was reprinted three times in the following year and, according to Clive Newman of Fremantle Press, has now sold around 18,000 copies in Australia and remains in print (2009a).

Clive Newman remembers selecting *Benang* for Literature Board assistance: 'We said, this is going to be a groundbreaking book, it's going to be expensive to publish, it's sure to get Literature Board subsidy.' Clive Newman believes that *Benang* would have been published even if hadn't received a subsidy; however, the subsidy 'made it much easier to do, and to do in the manner we did it – to publish it well' (2009a).

Benang was reviewed within its first year in print in the *Canberra Times*, the *Sydney Morning Herald*, *The Australian's Review of Books*, the *Weekend Australian*, the *Australian Book Review* and literary journals *Southerly*, *Westerly*, *Meanjin* and *Imago: New Writing*. On the announcement of *Benang* as joint winner of the 2000 Miles Franklin Award more media and journal articles about the book and its author appeared.

In the following years – and to date – *Benang* has remained the subject of academic teaching and research, particularly in the study of post-colonialism, Indigenous identity, 'whiteness', Australian history and Indigenous policy.

Most critics responded very favourably to the book. For instance, the *Age* reviewer writes of Kim Scott's 'complex, sometimes lyric prose' (2000). Gerry Turcotte, reviewing the book in the *Sydney Morning Herald* was one of the most enthusiastic critics: '*Benang* is brilliant. It is a mature, complex, sweeping historical novel which will remind many of Rushdie, Carey and Grenville at their best' (1999). Anita Heiss, writing in *Southerly*, agreed: 'The way in which Scott has written *Benang* is nothing short of brilliant. His use of personal narrative as well as historical documents is compelling' (1999, p. 191).

Some reviewers found it a difficult book for its multiple narrative modes, its length and its use of allegory. Philip Morrissey refers to the 'respectful but sometimes puzzled reception of *Benang*' (2000, p. 320), while *The Australian's Review of*

Books describes *Benang* as 'a complicated, challenging and sometimes frustrating book'. It continues, 'Scott's narrative technique creates a sense of everything happening at once ...' (Chynoweth, 1999, p. 24). John Donnelly, in the *Australian Book Review*, calls *Benang* 'an ambitious and problematical work, a work – like its country – struggling to tell its story' (1999, p. 30).

Beyond the issue of its language and structure, *Benang* was acclaimed for the nationally significant story it tells. It appeared within two years of the release of the devastating *Bringing Them Home* report detailing evidence from the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from their Families (1997). *Westerly* reviewer Jan Teagle Kapetas writes, '*Benang* is much more than social history, it's a wonderfully poetic novel, a lyrical layered text, full of terrible truths quietly sung' (Kapetas, 1999). Carmel Bird, editor of *The Stolen Children – Their Stories* (Random House, 1998), describes *Benang* as 'a work of deep, disturbing and dangerous necessity' that 'plunges its readers into the emotional and historical truths of "half-caste" Australia' (Bird quoted in Sullivan, 2000).

With *Benang*, Kim Scott was the first Aboriginal writer to win the Miles Franklin Literary Award, albeit as joint winner with Thea Astley (for *Drylands*). *Benang* also won the Western Australian Premier's Fiction Award 1999 and the Kate Challis RAKA Award for Creative Prose, 2001. It was also short-listed for the 2001 Tasmanian Pacific Region Prize.

Benang has been translated into French (Actes Sud, 2002), Dutch (Uitgeverij de Geus, 2003), and Chinese (Chongqing Chu Ban She, 2003).

Benang was set as a literature text for study in the Victorian Certificate of Education in the 2005–2007 period. It has also been studied at tertiary level since 2002 and is set for courses at, for example, the University of Western Australia and the University of NSW (Newman, 2009b).

An extract from *Benang* appears in the *Macquarie PEN Anthology of Aboriginal Literature* (2008), edited by Anita Heiss, Peter Minter and Nicholas Jose.

Author's literary career

Kim Scott, a Nyoongar man, was born in Perth in 1957. After studying at Murdoch University, he worked as a teacher in urban, rural and remote secondary schools. He is a poet and writer.

Scott's first published works were poems that appeared in magazines and journals in the mid-1980s. His first novel, *True Country*, was published by FACP in 1993 after being short-listed for the T. A. G. Hungerford Award, a biennial award for an unpublished work of fiction by a Western Australian author who has not previously been published in book form. *True Country* was assisted into publication with a Literature Board publishing subsidy to FACP. It was a critical success and sold relatively well.

In 1996, 'The First One', an extract from a work in progress that was to become *Benang*, was included in the short story anthology *Risks*, edited by Brenda Walker and published by FACP. Scott's second novel, *Benang*, appeared in 1999.

Scott also writes for children and participated in 2000 in a joint collection of children's stories, *From Two Islands: Stories from Ireland and Australia*, which was published in Australia by FACP and in Ireland by Wolfhound Press. In 2001 Scott collaborated with artist Peter Kendall on a children's picture book, *The Dredgersaurus*, released by FACP under its Sandcastle imprint.

In 2005, Kim Scott worked with Nyoongar elder Hazel Brown to create *Kayang and Me*, a biography / family history of the Wilomin Nyoongar people. This was also published by FACP and assisted with a Literature Board subsidy.

Scott has also received several writers' grants from the Literature Board to support his work: a Category B Fellowship (for developing writers) in 1993/94 and New Work, Developing Writers Grants in 1998/99 and 2003/04. He has gone on to become an established and respected writer who was provided with a first – and second – opportunity for publication of his novels through the Literature Board's publishing subsidies.

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East of Time

Brandl & Schlesinger published *East of Time*, an autobiographical work by Jacob Rosenberg, in August 2005. It was assisted into publication by a publishing subsidy from the Literature Board of the Australia Council.

Brandl & Schlesinger received a publishing subsidy of \$16,000 from the Literature Board to assist with the production costs of four titles in 2005: *The Universe Looks Down*, a poetry collection by Chris Wallace-Crabbe; *Vale Byron Bay*, a crime novel by Wayne Grogan; *Contemporary Australian Drama*, a work of literary criticism by Leonard Radic; and Jacob Rosenberg's *East of Time* (Australia Council, 2006, p. 95).

Brandl & Schlesinger is a small, independent Australian-owned publishing company specialising in works of literary fiction and non-fiction, poetry, biography and memoir. Established in 1994 and now operating from the Blue Mountains in NSW, Brandl & Schlesinger currently publishes between ten and fifteen books a year.

Jacob Rosenberg had published a number of collections of poetry and short fiction prior to this autobiographical work. He was a respected, if not well-known, Australian author. There is no doubt that the publication and positive critical reception of *East of Time* enhanced his reputation as an author and exposed his work to greater numbers of readers. He was eighty-three years old when the book was published.

East of Time was released in August 2005 as a B-format (200 x 130 mm) paperback of 220 pages. Its initial print run was 1,000 copies and it has been reprinted five times, with total copies printed now totalling about 7,500.

On publication *East of Time* was reviewed in the *Age*, the *Australian Book Review*, the *Bulletin*, the *Australian Jewish News*, the *Canberra Times*, *Island* and the *Sydney Morning Herald*. In the following two years, it was reviewed in the *Journal of Australian Studies Review of Books* and the *Weekend Australian*. A biographical article, which focused on the book and its author, was published in the *Age* in 2007. *East of Time* received further critical attention when it won and was short-listed for a number of literary awards in 2006 and 2007. A more detailed and sustained critical analysis of the book is found in Richard Freadman's study of Australian Jewish autobiography, *This Crazy Thing a Life* (2007).

East of Time is an autobiographical work by a Holocaust survivor. It details the early life of its author, including working-class life in pre-war Poland, incarceration in the Lodz Ghetto after the German invasion of Poland, transportation with his family to the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp and the deaths there of all of his immediate family. Judges for the NSW Premier's Awards, Douglas Stewart Prize for Non-Fiction, described the book as 'a testimonial, a lament and a celebration' and added 'what it has to say about humanity is both terrifying and uplifting' (quoted in Bennie, 2006).

Critics concurred that the language is a central feature of the book. It is variously described as 'lyrical, poignant and tough-minded' (Bond, 2005), 'ironic, paradoxical, sceptical' (Corris, 2007), 'poetic and beautiful' and in 'a unique mode of prose poetry' (Freadman, 2007, p. 88). The structure of the book is also highlighted in reviews: it is described as 'like a mosaic' (Bennie, 2007). Its form is a series of short vignettes 'deeply influenced by Jewish scripture, Yiddish literature and folk tales' (Freadman, 2007, p. 18).

Rosenberg himself described *East of Time* as a 'rendezvous between history and imagination' and cited Italo Calvino's *Invisible Cities* as a major influence on his book's structure and style (Bennie, 2007).

East of Time won the National Biography Award 2007 and the NSW Premier's Literary Awards, Douglas Stewart Prize for Non-Fiction 2006. It was short-listed for the Victorian Premier's Literary Awards, the Nettie Palmer Prize for Non-Fiction 2006; the Festival Awards for Literature (SA), Award for Innovation in Writing 2006; the Australian Literature Society Gold Medal 2006 and the Queensland Premier's Award for Non-Fiction in 2006.

According to Veronica Sumegi (2009), Publishing Director at Brandl & Schlesinger, *East of Time* is their most commercially successful book to date. It has sold around 6,000 copies since publication.

Rights to the book have been sold to University of Alabama Press, which published a US/North American edition in April 2008. Rights have also been sold for the Israeli and Polish markets. It has been produced in Australia as a sound recording by Louis Braille Audio Books (seven cassettes/CDs).

East of Time has been a popular subject for book discussion groups throughout Australia.

Author's literary career

Jacob Rosenberg (also known as Yaakov ben Gershon Rosenberg) was born in Lodz in Poland in 1922. After surviving internment during the Second World War, he migrated to Australia in 1948. Settling in Melbourne, he worked as a tailor, businessman and writer. He contributed to Yiddish journals in Australia and overseas and published several books of poetry and short prose in Yiddish in both Israel and Australia. He began publishing in English, his third language, in the 1990s.

Jacob Rosenberg's published works in English include three collections of poetry – *My Father's Silence* (Focus, 1994), *Twilight Whisper* (Focus, 1997), *Behind the Moon* (Five Islands Press, 2000) – and one collection of short prose, *Lives and Embers* (Brandl & Schlesinger, 2003). His first extensive autobiographical prose work, *East of Time*, was published in 2005. A sequel, published in 2007 and titled *Sunrise West*, won the NSW Premier's Literary Awards, Community Relations Commission Award 2008 and the Festival Awards for Literature (South Australia), Award for Non-

Fiction 2008, and was short-listed for the NSW Premier's Literary Awards, Douglas Stewart Prize for Non-Fiction 2008.

Richard Freadman describes Rosenberg as 'Australia's most accomplished Jewish autobiographer and a world-class figure in Holocaust literature' (2007, p. 87). In his obituary for Jacob Rosenberg, who died in October 2008, poet and editor Alex Skovron (2008) observed, 'Jacob Rosenberg was a poet, storyteller and author who lived through one of history's darkest nightmares and in his writing created a passionate and unique testament.'

Rosenberg's final work, a novel, *The Hollow Tree* was published posthumously by Allen & Unwin in 2009.

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Empty Texas

Paper Bark Press published *Empty Texas* by Peter Minter in 1999. *Empty Texas* is Peter Minter's second collection of poetry and comprises three sections or sequences of poems: 'The Impossible Rule', 'Empty Texas' and 'Arriviste'.

In the 1999/2000 financial year, Paper Bark Press received a total subsidy of \$13,500 from the Literature Board to assist with the publication of four collections of poetry and one of short stories. In addition to *Empty Texas*, the other Paper Bark

Press publications assisted that year were *Wicked Heat* by Kevin Hart; *Mines* by Jennifer Maiden; *Invisible Riders* by Peter Steele; and a short story collection, *Untold Tales*, by David Malouf (Australia Council, 2000, p. 109). All four poetry titles published with assistance that year won or were short-listed for major Australian literary prizes.

Established in 1986 by poet Robert Adamson and photographer Juno Gemes, Paper Bark Press is a small, privately owned company. It has specialised in publishing the work of established Australian poets in quality productions, and has been described as a 'high-end small press' (Mead, 2000, p. 37). Although it ceased publishing in 2002, Paper Bark Press continues to distribute its titles, having published more than 30 books during its fifteen years of operation.

Empty Texas was published as a finely produced paperback of 80 pages. Its initial and only print run was 1,000 copies. It was launched, along with the other four titles listed above, in a single Paper Bark Press launch event at the Melbourne Writers' Festival in August 2000. The co-publisher Juno Gemes believes that the group launch, which included works by several well-established poets, raised awareness of Peter Minter as a relatively new talent within the Australian poetry community (2009).

It was unusual for Paper Bark Press to publish so new a writer since it had previously focused on producing the work of mid-career poets. Peter Minter was an exception, according to Juno Gemes, because he had a 'mentor-like' relationship with co-publisher and poet Robert Adamson, and the publication of *Empty Texas* came from that relationship (2009).

Empty Texas was well received by critics and won the Age Book of the Year Award, Dinny O'Hearn Poetry Prize in 2000.

The book was reviewed shortly after its publication in the *Sydney Morning Herald* and the *Age*, as well as in literary journals *Meanjin*, *Southerly* and *Overland*. It was also reviewed in the *Times Literary Supplement (TLS)*, *Antipodes* and *Eureka Street*.

In general, critics welcomed the collection with praise. The *TLS* described it as 'innovative and varied' (Matthews, 1999), while Philip Mead believes this collection established Peter Minter as 'one of the most distinctive' of the 'impressive new voices in Australian poetry' (2000). Poet and critic Pam Brown writes in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, 'This *Texas* is a place where language distils through experimentation and contemplative thought into pure poetry' (2000). Gig Ryan, in her Judge's Report for the Age Book of the Year Poetry Prize, describes *Empty Texas* as 'alert, ironic and romantic simultaneously' (2000). Louis Armand's review in *Meanjin* concludes: 'Without doubt, Minter's formal innovations place him in the advance guard of a new discursive vision of Australian poetry' (1999, p. 190).

Most critics agree that not all three sections of the collection work equally well. Both Greg McLaren writing in *Southerly* and Steven Matthews in the *TLS* see the book's central section, 'Empty Texas',

as problematic. For McLaren it is 'distancing'. He writes, 'occasionally there is a distance and detachment that ... keeps the reader from entering the poetry' (2000, p. 196). Matthews believes that the poet 'is not always successful in managing the ... tension between local "content" and potential "meaninglessness"' in that section of the book' (1999).

Overall, *Empty Texas* was greeted with enthusiasm by the critics and most would agree with Juno Gemes's assertion that it was 'a career-making book' (2009). In late 2009, *Empty Texas* is out of print.

Author's literary career

Peter Minter was born in 1967 in Newcastle, NSW of Aboriginal, English and Scottish heritage. He began writing poetry in his teens and had individual poems published in journals and magazines before his first collection, *Rhythm in a Dorsal Fin*, was published by Five Islands Press in 1995 as part of its New Poets Series. This first collection was short-listed for the NSW Premier's Literary Awards, Kenneth Slessor Prize for Poetry in 1996.

Peter Minter was initially active in the Australian poetry community as the founding editor of the journal *Varuna New Poetry* in 1994 and later as co-editor and founder of *Cordite Poetry & Poetics Review* in 1997.

'Empty Texas', the central title sequence of poems in Minter's 1999 collection, was first published in 1998 as a 24-page chapbook by Folio/Salt Publishing (Mead, 2000, p. 37). In the following year, Paper Bark Press published that sequence along with two other sequences as *Empty Texas*.

In 2000, a small selection titled *Morning, Hyphen* was published in chapbook format by Vagabond Press in Sydney. The full *Morning, Hyphen* sequence of poems was later published by Equipage Press in Britain in 2003. Peter Minter's fourth collection of poetry, *blue grass*, was published in 2006 by Salt Publishing in Britain.

Peter Minter continued his editorial activities, becoming poetry editor of *Meanjin* in 2000 (where he remained until 2005). Also in 2000 he co-edited with Michael Brennan a significant poetry anthology, *Calyx: 30 Contemporary Australian Poets*, published by Paper Bark Press. He was guest editor for two issues of *Meanjin*, a special 'Poetics' issue in 2001 and the 'Indigenous Australia' issue in 2006 (Minter, 2009).

In 2008 Peter Minter co-edited with Anita Heiss *The Macquarie PEN Anthology of Aboriginal Literature*, which was published by Allen & Unwin and by W. W. Norton in the US. For this work, Minter and Heiss were awarded the 2008 Deadly Sounds Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Music, Sport, Entertainment and Community Awards for Outstanding Achievement in Literature. Minter also worked on the editorial team of the *Macquarie PEN Anthology of Australian Literature*, published in 2009 by Allen & Unwin and in the US by WW Norton (as *The Literature of Australia*).

In parallel with his literary career, Peter Minter has maintained a career in the tertiary education sector, teaching at the University of Newcastle, the University of Western Sydney and the University of Sydney.

He has received assistance from the Literature Board in the form of writing grants: in 2001 and again in 2002 he received \$25,000 as Developing Writer's New Work Grants, and in both 2006/07 and 2007/08 he was awarded a \$30,000 Established Writer's New Work Grant.

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Follow the Rabbit-Proof Fence

Follow the Rabbit-Proof Fence by Doris Pilkington (also known as Nugi Garimara or Doris Garimara) was published by the University of Queensland Press (UQP) in 1996. *Follow the Rabbit-Proof Fence* is a biographical story about Doris Pilkington's mother, Molly Kelly, and her two cousins, and their removal as children from their home community to a mission settlement some 1,600 kilometres away in Western Australia. The story describes the girls' escape and their long journey home along the rabbit-proof fence.

In 1995/96 UQP received \$40,000 in publishing subsidies to assist with the production costs of fourteen titles across genres including poetry, memoir, anthology, fiction, young adult fiction, young adult verse and literary criticism. UQP sought and received \$1,500 to assist with production costs of *Follow the Rabbit-Proof Fence* (Australia Council, 1996, p. 92). Note that in that year – 1995/96 – UQP applied for \$60,254 from the

Literature Board and received \$40,000 in publishing subsidies.

UQP is best described as a medium-sized, independent Australian publishing company. It was established in 1948 as the University of Queensland publications department but expanded into general publishing in the 1960s. It remains housed at and supported by the University of Queensland and has been a major and respected Australian literary and scholarly publishing company since the 1970s.

Follow the Rabbit-Proof Fence was published as a B-format paperback (200 x 130 mm) in 1996. It is a relatively short book of 136 pages and includes a map, facsimiles of several documents and a 'Glossary of Marduvara Words'. It was published in the 'UQP Black Australian Writers' series with an initial print run of 2,000 copies. Its recommended retail price was \$14.95.

Very few reviews of *Follow the Rabbit-Proof Fence* appeared at the time of publication or in the subsequent six years before the film based on the book was released. Early reviews did appear in the *Sydney Morning Herald* (1996), *Antipodes: A North American Journal of Australian Literature* (1997), the Malaysian-based newspaper *New Straits Times* (1996) and in the journal *Aboriginal History* (1998). The *Sydney Morning Herald* published a feature article on the book, the story it tells and on Molly Kelly, the book's main character. The other early reviews focus on the remarkable story, with some comments on the writing, which is described both as 'simple but powerful' (Smith, 1996) and as 'hackneyed' (Simpson, 1998, p. 257). Tonya Bolden, writing in *Antipodes*, criticised the editing of the book: 'It is so ... unfortunate that *Follow the Rabbit-Proof Fence* did not have the benefit of an excellent editor' (Bolden, 1997).

More reviews appeared after the film *Rabbit-Proof Fence* was released in 2002. Many of these reiterate the positive attributes as well as the concerns of earlier reviews. Bruce Sims for instance writes, 'The story is admirable, but the execution is, in the end, rather flat.' (Sims, 2002, p. 33) An exchange of views about the film took place in the pages of Brisbane's *Sunday Mail* in 2002 after columnist Andrew Bolt published an article doubting the veracity of conditions portrayed in the film (Bolt, 2002; Olsen, 2002; Mailman, 2002).

Later criticism in literary and academic journals focused on themes in the book such as motherhood, race relations, 'Stolen Generations' policies and, more generally, Australian cultural history.

The book was adapted as a screenplay by Christine Olsen in 2001. The screenplay won both the Queensland and NSW Premiers' Awards for scriptwriting in 2001, and the Film Critics Circle of Australia, Best Screenplay – Adapted, 2002. It was published as *Rabbit-Proof Fence: The Screenplay* by Currency Press in 2002.

The resultant feature film, *Rabbit-Proof Fence*, was released in Australia in 2002. It was directed by Phillip Noyce and produced by the Australian Film Finance Corporation and the South Australian Film

Corporation (and Jabal Films, The Premium Movie Partnership, Rumbalara Films and Olsen Levy). It was distributed by the major international film company Miramax. *Rabbit-Proof Fence* won the Australian Film Institute Awards, Best Film 2002 and won and was short-listed for numerous other Australian and international film awards. The film was released in English, French, Italian and German.

UQP licensed the film tie-in edition of the book to Miramax since 'it was too big for UQP' (Abbey, 2009), and Miramax Books and Hyperion published the tie-in edition as *Rabbit-Proof Fence* in 2002.

Former UQP publisher Sue Abbey points out that the initial print run of 2,000 copies was slow to sell. However, after the release of the film in February 2002, 60,000 copies sold in the first month, and the book featured in bestseller lists in Australian newspapers throughout much of 2002.

The original UQP book, *Follow the Rabbit-Proof Fence*, has been translated into Chinese (2002), Turkish (2003), German (2003), Dutch (2003), French (2003), Japanese (2003), Italian (2004) and Swedish (2005). Audio (ABC Books) and Braille versions of the book have also been licensed.

Follow the Rabbit-Proof Fence has been adapted by Doris Pilkington as a children's book under the title *Home to Mother* with illustrations by Janice Lyndon.

Follow the Rabbit-Proof Fence has been adopted for study in secondary schools across Australia, as has the film. A number of specialist study guides for both have been published. The children's edition, *Home to Mother*, is widely used in Australian primary schools.

Author's literary career

Doris Pilkington was born in 1937 and raised in the Aboriginal mission system in Western Australia. After working as a nurses' aid and raising a family, she studied journalism and worked in film and television production.

In 1990, Pilkington won the David Unaipon Award for an unpublished fiction manuscript, which was published by UQP in 1991 as *Caprice: A Stockman's Daughter*. The David Unaipon Award, named after the first Indigenous Australian to have literary work published, has been awarded annually since 1989 to an unpublished Indigenous Australian author for a manuscript in any genre. The winner of the award receives prize money from the Queensland government and a guarantee of publication by UQP. In the twenty years since the David Unaipon Award was established, UQP has used it to identify significant writing talent. UQP receives between 20–30 entries each year and has also published some of the Award's highly commended entries (Phillips, 1998, p. 150).

Follow the Rabbit-Proof Fence was Doris Pilkington's second published book. Her third, the autobiographical *Under the Wintamarra Tree*, was published by UQP in 2002, and short-listed for the WA Premier's Book Awards in the non-fiction category in the same year.

Notably, all three of Pilkington's books have been assisted by Literature Board publishing subsidies. Former editor of the 'UQP Black Australian Writers' series Sue Abbey believes that these publishing subsidies played an important role in Doris Pilkington's development and confidence as an author. Not only did the subsidies allow for Pilkington's manuscripts to benefit from developmental editorial work, but the author herself was encouraged and 'spurred on by the funding and the awards' (Abbey, 2009).

Doris Pilkington was awarded the Order of Australia (AM) in 2006 for her service to the arts in the area of Indigenous literature. In 2008 she won the Australia Council Red Ochre Award, a \$50,000 award that 'pays tribute to an Indigenous artist for their outstanding, lifelong contribution to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts at home and abroad' (Australia Council, 2009).

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Loaded

Christos Tsiolkas' novel *Loaded* was published by Random House Australia under its literary imprint Vintage in September 1995. It was assisted by a publishing subsidy from the Literature Board of the Australia Council.

It was one of five titles in the 1995/96 financial year for which the Literature Board provided a total subsidy of \$17,018 to Random House. Of this, \$2,718 was allocated to *Loaded* to assist with production costs. The other titles subsidised were *Blur*, an anthology of short works by new writers, edited by James Bradley; *Judy Cassab: Diaries* by Australian artist Judy Cassab; *The Pleasures of Conquest*, a second novel by Yasmine Gooneratne; and *Men Love Sex*, an anthology edited by Alan Close (Australia Council, 1996, p. 92).

Random House Australia is one of nineteen companies in the international Random House Group, the largest English-language trade-publishing group in the world. The Random House Group is fully owned by the German-based multinational company Bertelsmann AG (Random House, n.d.).

Before the publication of *Loaded*, Christos Tsiolkas had published articles and short stories in journals, magazines and an anthology. *Loaded* was his first published novel and established his reputation as an author.

The novel is relatively short at 151 pages. It was first published as a B-format paperback (196 x 130 mm) with an initial print run of 6,000. According to its publisher, Jane Palfreyman, then Publishing Director at Random House Australia, *Loaded* sold well – 'around 10,000 after a year or two'. Jane Palfreyman noted that at the time there was a strong market for gay-themed books in Australia (2009).

On publication, *Loaded* was reviewed in major daily and weekend newspapers and their magazines (including the *Weekend Australian*, the *Advertiser Magazine*, the *Age*, the *Sun Herald*, the *Canberra Times*, the *Australian Magazine*), in the *Australian Book Review*, and the *Australian Bookseller & Publisher*. Interviews with the author appeared in the *Age*, *Outrage* (a magazine for lesbians and gay men) and the *Australian Book Review*.

In general, *Loaded* had a mixed critical reception. Some reviewers expressed dismay at the 'explicit descriptions of drug-taking and gay sex', as well as its 'atmosphere of nihilistic despair' (Auld, 1995), while most noted its serious engagement with notions of identity, specifically migrant, Australian – Greek, masculine, sexual and vocational identity. Many reviewers also noted the energy that propels the text, and its central character, through the 24 hours that are the book's timeframe.

The book was identified by many reviewers as an example of the then fashionable literary style variously described as 'grunge' fiction, 'grit lit' and 'dirty realism,' which is characterised by a focus on 'edgy' sex, drugs, alcohol, bodily functions and violence. Murray Waldren, writing in the *Australian Magazine* in 1995, noted that while this style of fiction was not new, 'In Australia a new generation of writers is remolding dirty realism in its own image. They're young ... they're articulate and they're unapologetically digging in the dirt' (p. 13). Along with Christos Tsiolkas, Waldren identified

Justine Ettler, Andrew McGahan and Edward Berridge as 'grunge' fiction practitioners. In the same article Random House publisher Jane Palfreyman was quoted as saying '[*Loaded*] virtually defines the genre – it's black, erotic, grunge realism ... with attitude' (p. 16).

Editor, academic and critic Ivor Indyk has remarked, '*Loaded* is a good adolescent read and is pitched at the marketplace. I thought it had no great style or complexity. It's got energy, that's all' (Bennett, 1995, p. 118).

In the years that followed its release, *Loaded* was the subject of further in-depth literary criticism, often along with other works in the 'grunge' genre. *Loaded* was also critiqued by academics and cultural theorists for its themes of identity, migrant experience, alienation and sexuality, and for its use of music.

In 1998 a feature film based on *Loaded* was released. Titled *Head On*, the film was produced by well-known Australian producer Jane Scott and directed by Ana Kokkinos from a screenplay by Andrew Bovell, Ana Kokkinos and Mira Robertson. The film was well received and its personnel won and were nominated for a number of Australian and international film industry awards.

The release of the film prompted the publication of a film tie-in edition of the book, for which sales exceeded 30,000. Both *Loaded* and the film tie-in edition, *Head On*, remained in print in 2009.

Overseas and translation rights were sold and a British edition of *Loaded* was published by Random House in 1997; a German edition titled *Unter Strom* appeared in 1998; a Greek version, *Kata metopo*, in 1999 and in 2002, a Czech translation titled *Ari* was published.

Author's literary career

The son of Greek migrants, Christos Tsiolkas was born in 1962 and raised in Melbourne. He is an active and successful novelist, scriptwriter and social and political commentator, and has recently been described as 'one of the most important writers in Australia' (Brennan, 2008).

Immediately following the publication of *Loaded*, Christos Tsiolkas published an autobiographical work with Sasha Soldatow, *Jump Cuts: An Autobiography* (1996). His second novel, *The Jesus Man*, appeared in 1999 and his third novel, *Dead Europe* (2005), won several awards, including the Fiction Prize in the Age Book of the Year Awards, 2006 and the inaugural Melbourne Prize, Best Writing Award in 2006. *Dead Europe* was also short-listed for the NSW Premier's Literary Awards, Christina Stead Prize for Fiction 2006; the Australian Literature Society Gold Medal 2006 and for the Queensland Premier's Literary Awards, Best Fiction Book 2005.

In 2009 Tsiolkas' fourth novel *The Slap* won a number of major literary awards, including the Commonwealth Writers' Prize (both for the South-East Asia and Pacific Region and the year's overall prize); the Victorian Premier's Awards, the Vance

Palmer Prize for Fiction; the Australian Book Industry Awards, Australian Book of the Year; and the Australian Literature Society Gold Medal 2008. *The Slap* was short-listed for the 2009 Miles Franklin Literary Award; the Queensland Premier's Awards, Best Fiction Book and the Colin Roderick Award 2008. It was a major bestseller.

Tsiolkas has also had considerable success as a scriptwriter. In 2009, with Andrew Bovell, Melissa Reeves, and Patricia Cornelius, he won an Australian Writers Guild (Awgie) Award for a Feature Film Screenplay Adaptation for *Blessed*. The play-script from which *Blessed* was adapted, *Who's Afraid of the Working Class* – also won awards for its writers: Tsiolkas, Andrew Bovell, Melissa Reeves and Patricia Cornelius – in 1998 and 1999. In 2002, Tsiolkas published a critical work on the Fred Schepisi film *The Devil's Playground* and completed a number of scripts for theatre and film.

Christos Tsiolkas also publishes social and political commentary in the form of essays and articles. In 2008 he contributed, along with Gideon Haigh and Alexis Wright, to a collection of essays, *Tolerance, Prejudice and Fear: Sydney PEN Voices, The 3 Writers Project*, commissioned by Sydney PEN and published by Allen & Unwin (2008).

It was not until he had had several publications that Christos Tsiolkas received, in 2003, a Literature Board Grant for Established Writers. However, the Literature Board subsidy that assisted his first novel, *Loaded*, into publication in 1995 could certainly be said to have helped establish Christos Tsiolkas's literary reputation and career.

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Plains of Promise

Plains of Promise was published in 1997 by the University of Queensland Press (UQP). It is the first novel by Alexis Wright, an Indigenous Australian of the Waanyi people of the Gulf of Carpentaria and, with a focus on several generations of Aboriginal women, tells a story of dislocation, hardship and abuse in the Queensland 'protective' mission system.

In the 1996/97 financial year, UQP was granted \$23,046 in subsidies from the Literature Board to assist with the production costs of six books. These included *Dreaming in Urban Places*, a first poetry collection by Indigenous poet Lisa Bellear, and *Accidental Grace*, a second collection of poetry by Judith Beveridge; *Trivia Man*, a first novel for young adults by Laurine Croasdale; *Paradise Misaid: In Search of the Australian Tribe of Paraguay*, a biography by Anne Whitehead; an autobiographical work, *Heaven, Where the Bachelors Sit*, by Gerald Windsor; and *Plains of Promise* (Australia Council, 1997, p. 104).

The manuscript that became *Plains of Promise* was brought to UQP by its author. The editor then entered it into the David Unaipon Award – an annual literary award for unpublished Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander writers. The work was highly commended by the Award's judges.

Plains of Promise was released in March 1997 in a B-format paperback of 304 pages with a recommended retail price of \$17.95. Its initial print run was 2,500 copies. The book was edited by Sandra Phillips, then a trainee Indigenous editor at UQP, and was produced as part of the UQP Black Australian Writers Series. Established in 1990, the Black Australian Writers Series now comprises more than 30 published books.

On its release in 1997, *Plains of Promise* was reviewed in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, the *Sunday Age*, the *Weekend Australian* and *The Australian's Review of Books*. The following year more reviews appeared in journals such as the *Journal of Australian Studies*, La Trobe University's *Meridian*, *Antipodes* and *World Literature Today*. It has since received attention in academic journals with articles that focus on various themes in the book such as 'the tropics' (Jacobs, 2003), Asian-Australian cultural alliances (Stephenson, 2003), and dispossession and cultural dislocation (Grossman, 1998).

All reviewers agree that *Plains of Promise* makes a significant contribution to Australian Aboriginal writing, and tells a harrowing story of the experiences of several generations of Aboriginal women in the Gulf country of Queensland. Lisa Bellear, writing in the *Journal of Australian Studies*, begins her review: 'This is a powerful, devastating and sensitive story ...' (1998, p. 194); while Nicholas Jose, in his review in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, writes, 'Alexis Wright has a fantastic story to tell ... and tells it with eloquence, passion and big-hearted engagement' (1997).

Several reviewers drew attention to the book's less-than-perfect editing and writing. Nicholas Jose is of

the view that 'some of the hard editorial decisions had not been taken' and that 'a first novel by as classy a writer as Alexis Wright deserves Rolls Royce treatment' (1997). Tegan Bennett in the *Weekend Australian* believes that *Plains of Promise* 'is not a great book' and that 'it's the material that makes it worth reading, not the writing' (1997).

In spite of these claims, *Plains of Promise* was short-listed for the Commonwealth Writers' Prize, Best First Book Award in the South-East Asia and Pacific Region, 1998; the *Age* Book of the Year Award and the New South Wales Premier's Literary Awards.

It also sold relatively well. The initial print run sold out in the first year and it has since been reprinted three times. The total Australian sales to date are around 6,000 copies.

Plains of Promise has been translated into French and published as *Les Plaines de l'Espoir* in 1999 by Actes Sud, with a reprint in 2002. According to Jane O'Sullivan, writing in the *Age* in 2006, *Plains of Promise* has 'found a strong niche in the field of Indigenous studies' in Australia, Spain, Italy and Austria, 'and there are school textbook versions in Saami, the Indigenous language of northern Scandinavia'.

In 2003, an excerpt from *Plains of Promise* was published in *Fresh Cuttings: A Celebration of Fiction and Poetry from UQP's Black Australian Writers Series*. Another excerpt, 'The Timekeeper's Shadow', Chapter 6 in *Plains of Promise*, appears in both the *Macquarie PEN Anthology of Aboriginal Literature* (2008) and the *Macquarie PEN Anthology of Australian Literature* (2009).

Author's literary career

Alexis Wright was born in 1950 in Cloncurry in Queensland. She has worked extensively in Aboriginal organisations and communities, as well as for government and universities. In the course of her employment, Wright has produced many reports and other written material but it was not until the 1990s that her literary work found publication.

Plains of Promise was Alexis Wright's first major literary work. In the same year, 1997, Magabala Books published Wright's non-fiction title *Grog War*, an account of the endeavours of the Waramungu people of Tennant Creek in the Northern Territory to restrict alcohol in the town in an effort to control substance abuse and associated problems. Alexis Wright worked closely with the Julalikari Council, which commissioned the book, and with the local people in the telling of their story. *Grog War*, which was released in a second edition in 2009, is an important work in the ongoing struggle to understand and combat alcohol abuse in Indigenous communities. Michèle Grossman writes of the book:

It is ... a powerful narrative in which the eventual success of the Julalikari Council's beat-the-grog war – a war fought long and hard on the ground – ultimately shifted Territorian paradigms that blamed

only the Aboriginal consumers of alcohol by refocusing on the licensers, producers and retailers of alcohol, from Tennant Creek publicans all the way to the Territory's Liquor Licensing Commission. (1998, p. 84)

In 1998 Alexis Wright edited *Take Power, Like This Old Man Here: An Anthology of Writings Celebrating Twenty Years of Land Rights in Central Australia, 1977–1997* for the Central Land Council. The Indigenous publisher IAD Press in Alice Springs published this collection of poetry and prose.

Alexis Wright has a French publisher with whom she has published several books not available in English or in Australia. In addition to the above-mentioned French edition of *Plains of Promise*, Actes Sud, a company located in Arles in France, has also published Wright's essay, *Croire en l'incroyable* [Believing in the Unbelievable] in 2000 and her collection of short stories, *Le pacte du serpent arc-en-ciel* [The Pact of the Rainbow Serpent], in 2002.

Wright has also contributed short stories and essays to various anthologies. For example, an essay 'A Family Document' about her grandmother (Vernay, p. 119) appears in *Storykeepers*, a collection by Australian authors on the writers, stories and storytellers who inspired them, edited by Marion Halligan (2001).

In 2006, Giramondo Publishing released Wright's second novel, *Carpentaria*. An epic story of life in the fictional Gulf country coastal town of Desperance, *Carpentaria* is Alexis Wright's most successful and celebrated novel. In 2007 it won the Miles Franklin Literary Award; the Australian Literature Society Gold Medal; the Victorian Premier's Literary Awards, Vance Palmer Prize for Fiction; the Queensland Premier's Literary Awards, Best Fiction Book and the Australian Book Industry Awards, Australian Literary Fiction Book of the Year. In the same year it was short-listed for the NSW Premier's Literary Awards, Christina Stead Prize for Fiction; the Age Book of the Year Award, Fiction Prize, and the Commonwealth Writers' Prize, South East Asia and South Pacific Region, Best Book. It was also nominated, in 2007, for the Deadly Sounds Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Music, Sport, Entertainment and Community Awards, Outstanding Achievement in Literature.

Carpentaria has been published in Britain by Constable (2008) and in hardback in the US by Simon & Schuster (2009) with a paperback edition due for release in the US in 2010. In Australia, the Victorian Centre for Adult Education has published book discussion notes on *Carpentaria*.

Alexis Wright's literary talent and reputation has since secured her current position as a Distinguished Fellow in the Writing and Society Research Group at the University of Western Sydney. In 2009 she was awarded an honorary doctorate by the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology.

There can be little doubt that the beginning of Alexis Wright's literary career was assisted by the Literature Board publishing subsidy that supported

UQP in publishing her highly commended manuscript *Plains of Promise*. Her second, Miles Franklin Award winning novel *Carpentaria*, was also supported by a Literature Board publishing subsidy.

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Rose Boys

Allen & Unwin published *Rose Boys* by Australian poet and editor Peter Rose in 2001. *Rose Boys* is a biography of Peter Rose's brother, the cricketer and Australian Rules footballer Robert Rose, who was seriously injured in a car accident at the height of his sporting career, and lived another 25 years as a quadriplegic. According to Peter Rose, 'I conceived it as a biography of both of us, an exercise in fraternal juxtaposition if you like – part autobiography, mostly biography – a book in which my life experience was a factor, but always secondary to the major theme, which is what happened to Robert' (n.d.).

In the 2000/01 financial year, Allen & Unwin was granted \$21,000 by the Literature Board to subsidise the publication of eight titles: *Just Tell Them I Survived*, an account of women in Antarctica by Robin Burns; *Reefscape*, a non-fiction travel book on the Great Barrier Reef by Rosaleen Love; *Isabelle the Navigator*, a novel by Luke Davies; *The Water Underneath*, a first novel by Kate Lyons; *Angel Mine*, a novel by Ainslie Yardley; *Boys' Stuff*, an anthology of short stories for young adults, edited by Wayne Martino and

Maria Pallotta-Chiarolli; *Taking a Stand*, an account of Aboriginal policy by former Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs Robert Tickner, and *Rose Boys* by Peter Rose (Australia Council, 2001, pp. 101–102; note that *Rose Boys* does not appear in the Australia Council *Annual Report* of that year because it was a late substitution).

Allen & Unwin is a leading publisher of Australian literary fiction and non-fiction, as well as 'commercial fiction'. It has been an independent Australian-owned company since the management buy-out of Allen & Unwin Australia in 1990 during the sale of the British parent company Unwin Hyman to Harper Collins. The company administers the *Australian/Vogel Award*, which established its reputation as a fiction publisher and 'remains at the heart of the list' (Poland, 2006).

Rose Boys was first released in a small hardcover format of 304 pages in October 2001; a reprint was necessary within the year. The hardback edition was short-listed for the Best Designed Literary Non-fiction Book 2002 in the Australian Publishers Association Design Awards in that year. In November 2002, a B-format paperback edition was released; it was also 304 pages.

Rose Boys was widely reviewed, due possibly to the high public profiles of Peter Rose in literary circles, and of Robert Rose and their father, Bob Rose, in sporting circles. According to *AustLit: The Australian Literature Resource*, since its publication in 2001 *Rose Boys* has been the subject of 23 reviews in Australian newspapers, magazines and literary journals, as well as in several overseas academic journals (2008). It is likely that there are even more reviews in sources not indexed by *AustLit*, such as the *Australian Society for Sports History Bulletin* cited below.

A sample of reviews indicates a positive reception to what has been described by many critics as a brave, honest and moving book. Sportswriters were particularly affected by the book. For example, Barry Nicholls writes in the *Australian Society for Sports History Bulletin* that '[Peter Rose] has written a sensitive family portrait involving adversity, prolonged grief, loss and fraternity.' He later remarks, '*Rose Boys* is a profoundly moving tale and also a story of love and hope' (2002). Former footballer and sports writer Brent Crosswell describes *Rose Boys* as 'a book of immense emotional force that is a eulogy to his brother, a tribute to his parents and a powerful demonstration of the redemptive quality of suffering' (2002).

The literary critics concurred. Richard Freadman, writing in the *Australian Book Review*, describes *Rose Boys* as 'life writing of a very high order.' He considers Peter Rose 'a fine practitioner of a form of life writing that combines biography, autobiography, pathography, eulogy, ethical reflection, and an inquiry into Australian myths, ideologies, styles of masculinity, and cultural locales' (2001). Andrew Riemer writes in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, 'Poets, when they turn to prose, are often tempted into excessively evocative writing. There is no cleverness here, almost no ornamentation, merely a moving story expertly told'

(2001). Jason Steger, literary editor of the *Age*, was unstinting in his praise: 'It is enthralling and heart-rending to read. And it is entirely uplifting.' (2001)

Rose Boys was joint winner, with Don Watson's *Recollections of a Bleeding Heart* (Knopf, 2002), of the National Biography Award 2003. It was short-listed for the NSW Premier's Literary Awards, Douglas Stewart Prize for Non-Fiction, 2002 and won the 2001 Colin Roderick Award from the Foundation for Australian Literary Studies. This latter award is made annually to the best book published in Australia that deals with any aspect of Australian life.

Sales of *Rose Boys* have been high. The first edition hardback was reprinted three times, and achieved sales of around 8,000 copies. A paperback was released in 2002; it has since been reprinted six times and remains in print. Sales for the paperback edition have reached almost 14,000. ABC Books produced the audio book, read by the author, in audiocassette and CD format.

Allen & Unwin produced *Notes for Reading Groups: Rose Boys by Peter Rose* which is available on the Allen & Unwin website (Rose, n.d.). The *Notes* include a statement by Peter Rose about writing the book, excerpts from a number of book reviews and some suggested points for discussion in reading groups. The Victorian Centre for Adult Education has also published *Rose Boys by Peter Rose: Notes* by Gillian Bouras (c. 2004) – these publications suggest that the book was very popular with reading groups. *Rose Boys* has been adopted for study at upper secondary level, including for the Victorian Certificate of Education, as well as by some tertiary courses.

Author's literary career

Peter Rose was born in 1955 in Wangaratta, Victoria. After completing an Arts degree, he worked as a bookseller before moving into publishing. Peter Rose later became Publisher at Oxford University Press in Melbourne.

Rose's first published poem appeared in the literary journal *Scripsi* in 1985, and his first collection, *The House of Vitriol*, was published in 1990 by Picador, and commended in the Association for the Study of Australian Literature's Mary Gilmore Award for a First Book of Poetry in 1991. In 1993 Picador released Peter Rose's second collection, *The Catullan Rag*, and Hale & Iremonger published his third collection, *Donatello in Wangaratta*, in 1998. All of these collections were assisted into publication by publishing subsidies from the Literature Board.

In 2001 *Rose Boys* was published, and in the same year Rose became editor of the *Australian Book Review*.

In 2005, Salt Publishing (UK) released Rose's fourth collection, *Rattus Rattus: New and Selected Poems*. Salt Publishing received a grant from the Literature Board for this publication and for promotion of the UK edition.

In 2006, Rose published his first novel, *A Case of Knives* (Allen & Unwin), a thriller set in the publishing world. This book was also assisted with a subsidy from the Literature Board. In 2007 and 2008, Rose edited Black Inc.'s annual publication *Best Australian Poems*.

While it appears that Rose has not been a recipient of a writers' grants from the Literature Board, his literary career has certainly been assisted by Board funding. All of his poetry collections, his novel and *Rose Boys* were assisted into print by publishing subsidies.

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Stasiland

Stasiland is a work of non-fiction written by Anna Funder – it was published in 2002 by Text Publishing Company. Through the stories of both victims and perpetrators, it examines the operations of the East German secret police, known as the Stasi, in the period when Germany was divided into West and East German states (1949–1989).

In 2001/02 Text Publishing received \$27,000 in publishing subsidies from the Literature Board for at least four titles, including *Miles McGinty*, a novel by Tom Gilling; *Salamanca*, a novel by John Higgins; *The Dig Tree: The Story of Burke and*

Wills, a history by Sarah Murgatroyd and *Stasiland* (Australia Council, 2002, p. 85).

Text Publishing Company was established in 1991 as a joint venture between Reed Publishing and Diana Gribble (and later Michael Heyward). In 1994 the partnership was dissolved with Reed retaining the rights to all books published and in production at the time. Heyward and Gribble then re-established their own independent literary publishing venture with Chong Weng Ho as in-house designer (Galligan, 2006).

Stasiland was originally published as a C-format paperback of 288 pages in February 2002. Its initial print run was 3,000 copies and before the end of 2002 it had been reprinted three times. A second edition in B-format was published by Text the following year and reprinted three times in that year. The book obviously sold well, and better than its publisher had expected.

In the years since publication, *Stasiland* and its author have received considerable media coverage, particularly overseas. However, the book appears not to have been as widely reviewed in Australia on its first publication, although reviews did appear in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, the *Age* and the *Courier-Mail*. When *Stasiland* was short-listed for major prizes in 2003 and 2004, more Australian newspapers ran reviews of the book and stories about its author, while some media attention in Australia focused on the book's publication and reception in Germany. By contrast, *Stasiland* was reviewed on publication in Britain in the *Times Literary Supplement* (TLS), the *Evening Standard*, the *Weekly Telegraph*, the *Independent*, and the *Guardian*. In addition, the *Scotsman* published reviews when *Stasiland* was short-listed for, and subsequently won, the British Samuel Johnson Prize for Non-Fiction in 2004.

Anna Funder was interviewed about *Stasiland* several times on ABC Radio in the years following the book's release. She appeared on the programs *Late Night Live* (2002), *Morning Interview with Margaret Thorsby* (2004), *Big Ideas* (2006), and read from *Stasiland* in the *First Person* segment of the *Life Matters* program (2003, 2004). Funder describes *Stasiland* as 'literary non-fiction' that uses techniques of fiction such as characterisation (2002).

Responses to *Stasiland* have been mixed. One commentator called it 'an appealing blend of investigative and reflective reporting, with the drive of powerful human interest stories' (Bloch, 2002). Another described it as 'a sadly shallow book' (Eltham, 2002). In general, commentators noted its unusual approach and its subject matter, the activities of the Stasi and their effect on the lives of East Germans (Eltham, 2002). A judge of the British Samuel Johnson Prize, Michael Wood wrote: '*Stasiland* is a fresh and highly original close-up of what happens to people in the corrosive atmosphere of the totalitarian state' (quoted in English, 2004). The surveillance operations of the Stasi detailed in the book were more than once compared by critics with George Orwell's vision of the future in his 1949 novel, *Nineteen Eighty-Four*.

Those critical of the book cite an absence of history, or historical context, as a failing. Ben Eltham writes, 'The lack of any real engagement with the historical record and literature leaves her book [*Stasiland*] in an inconclusive limbo' (2002). A review in the *TLS* describes *Stasiland* as 'a gushing account with an awful lot of the author in it, not always for any clear narrative reason'. The reviewer goes on to write that the book has 'an ingenué's verve' (McElvoy, 2003).

Stasiland was short-listed for seven major awards in Australia and Britain and won the British Samuel Johnson Prize for Non-Fiction, with a prize purse of £30,000 in 2004. It was short-listed for the Queensland Premier's Literary Awards, Best Non-Fiction Book 2002; the *Age* Book of the Year Award, Non-Fiction Prize 2002; the Festival Awards for Literature (SA), Award for Innovation in Writing 2004; the Australian Booksellers Choice Award 2004; the *Guardian* First Book Award (UK) 2003; the Index Freedom of Expression Awards, Book Award (UK) 2004 and the W. H. Heinemann Award (UK) 2004.

Stasiland has been translated into Dutch (c. 2002), German (2004 and 2006), Danish (2004 and 2005), Portuguese (c. 2004), Slovene (2005), Italian (c. 2005), Polish (2007), and Spanish (2009). It was also produced in Australia by ABC Audio as a sound recording in 2003. A Reader's Digest condensed version of the book was also published in Australia in 2006.

A British edition of *Stasiland*, subtitled *True Stories from Behind the Wall*, was published by Granta in paperback in 2003 and in hard cover in 2004. In 2006 several Australian newspapers reported that Britain's National Theatre had commissioned British poet and novelist Nick Drake to adapt *Stasiland* for the stage.

In Australia, *Stasiland* has been set for study at upper secondary level in the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) and appears in the VCE's 'Literature Texts List' for 2009 and 2010. It was adopted early by book discussion groups and the Victorian Council of Adult Education published book discussion notes for *Stasiland* in 2002.

Author's literary career

Anna Funder was born in Melbourne in 1966. She trained and worked as a lawyer before returning to study creative writing at the University of Melbourne. Anna Funder received the Felix Meyer Scholarship, an Australian – German Association Fellowship, an Arts Victoria literature grant and was Writer-in-Residence in 1997 at the Australia Centre in the University of Potsdam in Germany (*AustLit*, 2009).

Stasiland is Anna Funder's first published book. The manuscript was originally submitted as a thesis (MA) to the Department of English and Cultural Studies at the University of Melbourne in 2002.

In the year following the publication of *Stasiland*, Funder received a Literature Board Grant of \$25,000 for New Work: Developing Writers.

Since then she has published several essays and columns. In 2009, she contributed an essay, along with Melissa Lucashenko and Christopher Kremmer, to *Courage, Survival, Greed* (Allen & Unwin, 2009). Sydney PEN had commissioned all three essays as lectures in 2008.

In 2009, Funder was granted the 2009 NSW Writer's Fellowship to assist her with writing her current work-in-progress.

Stasiland earned Funder significant publicity and established her reputation as an author. The 2001/02 Literature Board subsidy to Text for assistance with the publication of *Stasiland* certainly helped to initiate that process.

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The Goddamn Bus of Happiness

Wakefield Press published *The Goddamn Bus of Happiness* by Stefan Laszczuk in 2004. It is a first novel by the then 31-year-old creative writing student that concerns the lives and misadventures of a group of young people living in the suburbs of Adelaide as they attempt to find their way in the world.

In the 2004/05 financial year, the Literature Board provided Wakefield Press with \$22,000 in publishing subsidies to assist with the publication of six literary titles: a collection of poetry, *At the Flash and at the Baci* by Ken Bolton; *An Uncommon Dialogue*, an autobiographical work by Debra Drake; and four novels: *The House at Number 10* by Dorothy Johnston; *Innocent Murder* by Steve J. Spears; *Poinciana* by Jane Turner Goldsmith; and *The Goddamn Bus of Happiness* (Australia Council, 2005, pp. 78–79).

Wakefield Press is an independent, Australian-owned publishing company and the major trade publisher in South Australia. Founded in 1942, and revived in 1985, it has seen many changes but has been under the current ownership and management since 1989. Wakefield Press publishes about 50 books each year and specialises in non-fiction, particularly 'true stories' – biography and autobiography, gastronomy and culture (Wakefield Press, n.d.). Wakefield Press also publishes a number of fiction and poetry titles each year.

Since 2002, Wakefield Press has administered, in association with Arts SA, a biennial unpublished manuscript competition for South Australian writers as part of the Festival Awards for Literature. The author of the winning manuscript receives \$10,000 prize money and publication by Wakefield Press. Stefan Laszczuk's *The Goddamn Bus of Happiness* won this award in 2004.

The Goddamn Bus of Happiness was published in December 2004 as a B-format paperback. Its initial print run was 2,500 copies. Although most of the book's characters are young adults in their late teens and twenties *The Goddamn Bus of Happiness* has not been categorised as 'young adult fiction'; it appears to have had a broader appeal. In 2005, *The Goddamn Bus of Happiness* was selected as a title for the 'Big Book Club', a national joint initiative of the Australia Council, state government arts agencies and private sector companies to promote literature, reading and book discussion (Big Book Club, n.d.).

In the early months of 2005, reviews of *The Goddamn Bus of Happiness* appeared in the *Weekend Australian*, the *Sydney Morning Herald*, the *Age*, the *Adelaide Advertiser*, the *Canberra Times* and the *Brisbane Courier-Mail*. A review also appeared in the monthly magazine, the *Adelaide Review*.

It was well received by critics as an accomplished and 'impressive' (Woodhead, 2005) debut novel. Katharine England, writing in the *Advertiser*, describes it as 'a social chronicle as well as an entertaining, depressing, often poignant read' (2005). Cameron Woodhead observed that '*The Goddamn Bus of Happiness* is powerful, confronting young adult fiction written with blinkers off' (2005).

The somewhat dissolute lifestyles of the main characters have led to comparisons with the 'grunge fiction' of the 1990s as well as gonzo journalism (Harris, 2005). One critic wrote that the book reminded her of Andrew McGahan's first (arguably 'grunge') novel *Praise* (England, 2005); another was reminded of Luke Davies' *Candy* (Woodhead, 2005). However, as Sacha Molitorisz writes in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, 'as well as the plot and well-drawn protagonist, this is too funny to be a grunge novel. Laszczuk combines a rich imagination with a fondness for wordplay' (2005).

Most critics responded to the combination of energy, humour, good writing and redemptive experiences and insights in *The Goddamn Bus of Happiness*. Gillian Dooley in the *Adelaide Review*

sees the book as 'a simple morality tale of growing up' with 'quite serious intentions' (2005). The *Age* reviewer concludes: 'Laszczuk's potent realism and strong characterisation, together with his dramatic acumen, make this an impressive debut' (Woodhead, 2005). The *Herald* reviewer agrees: 'With its lean prose and pacy plot, this novel passes as quickly as an express bus. But that doesn't preclude substance or depth' (Molitorisz, 2005).

Most reviewers noted the book's success in the Festival Awards Unpublished Manuscript competition and few disputed that it had the attributes of a worthy winner.

Author's literary career

Stefan Laszczuk was born in Adelaide in 1973 and, after studying for a degree in journalism, he began creative writing studies with a graduate diploma course in 2002. He subsequently completed a Masters and a PhD. He is also a musician and songwriter and has played in several Adelaide-based bands.

His first publication came as a result of his success in winning a local short story competition in 2002, sponsored by the SA Writers' Centre, Seaview Press and CM Digital. The prize was the publication, by Seaview Press, of a collection of his short stories. The resulting *The New Cage* (2002) comprised eleven original stories.

In the following year, Stefan Laszczuk co-edited, with three others, a collection of short stories and poetry by Adelaide University creative writing Masters students. Titled *Cracker! A Christmas Collection*, it was published by Wakefield Press in December 2003.

Laszczuk completed the manuscript of his first novel, *The Goddamn Bus of Happiness*, as a Masters student at Adelaide University under the mentorship of Tom Shapcott, then Dean of Creative Writing.

Following the publication of *The Goddamn Bus of Happiness*, Stefan Laszczuk enrolled in a doctorate in creative writing at Adelaide University and began work on his second novel. In 2007 that manuscript won *The Australian/Vogel Award*, and the book was published as *I Dream of Magda* (Allen & Unwin, 2008). Of this experience, Laszczuk (2007) wrote:

Winning the Vogel is just about the best thing that can happen to an emerging Australian writer. For me personally, it was brilliant in that it gave my novel a decent level of national exposure, whereas my previous book struggled to make much of an impact outside of South Australia. It won't make writing the next book any easier, but it will mean that potential publishers and agents will most likely return my calls — if only to pay me the courtesy of rejecting me in person.

Laszczuk's literary career is well underway – assisted by tertiary education creative writing courses, two unpublished manuscript awards and Literature Board publishing subsidies. Stefan Laszczuk wrote of the awards, 'The most important

thing about the prizes for me was that they both gave me the opportunity to be published' (2009). The publishers involved in both of the unpublished manuscripts awards that Stefan Laszczuk won – Wakefield Press and Allen & Unwin – have tended to rely on Literature Board publishing subsidies to assist with the production costs of the winning (and often the short-listed) books. This also applies to Fremantle Press and its association with the T. A. G. Hungerford Award, an award made biennially for an unpublished work of fiction by a West Australian author who has not previously been published in book form (Writing WA, 2008). In this way, the publishing subsidy program plays a major role in establishing the careers of young and regional Australian writers.

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The Kindly Ones

The Kindly Ones is a collection of poetry by Susan Hampton that was published by Five Islands Press in late 2005 with the assistance of a Literature Board publishing subsidy.

It was one of nine Five Islands Press poetry titles assisted in the 2004/05 financial year with a total subsidy of \$20,000. The other books were

Collected Poems by Juan Garrido Salgado, *True North* by Bernard T. Harrison, *Fontanelle* by Andrew Lansdown, *Fragmenta Nova* by Alan Loney, *The Yellow Dress* by Yve Louis, *Poetileptic* by Mal McKimmie, *Agnostic Skies* by Geoff Page and *Fiddleback* by Heather Stewart (Australia Council, 2005, p. 77).

Five Islands Press is an independent publishing company specialising in contemporary Australian poetry. The press was founded in 1986 by Ron Pretty and established in Wollongong, New South Wales. When Ron Pretty retired in July 2007, having published more than 230 books of poetry, Five Islands Press moved to Carlton, Victoria, where it continues under new directors.

The Kindly Ones was released in late 2005 as a paperback of 94 pages with a print run of 500 copies, which was the usual run for poetry collections released by Five Islands Press. Its recommended retail price was \$18.95. It is a collection of poetry, containing one epic poem of forty-five pages from which the book takes its title, as well as a number of shorter poems.

On publication *The Kindly Ones* was widely reviewed. At least twelve reviews appeared in the *Canberra Times*, the *Age*, the *Australian Book Review*, the *API Review of Books*, and in the literary journals *Southerly*, *Five Bells*, *Jacket*, *Overland* and *Westerly*.

Reviewers were enthusiastic about the collection. According to Peter Pierce writing in the *Canberra Times*, *The Kindly Ones*, with its 'powerful and unapologetic narrative drive', was one of the best books of poetry he had read in 2005. He also wrote that the collection was 'striking, bold, funny when cause arises, accomplished at all times in its management of disparate tones and materials' (Pierce, 2006). Kirsten Lang (2005) observes that *The Kindly Ones* 'reminds us that large concerns, spirituality and justice among them, are with us in our daily lives'. Writing in *Southerly*, Lang also notes that 'Hampton's strengths lie in her candidness and humour ... crucial details are well-placed and well-timed ... there is a joyful sense of liberation in the cross-fertilisation of ancient and modern.'

For Jan Dean (2006), writing in *Five Bells*, the title poem 'The Kindly Ones' is 'a tour de force'; for Merle Goldsmith (2007), it is a 'powerful adventure narrative ... often hellishly funny'; while Stephen Lawrence (2006) described *The Kindly Ones* simply as 'artful and fey', adding that Susan Hampton is 'a fresh, clear voice'. In the *Australian Book Review*, Lisa Temple (2006) observed:

Hampton's constant juxtaposition of the deeply disturbing and the ordinary also results in irony that ranges from the charming to the razor-edged. Much of this is achieved by her excellent control of voice. Her finely tuned ear for the vernacular sits next to layers of classical erudition, and exposition on the nature of tragedy – ancient versus modern ... In its fusion of mythical and modern worlds, its exploration of vengeance and forgiveness, its female sensibilities, its ironies, wit and pace, this is a verse narrative to be savoured.

Lisa Gorton (2006) concurs, declaring that *The Kindly Ones* is 'an extraordinary poem: bold, bitter, intelligent and fantastical'.

The Kindly Ones won the Australian Capital Territory Poetry Award, Judith Wright Award for a Published Collection by an Australian Poet in 2006. It was short-listed for five other awards, including the Age Book of the Year Award, Dinny O'Hearn Poetry Prize 2006; the Victorian Premier's Literary Awards, The C. J. Dennis Prize for Poetry 2006; the New South Wales Premier's Literary Awards, Kenneth Slessor Prize for Poetry 2006; the Australian Capital Territory Book of the Year Award 2006.

The first and only print run of *The Kindly Ones* sold out and the book is now out of print. In 2008, River Road Press republished *The Kindly Ones* as an audio CD in its series of Australian poets reading their own work (River Road Press, 2009). Some of the book was read on *Poetica* on Radio National (Hampton, 2010).

Author's literary career

Born in NSW in 1949, Susan Hampton writes poetry, drama, short stories and literary criticism; she also works as a literary editor. Her early writing was published in literary and feminist journals in the mid-to-late 1970s, jointly winning the Patricia Hackett Prize in 1977 for her short story 'Jocasta's Chair', and winning the ACTU's Dame Mary Gilmore Poetry Award in 1979 for her poem 'In the Kitchens: Stockton'. Also in 1979, she was one of four new poets whose work was showcased in the inaugural 'Sisters' anthology, *Sisters Poets 1*, edited by Rosemary Dobson (Sisters Publishing).

In 1981, a collection of prose and poetry by Susan Hampton, *Costumes: Poems and Prose*, was published by Transit Poetry and Wild & Woolley, and in 1987 a poetry collection, *White Dog Sonnets: A Novel*, was published by Fab Press in Sydney.

Susan Hampton's next collection of short stories, poetry, criticism, prose and drama titled, *Surly Girls*, was published by Collins in 1989 and won the Warana Writers' Awards, Steele Rudd Award in 1990. She published *A Latin Primer* (Cerebus Press), a collection of poetry, in 1998.

Prior to the release of *The Kindly Ones* in 2005, Susan Hampton's poems, short stories, essays and criticism had been included in a number of edited works and anthologies, including *Australian Poetry 1986: The Finest of Recent Australian Poetry* (ed. Vivian Smith, Angus & Robertson, 1986); *Kiwi and Emu: An Anthology of Contemporary Poetry by Australian and New Zealand Women* (ed. Barbara Petrie, Butterfly Books, 1989); *The Oxford Book of Australian Love Poems* (ed. Jennifer Strauss, Oxford University Press, 1993); *Picador New Writing 2* (eds Helen Daniel and Drusilla Modjeska, Pan Macmillan Australia, 1994), and *Car Maintenance, Explosives and Love* (eds Susan Hawthorne, Cathie Dunsford and Susan Sayer, Spinifex Press, 1997). She had also previously co-edited the landmark anthology *The Penguin Book*

of Australian Women Poets with Kate Llewellyn (Penguin, 1986); three of Hampton's own poems appeared in this anthology.

Her latest poetry title, *News of the Insect World* (Five Islands Press), was released in November 2009.

Susan Hampton has been the recipient of Australia Council writers' grants, most recently a New Work grant for Developing Writers in 2007 (*AustLit*, n.d.). In a recent interview (2009), Susan Hampton remarked:

The Literature Board is the only reason that I am a writer ... All the poetry that I've published has been courtesy, in some way, of Literature Board funding ... I think it's hugely important, more so now even than before ... If we want to have a flourishing poetry culture, the Literature Board is a vital necessity.

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The Lovemakers: Book One, Saying All the Great Sexy Things

The Lovemakers: Book One, Saying All the Great Sexy Things is the second major verse novel by Australian poet Alan Wearne. It is Book One of a longer work that was published in two parts several years apart by different publishers. *The Lovemakers: Book One* was published in 2001 by Penguin Books Australia.

The Lovemakers was one of eight Penguin titles assisted by a \$25,000 Literature Board publishing subsidy in 2000/01. Other titles included *Men: From Stone Age to Clone Age* by Bob Beale; *The Blind Eye*, a novel by Georgia Blain; *The World as a Clockface*, a novel by Philomena van Rijswijk; three autobiographical works – *Heart Country* by Kerry McGinnis, *Wicked but Virtuous* by Mirka Mora and *The Olive Grove* by Patrice Newell; and an anthology of short stories, *Penguin Summer Stories 3* (Australia Council, 2001, p. 103).

Penguin Books Australia is part of the multinational Pearson Group, a media company that specialises in 'education, business information and consumer publishing' (Pearson, 2009). Pearson has major publishing and book distribution operations in the UK, US, Canada, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, India, South Africa and China. Penguin Books Australia has an annual turnover from local publishing of more than A\$50 million based on recent figures (Sessions, 2009).

Although the entire manuscript was submitted to Penguin, the publisher chose to divide it into two parts and to publish only the first part as *The Lovemakers Book One*. It was released in March 2001 as a C-format paperback of 359 pages with an initial and sole print-run of 2,600 copies.

With the launch of *The Lovemakers: Book One*, Alan Wearne released a CD recording of selected readings from the verse novel, accompanied by original music composed and performed by Houston Dunleavy. The CD was produced by John Hawke.

On its release, *The Lovemakers: Book One* was reviewed in the *Canberra Times*, the *Weekend Australian*, the *Bulletin*, the *Sydney Morning Herald*, the *Age* and the *Australian Book Review*. It was reviewed later in literary journals including *Island*, *Westerly*, *TEXT: The Journal of the Australian Association of Writing Programs*, *Imago: New Writing* and *Overland*. The book was reviewed by a number of senior and respected Australian literary critics, including Peter Craven, Martin Duwell, Ivor Indyk, David McCooney and Thomas Shapcott.

Most critics note the book's length, time in the making and its expanse: 359 pages written over thirteen years and its subject spanning a 30-year period. Some describe it as 'an epic' with echoes of Milton, Pope and other poets, since Wearne plays throughout the work with a large range of established poetic forms (Indyk, 2001; Shapcott, 2001; Alizadeh, 2001).

It is the book's complex, idiosyncratic style and language that attracted most critical attention.

Peter Craven describes the book as 'cross-textured and cross-referenced in a crazy quilt of suburban tales and intertwinings' (2001, p. 12). David McCooney writes:

'The Lovemakers' is long, lacks a conventional plot or central character, and boasts conspicuously odd syntax and dialogue. It is an oxymoronic work: one voice and many voices; highly poetic and deeply demotic; a factitious and formalist version of naturalism. (2001, p. 52)

Its ironic yet apparently accurate portrayal of Australian suburban family life is another focus for critical comment. Reviewer Martin Duwell writes, 'If one of the many functions of poetry is to relate us to people, their values and the almost infinitely complex lives they lead, Australia can have produced few better poems than "The Lovemakers"' (2002, p. 100).

The Lovemakers: Book One is generally regarded by reviewers as flawed, sometimes rambling and inconsistent, but a unique, ambitious and significant work, with Peter Craven concluding, 'The collision of this mishmash of idiolectal language and a dag's-eye view of mundane Australia creates a strange and haunting work of art'. (2001, p. 13)

The Lovemakers: Book One won the NSW Premier's Literary Awards, Book of the Year 2002, as well as the NSW Premier's Literary Awards, Kenneth Slessor Prize for Poetry 2002 and the Queensland Premiers Literary Awards, Arts Queensland Judith Wright Calanthe Prize for Poetry 2002.

In spite of these awards and its generally positive reception from critics, *The Lovemakers: Book One* sold only about 1,200 copies and Penguin declined to publish the second volume. According to Bronwyn Lea in her chapter on 'Poetry Publishing' in *Making Books: Contemporary Australian Publishing*, Penguin also pulped its unsold stock of *The Lovemakers: Book One* (2007, p. 247). Alan Wearne also mentions this on his website (2009).

Author's literary career

Alan Wearne has been writing poetry since the 1960s. His first collection, *Public Relations*, was published in 1972 in the Makar Press *Gargoyle Poets Series*. In 1976, *New Devil, New Parish* was published by UQP in its *Paperback Poets Series*. *Out Here*, a long poem (or verse novella) in the aforementioned collection, was published separately in the UK by Bloodaxe Books in 1987. Ten of Alan Wearne's poems appeared in *The New Australian Poetry*, an anthology edited by John Tranter in 1979 that is considered something of a watershed for Australian poetry, heralding a new era of modernist Australian poets. Alan Wearne is included among the so-called 'Generation of '68' poets, a term coined by John Tranter when referring to some of the non-traditionalist experimental Australian poets of the 1970s and 1980s.

In 1978 Alan Wearne was commissioned by Penguin Books Australia to write a verse novel;

this was completed eight years later and published in 1986 as *The Nightmarkets: A Novel*. Penguin was assisted with a Literature Board subsidy for its publication. *The Nightmarkets* was a critical success and won the National Book Council 'Banjo' Award in 1987 and the Australian Literature Society's Gold Medal, also in 1987. It sold relatively well – around 4,000 copies. *The Nightmarkets* established Alan Wearne's reputation as a successful and significant Australian poet.

In the years between the publication of *The Nightmarkets* and that of his next major verse novel, *The Lovemakers: Book One*, Alan Wearne published a satirical crime novel set in the world of AFL football, *Kicking in Danger: The Footy Novel* (Black Pepper, 1997). He also published extracts from *The Lovemakers*, his work in progress, in the literary journals *Overland* and *HEAT*.

With Penguin declining to publish the second part of the verse novel, *The Lovemakers: Book Two*, *Money and Nothing* found a publisher in ABC Books, which produced the book in a format similar to that of *Book One*. The second volume was also well received critically and was the joint winner (with Tim Winton's *The Turning*) of the Colin Roderick Award 2004 (awarded annually by the Foundation for Australian Literary Studies, James Cook University, for 'the best book published in Australia which deals with any aspect of Australian life') (JCU, 2009) It was short-listed for both the NSW Premier's Literary Awards, Kenneth Slessor Prize for Poetry 2005 and the Arts Queensland Judith Wright Calanthe Prize for Poetry 2004.

UK poetry publisher Shearsman Books released a combined volume *The Lovemakers* in 2008. Neither *Book One* nor *Book Two* was in print in Australia in 2009.

Alan Wearne continues to create award-winning poetry. In 2008 Giramondo released *The Australian Popular Songbook*, which won the Grace Leven Poetry Prize in 2008 and was short-listed for the poetry prizes in both the NSW and Queensland Premiers' Literary Awards for 2009 and 2008 respectively. Wearne teaches creative writing at Wollongong University.

Alan Wearne has received assistance from the Literature Board in the form of numerous fellowships and grants, beginning with a Young Writer's Fellowship in 1974, but doesn't appear to have received any personal grants since 1998. His works have been assisted into publication with multiple publishing subsidies. In 1976, UQP received \$1,104 to assist with the publication of *New Devil, New Parish*; Penguin received \$5,472 for publication of *The Nightmarkets* in 1986, as well as \$2,500 to assist with production costs for *The Lovemakers: Book One* in 2001. There is no doubt that Alan Wearne's critically successful literary career has been facilitated – and maintained – by Literature Board assistance, in the form of both writers grants and publishing subsidies.

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Three Anthologies

***Blur: Stories by Young Australian Writers*, edited by James Bradley, Random House, 1996**

***Risks*, edited by Brenda Walker, Fremantle Arts Centre Press, 1996**

***Seams of Light: Best Antipodean Essays*, edited by Morag Fraser, Allen & Unwin, 1998**

Blur: Stories by Young Australian Writers

The anthology *Blur* is a collection of short stories by 31 young Australian writers aged, at the time of publication, between 23 and 35. It was edited by

James Bradley, a then 29-year-old poet and short story writer. The common element in the anthology is the youth of the writers.

In 1995 Random House Australia, a subsidiary of the German-based multinational company Bertelsmann AG, received \$17,018 from the Literature Board as subsidies to publish four titles: the anthology *Blur*; an autobiographical work, *Judy Cassab: Diaries*; Yasmine Gooneratne's second novel, *The Pleasures of Conquest*; and *Loaded*, a first novel by Christos Tsiolkas (Australia Council, 1996, p. 92).

Blur was released in January 1996 in a B-format paperback of 349 pages under the Vintage imprint of Random House. The initial print run was 4,000 copies. The \$4,600 subsidy from the Literature Board included a specific 'anthology subsidy' of \$3,100. Jane Palfreyman, Publishing Director at Random House, noted that the Literature Board subsidies for this anthology and others assisted with payment of contributors' fees which, for a relatively large anthology such as *Blur*, could be substantial (2009).

While most of the contributors to *Blur* were new writers, a number had established careers prior to their inclusion in the anthology. Nick Earls, for instance, had published many poems and short stories, as well as a successful short story collection, *Passion* (UQP, 1992), before contributing to *Blur*. Luke Davies was an established poet with two published collections to his name. Tegan Bennett, Mandy Sayer, Bernard Cohen and Matthew Condon had all published several novels prior to their inclusion in *Blur*.

For most contributors, *Blur* was an early career opportunity for publication. Chloe Hooper achieved her first publications in 1996 in several journals, as well as contributions to the anthologies *Blur*, *More Beautiful Lies* and *Women Love Sex*, all published by Random House in 1996. Mireille Juchau's contribution to *Blur* was her second publication after having a short story accepted by *Meanjin* in 1995.

Many of the 31 contributors to *Blur* have gone on to establish successful literary careers. These include James Bradley, Nick Earls, Luke Davies, Tegan Bennett, Mandy Sayer, Bernard Cohen, Mireille Juchau, Chloe Hooper, James Roy, Elliott Perlman and Christos Tsiolkas.

Blur received only a handful of reviews on its release. It was reviewed in the *Australian Book Review*, the *Bulletin*, the *Courier-Mail*, the *Weekend Australian* and literary magazines *Overland* and *Meanjin*. The long *Meanjin* review (four and a half pages) written by Chris Feik (1997) is generally disparaging about the collection. Feik is concerned that much of the work in the anthology draws on experiences of isolation, 'good old-fashioned alienation' and the preoccupations of 'grunge lit' (presumably he means sex, drugs, alcohol, bodily functions and violence). Feik also notes exceptions to 'the succession of stories about isolated young males' and describes the stories by Chloe Hooper,

Jay Kranz and Anna Kay as having 'come from a different place – both more playful and more contemporary'. As suggested in the title of his review, 'Pulp Fiction', Feik concludes that the tension between literary and pulp impulses is a challenge that confronts young writers.

Reviewer Nigel Krauth complains about the over-representation of Sydney and Melbourne-based writers in the collection, and of University of Technology Sydney and Melbourne University creative writing course students and graduates in particular. He believes: 'There is a distinct undergraduate feel to *Blur*. Undergraduate, underdone, under-edited.' He goes on to detail some exceptions but concludes that it is an unsatisfying collection (1996). Writing in *Overland*, Thuy On has a different view: '*Blur* offers a dazzling kaleidoscope of choices in narrative voices and themes; it is a superb collection, documented proof that young Australian writers have a voice and an eloquent one at that' (1996).

Risks

Risks is a collection of short fiction, short stories and extracts from larger works-in-progress, by fourteen Australian fiction writers.

The theme of the collection is 'risk' in a broad sense. As editor Brenda Walker writes in her introduction, 'I was hoping less for stories about acts of audacity, or characters in physical jeopardy, than for a sense of the riskiness which so much strong writing carries, whether it is traditional or experimental in form' (Walker, 1996, p. 7). The focus in this anthology is on the writing.

In 1995 Fremantle Arts Centre Press (FACP, now Fremantle Press) received \$37,157 from the Literature Board as subsidies to assist the publication of eleven titles: four books of poetry, five of fiction and two anthologies, including *Risks* (Australia Council, 1996, p. 91).

Risks was published in March 1996 as a B-format paperback of 320 pages. Three thousand copies were printed and FACP received an anthology subsidy from the Literature Board of \$6,000. While most of the first and only print run sold in the first fifteen months, copies are still available on order from Fremantle Press. The Press considered the book 'a modest success' but one which 'did not do quite as well as we had hoped' (Newman, 2009).

In addition to its editor, Brenda Walker, contributors to *Risks* include Gail Jones, Brian Castro, Sara Dowse, Joan London, Gillian Mears, Kim Scott, Marele Day, Tom Flood, Beverly Farmer, David Brooks, John Scott, Simone Lazaroo and Carmel Bird.

Most were established, mid-career writers at the time that *Risks* was published; however, several, including Kim Scott and Simone Lazaroo, were relative newcomers. Most of the contributors were short story writers and novelists, and a

common feature of their work is its experimental, innovative – or perhaps literary – nature. The publisher's back cover 'blurb' pitches the collection as 'new stories from fourteen of Australia's most exciting fiction writers'.

A number of contributors, but not all, are from Western Australia or had been published by Fremantle Arts Centre Press. These include Brenda Walker, Gail Jones, Kim Scott, Simone Lazaroo and Joan London.

The majority of works in the anthology are short stories, and several are illustrated with black and white photographs. There are also several extracts from larger works-in-progress. Kim Scott, for instance, contributed an extract titled 'The First One' from what was to be his Miles Franklin Award winning novel *Benang: From the Heart* (FACP, 1999). Similarly, novelist Brian Castro contributed a short story titled 'Shanghai Dancing'; he later published a fictional autobiography with the same title (Giramondo Publishing, 2003). This anthology, like many anthologies, provided an opportunity for writers to 'test' their works-in-progress in a shortened form.

Risks was reviewed in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, the *Canberra Times*, the *Weekend Australian*, the *Australian Book Review*, the *Australian Women's Book Review* and in the journal *Westerly*. The *Herald* reviewer, Anne Susskind, found the anthology 'hard work because the stories break conventions and the narrative line is seldom straight', but, she continues, 'they're probably worth the trouble because they feel untrammelled, unconcerned about mass appeal' (1996). Rosemary Sorenson describes the 'riskiness' in the anthology as 'both rule-bending and ethic-challenging' and illustrates this in a long review that considers a number of the contributions in detail. Her conclusion is, 'let's risk again please, Fremantle Arts Centre, et al.' (1996). Don Anderson also enjoyed the anthology. Writing in the *Australian Book Review* he concludes, 'In summary: no contribution is less than satisfying, many are gripping, most are distinguished' (1996).

Seams of Light: Best Antipodean Essays

Seams of Light is an anthology of essays by one New Zealand and seventeen Australian writers. The unifying elements of the anthology are its literary form – the essay – and the 'antipodean' perspective of the writers. In her introduction, Morag Fraser notes Montaigne's notion of *Essais* as 'the conversation between self and the world' and goes on to define 'antipodean' as a state of mind rather than a place, 'an intellectual hybridism'. This seemed appropriate to the writers whose 'conversations between self and the world' appear in the anthology. It was 'one term', she writes, 'that could contain their heterogeneity and link them together' (1998, p. 3).

In 1997/98 Allen & Unwin, an independent Australian-owned publishing company, received \$23,650 from the Literature Board as a subsidy to support the publication of this anthology and eight other books. The other books assisted were four novels, a non-fiction work of cultural criticism, a biography and two anthologies of short stories (Australia Council, 1998, p. 133). The subsidy for *Seams of Light*, a \$3,000 anthology subsidy, assisted the publisher to pay the contributors' fees for the essays appearing in the anthology.

Seams of Light was published in March 1998 in a B-format paperback of 264 pages. Around 3,000 copies were printed in its first and only print-run, and slightly over 2,000 copies were sold. In 2009 the book is out of print.

The contributors to *Seams of Light*, including its editor, are all well-known Australian (and one New Zealand) writers, critics, and social and literary commentators with well-established literary and other careers. Fifteen of the eighteen contributors are male and include David Marr, Les Murray, John Clarke, Barry Oakley, Brian Castro, Ivor Indyk, Peter Porter, Chris Wallace-Crabbe, Robert Dessaix and Peter Steele. The women in the anthology are Inga Clendinnen, Helen Garner and Kerry Goldsworthy.

Most of the essays had been published previously in newspapers, journals, magazines and books during the 1990s. That decade saw a revival of the essay form in Australia with essay collections published by individual writers; it also witnessed the introduction, in 1998, of an annual *Best Australian Essays* by Black Inc. Publishing. In 2001 Black Inc. introduced its *Quarterly Essay*, a journal containing a single long essay on political or cultural issues.

The essays in *Seams of Light* address a wide range of topics including dilettantism, the Museum of Tolerance in Los Angeles, Aboriginal education policy, Maori – Pakeha relations in New Zealand, public (and pub) architecture, Kenneth Slessor and personal history. There is also political satire in John Clarke's television scripts.

Seams of Light was reviewed in the *Sunday Age*, the *Canberra Times*, the *Bulletin*, the *Sydney Morning Herald*, the *Weekend Australian*, as well as the *Australian Book Review* and *Quadrant*. These reviews demonstrate mixed opinions on the collection. Katherine Cummings, writing in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, describes the anthology as 'a fine meld of essays' which are 'eighteen thoughtful pieces for all moods and seasons' (Cummings, 1998). Luke Slattery, reviewing the anthology in the *Weekend Australian*, is also unequivocal in recording his enjoyment of the essays: 'Each is a pleasure to read. There is not one dud' (1998).

On the other hand, Cassandra Pybus finds the collection wanting in spite of some 'absolutely superb' individual essays. She notes 'the preponderance of male opinions', 'the total absence of youth' and the 'sameness of the form' (1998, p. 24). Paul Tankard reviewing for *Quadrant* feels similarly. While he 'thoroughly enjoyed' some of the essays, he found others 'powerfully

annoying'. He writes: 'Many of the writers seem too concerned with writing essays to do so successfully' (1998). Both Pybus and Tankard questioned the inclusion, in an anthology of essays, of the John Clarke scripts.

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White Turtle: A Collection of Short Stories

Merlinda Bobis's *White Turtle* is a collection of 23 short stories set in the Philippines and Australia. It was published by Spinifex Press in 1999.

In the 1999/2000 financial year, Spinifex Press was granted a total of \$5,500 by the Literature Board to subsidise two titles: *Wire Dancing*, a book of poetry by Patricia Sykes, and *White Turtle: A Collection of Short Stories* (Australia Council, 2000, p. 108).

Spinifex Press describes itself as 'an award-winning independent feminist press, publishing innovative and controversial feminist books with an optimistic edge' (Spinifex Press, 2009a). Founded in 1991, the company has published a diverse list of almost 200 titles across a range of genres – poetry, fiction, short fiction, young adult fiction, autobiography and non-fiction. Its non-fiction titles have focused on politics, human rights, globalisation, environment and health.

Spinifex Press has successfully placed Australian feminist literature on the international map by co-publishing with feminist and independent presses in other countries and by selling territorial or translation rights (Hawthorne, 2005). Spinifex also distributes selected feminist titles released by other Australian publishers, including two titles previously supported by Literature Board publishing subsidies to the now-defunct Sybylla Press: *She's Fantastical* (Sybylla, 1995) and *Motherlode* (Sybylla, 1996). In addition, Spinifex Press is a pioneer in digital publishing with more than 80 titles currently available as e-books; it also markets its list through online social networking communities such as Facebook and Twitter (Spinifex Press, 2009b).

Spinifex is known for its commitment to innovative and experimental poetry, with a list that includes verse by established poets Jordie Albiston, Merlinda Bobis, Louise Crisp, Diane Fahey, Susan Hawthorne, Sandy Jeffs, Muriel Lenore, and Patricia Sykes, as well as a number of anthologies with a high proportion of poets. Spinifex published Bobis's first collection of poetry and drama, *Summer Was a Fast Train Without Terminals*, in 1998.

When Merlinda Bobis approached Spinifex Press with an unsolicited manuscript for *White Turtle* the publisher Susan Hawthorne found herself unable to refuse it, despite an earlier resolution not to publish books in the commercially marginal genre of short fiction. Short stories are notoriously difficult to sell and are almost always a non-commercial proposition for a publisher. As a consequence, very few short fiction manuscripts secure publication in Australia without the assistance of a subsidy. However, the stories in *White Turtle* were of a high quality. The opening short story in the collection, 'An Earnest Parable', had won the ABC Radio National *Books and Writing* Short Story Competition in 1997, and the short story 'White Turtle' had won the 1998 Ashes Trans-Tasman Short Story Competition. Other stories in the collection had also been published in the literary journals *Australian Short Stories*, *HEAT*, *Hecate*,

Philippine Free Press, *Philippine Graphic*, *Picador New Writing* and *Southerly*. Hawthorne remembers how *White Turtle* challenged her resolve: 'When Merlinda's manuscript came in, I couldn't say no to it ... it's our exception' (2000).

Spinifex Press in Australia and De La Salle University Press in the Philippines released *White Turtle* simultaneously in 1999 as a paperback of 189 pages with a recommended retail price of A\$21.95. The print run was 200, as is typical for a collection of poetry or short fiction published by any small independent press.

On publication, *White Turtle* was widely and positively reviewed in Australia and the Philippines as well as in the US. At least two critics describe Merlinda Bobis as a 'translated woman', 'a woman who has been carried across different cultures and who consequently cannot be defined by making exclusive reference to any of them' (Herrero Granado, 2003). Libe Garcia Zarranz points out that Bobis 'succeeded in giving voice to a myriad variety of complex and fascinating female characters' (2007). On this note, a reviewer in *Generation Asia* (1999) writes:

Just as the scent of guavas, papayas and lemon grass lulls the reader into a false sense of security Bobis runs out, machete waving, to cut down all the stereotypes about Asian women, migration, love, hope, storytelling and everything else. Then she soothes your wounds again with the healing power of her delicious imagery and her wickedly wild and whimsical imagination.

As in this response, most critics focus on Bobis's commanding mix of social commentary, dazzling storytelling, and original and quirky language use. In the *Australian Women's Book Review* (1999), Judith Gleeson writes:

Like the white turtle of the title story, her words materialise themselves. It is a difficult writing to categorise – it slides and dives between something which is, but isn't, magic realism ... More effective than any detached post-colonial analysis are Bobis's delicate delineations of ordinary lives in juxtapositions of poverty and wealth which transcend stereotypes or easy sentiment ... All these stories spin their substance out of a delight in language together with an acute sensitivity to the social.

This innovative poetics is captured by Jennifer Maiden writing in *Overland* (2001). Maiden observes that *White Turtle* is 'a skilful, unusual and energetically symbolist collection of short stories'. She explains:

The surreal is used memorably as metaphor for social protest. ... There are powerful and realistic Philippines settings in most of the stories and the emotional and economic details are poignant and give tragic resonance to the symbolism, which as a result becomes a tool for explanation, analysis and sometimes ribald, didactic humour rather than self-conscious experimentation.

White Turtle went on to win the Queensland Steele Rudd Australian Short Story Award (joint winner,

2000) and the National Book Award, Manila Critics Circle, Fiction Section (joint winner, 2000).

In 2000, Spinifex Press sold North American rights for *White Turtle* to Aunt Lute Books on the West Coast of the US, where the book was released under a new title for the North American market, *The Kissing* (Hawthorne, 2005, p. 107). *The Kissing* (2001) won the Judges' Choice Award at the Bumbershoot Bookfair, Seattle Arts Festival, 2001.

Ten years after publication, almost the entire initial small print run has sold. In January 2008, as part of its commitment to making its list available in digital format, Spinifex Press released *White Turtle* as an eBook, available for direct purchase via the web, or via its agents in the UK, US and Europe.

Author's literary career

Born in 1959 in the Philippines, Merlinda Bobis came to Australia in 1991 on an AusAID scholarship to undertake a doctorate in creative writing at the University of Wollongong. At that time, she was a published author with three titles to her credit in the Philippines: *Rituals: Selected Poems, 1985–1990* (1990), *Ang Lipad ay Awit sa Apat na Hangin / Flight is Song on Four Wings* (bilingual edition, 1990), and *Daragang Magayon/Cantata of the Warrior Woman* (bilingual edition, 1993).

Although Bobis already had several Philippine national awards for her bilingual poems to her credit and had twice won the Palanca Award, the Philippines' most prestigious literary prize, she was not easily accepted by the Australian literary community (Manila, 2000). During her early years in Australia, she received rejection slips for several poems she submitted to literary journals. It was not until her radio play, *Rita's Lullaby*, about child prostitution and militarisation, won the prestigious Prix Italia Award for radio fiction (1998) as well as the Australian Writers' Guild (Awgie) Award (1998) and the Ian Reed Radio Drama Prize (1995) that Bobis gained recognition in Australia.

Spinifex published Bobis's fourth title, a collection of poetry and drama, *Summer Was a Fast Train Without Terminals* in 1998. It was short-listed for the Age Book of the Year Award 1998. In 1999, Bobis was awarded a three-month writing fellowship at the Australian National University, Canberra University and the Australian Defence Force Academy. In the same year, Merlinda Bobis's second Spinifex title, *White Turtle*, was published with the support of a Literature Board subsidy. This was her first work of fiction. By this time, too, Bobis was well known as a performance poet who had performed for audiences in Australia, the Philippines, France and China (Spinifex Press, 2009b).

The short story, 'Fish-haired Woman', which appears in *White Turtle* has acted as a springboard for some of the author's later creative works. In 2002, with the support of a NSW Ministry of the Arts Writer's Fellowship, Bobis commenced a novel (in progress) based on 'Fish-haired Woman'. Four years later, in 2006, Jane Ulman produced a radio adaptation of 'Fish-haired Woman' for ABC Radio, and in 2009 Bobis performed her one-woman play

River, River (also adapted from 'Fish-haired Woman') in the US and Spain (Bobis, 2008).

Merlinda Bobis has also had two novels published – *Banana Heart Summer* (Pier 9, Murdoch Books Australia, 2005) and *The Solemn Lantern Maker* (Pier 9, Murdoch Books Australia, 2008) – and her plays have been produced on stage and radio in Australia, the Philippines, Spain, the US, France, China, Thailand and the Slovak Republic (Bobis, 2008). In 2006, her first novel *Banana Heart Summer* won the Gintong Aklat Award/Golden Book Award in the Philippines, and was short-listed for the Australian Literature Society Gold Medal. Also in 2006, Bobis received the Balagtas Award in the Philippines, a lifetime achievement award for her fiction and poetry.

Merlinda Bobis is now acknowledged as an accomplished poet and performer of her own work as well as an important dramatist, storyteller and novelist. Her literary career in Australia was launched in part by Spinifex Press when it published her *Summer Was a Fast Train Without Terminals* (1998) and *White Turtle* (1999), the latter with the assistance of a Literature Board publishing subsidy.

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Wolf Notes

Wolf Notes is a collection of poetry by Judith Beveridge. It was published by Giramondo Publishing Company in December 2003 with the assistance of a Literature Board publishing subsidy.

In 2003, the Giramondo Publishing Company received its first book publishing subsidies from the Literature Board. It was granted \$13,000 for titles including *Wolf Notes* by Judith Beveridge; *The Sleep of a Learning Man*, a poetry collection by Anthony Lawrence; and essay collections *The Idea of Home* by John Hughes and Louis Nowra's *Chihuahuas, Women and Me: Essays* (Australia Council, 2004, p. 67; Indyk, 2009a).

Giramondo is a small independent Australian-owned company which was originally established in 1995 to publish the literary magazine *HEAT*. It began publishing books in 2002 and describes itself as: 'An independent university-based Australian literary publisher of award-winning poetry, fiction and non-fiction, renowned for the quality of its writing, editing and book-design' (2009). Giramondo Publishing Company is supported by and located at the University of Western Sydney.

Wolf Notes was originally published in October 2003 as a B-format paperback of 128 pages. It was produced on high-quality paper and its cover featured a reproduction of the painting *Floral Design with Tiger Lily*, by contemporary Australian artist Tony Clark. The initial print run for *Wolf Notes* was 1,000.

In the months following its release, *Wolf Notes* was reviewed in the *Canberra Times*, the *Age*, the *Sydney Morning Herald* and the *Weekend Australian*. It was also reviewed in *Australian Book Review*, *Australian Women's Book Review* and on the ABC Radio National program *Books and Writing*. Poetry and literary journals *Five Bells*, *Island*, *Southerly*, *Overland* and *Space: New Writing* also published reviews.

The reviews were positive, with many welcoming this new collection from Judith Beveridge, the first in seven years. Barry Hill begins his review in the *Weekend Australian*: 'Judith Beveridge is one of Australia's best poets and *Wolf Notes*, her third book, is her best so far' (2004).

Several critics remark on the pleasing production values of the book including the 'generous formatting of the poems, plush paper, and a beautiful cover painting' (Vickery, 2003). All note the poetic skill apparent in the works that make up *Wolf Notes*. The poetry is described as displaying 'authoritative composure' (Strauss, 2004) and as 'aesthetically polished and clean' (Vickery, 2003). Geoff Page writes of Judith Beveridge's 'poetic skill', her 'watchful compassion' and 'craftsmanship' (2004), and Barry Hill describes the poems in the central sequence, 'Between the Palace and the Bodhi Tree' as 'ravishingly good poems' (2004).

One reviewer suggests that the poems in the collection's central sequence, with their focus on the journey of Siddhattha Gotama to 'Buddhahood', 'somewhat depend on the reader's interest in the story' (McLaren, 2004, p. 187).

Wolf Notes won the Queensland Premier's Literary Awards, Arts Queensland Judith Wright Calanthe Prize for Poetry in 2004 and the Victorian Premier's Literary Awards, the C. J. Dennis Prize for Poetry 2004. It was short-listed for the Festival Awards for Literature (SA), John Bray Award for Poetry 2006 and the Age Book of the Year Award, Poetry, 2004. This critical recognition of *Wolf Notes* – along with the awards won by Giramondo's very first publication, *Shanghai Dancing*, a novel by Brian Castro – helped establish the reputation of Giramondo as a new publisher of quality literary titles.

Prior to its publication in *Wolf Notes*, the sequence of poems 'Between the Palace and the Bodhi Tree' won the Josephine Ulrick Poetry Prize 2003. The Prize is a national poetry prize administered by Griffith University and awarded annually by the Josephine Ulrick and Win Schubert Foundation.

The initial print run of 1,000 was exhausted by 2007 when *Wolf Notes* was listed on the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) Literature List for the period 2008–2010. A second edition with a new cover and a print run of 1,500 was published in late 2007 in the Giramondo Poetry Classics Series. There was a second print run of this edition in late 2009. According to publisher Ivor Indyk, with sales to date of about 2,500 copies, *Wolf Notes* is Giramondo's best-selling poetry collection. He noted that Giramondo poetry collections usually sell between 400–600 copies (2009b).

Anthology rights to some of the poems in *Wolf Notes* have been sold, as have broadcast rights to several of the poems. *Cut by Stars* (2007), a spoken-word CD, includes selected works from all of Judith Beveridge's published collections: *Wolf Notes*, *Accidental Grace* and *The Domesticity of Giraffes*. It was recorded and produced by Carol Jenkins for River Road Press in 2007 (River Road Press, 2009).

Author's literary career

Judith Beveridge has been writing poetry since 1974. Black Lightning Press (a small NSW-based poetry publishing company, now defunct), published her first collection of poetry, *The Domesticity of Giraffes*, in 1987. The collection was well received. It won the Mary Gilmore Award in 1988, presented by the Association for the Study of Australian Literature for the best first book of poetry. *The Domesticity of Giraffes* also won the NSW State Literary Award for Poetry in 1988 and the Victorian Premier's Literary Awards, CJ Dennis Award for Poetry 1988. Poems from the collection were adopted for study in the NSW Higher School Certificate.

Beveridge's second collection, *Accidental Grace*, which was published by the University of Queensland Press in 1996, was assisted into

publication by a Literature Board publishing subsidy. Her third collection, *Wolf Notes* appeared in 2003.

Judith Beveridge has edited a number of poetry anthologies, including *Best Australian Poetry 2006* (UQP) and is currently poetry editor for *Meanjin*. She has worked on literary journals *Hobo* and *Kalimat: An International Periodical of Creative Writing*. Judith Beveridge was a member of the Australia Council's Literature Board from 2001 to 2004.

She has received a number of fellowships and grants from the Literature Board as a 'developing writer' and, later in her career, for new work as an 'established writer'. In 2005, she was awarded a \$20,000 NSW Writer's Fellowship to complete a new collection of poetry, which was published as *Storm and Honey* by Giramondo in 2009. In 2005 also, Beveridge won the Philip Hodgins Memorial Medal.

Judith Beveridge is an established, well-known, respected and multiple award-winning Australian poet. Her poems regularly appear in annual 'Best Australian' poetry anthologies and in literary journals and her work is represented in the 2009 *Macquarie PEN Anthology of Australian Literature*. She is active in the literary community as a poet, reviewer and editor, and she has taught creative writing at Newcastle University and the University of Technology, Sydney. She currently teaches creative writing at the University of Sydney. Given her presence on educational lists at secondary level over the years, it is likely that Judith Beveridge is one of Australia's best-selling poets. Her literary career has been significantly assisted by Literature Board support, through both writers' grants and publishing subsidies.

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Appendix B.

Interview schedule

Please note that we don't intend to use a standard script and that our questions will depend on the individual we are interviewing. The following is an indicative outline of the issues to be raised with a publisher or editor during interview.

1. How would you describe your role in the publishing process in the ten years 1995–2005?
2. To what extent were you aware of Literature Board publishing subsidies and their contribution to the economies of the publishing house?
3. Can you recall specific titles that you published that required a Literature Board subsidy?
4. Who in the publishing house applied for the subsidies? What proportion of their time was committed to applying for subsidies?
5. What role did the expectation of a subsidy play in your decision to publish a title? How important was it from the point of view of the publishing house?
6. How substantial was the contribution made by a subsidy to the overall production costs of a title?
7. What kinds of books were likely to be put up for subsidy? Or, conversely, what kinds of books were not likely to be put forward?
8. Were there titles deserving of publication that couldn't be published without subsidy?
9. To what extent did the expectation of a subsidy make you more inclined to take risks as a publisher or editor? Can you give an example/s?
10. What expectation did you have of educational adoptions, generally, and in relation to specific texts? What was the impact of these adoptions?
11. What experience (if any) did you have of delays and substitutions in your dealings with Literature Board subsidies? Can you give an example/s?
12. How difficult or onerous were the processes of applying for and acquitting subsidies? Was it sufficient to discourage your application?
13. What role, if any, do you think subsidies play in sustaining particular genres?
14. What is your view of the Australia Council logo on assisted books?
15. Can you suggest anything else that might assist the project's research on the effectiveness of Literature Board subsidies? In your view, is there something that should come through strongly in our findings?

Appendix C.

Publishers interviewed

	Publishing company and position/s held within the 1995–2005 period
Sue Abbey	University of Queensland Press (Senior/Commissioning Editor)
Rhonda Black	Aboriginal Studies Press (Director) and Hale & Iremonger (Publisher)
Sophie Cunningham	Allen & Unwin (Trade Publisher)
Patrick Gallagher	Allen & Unwin (Executive Chairman and former Publishing Director and Managing Director)
Juno Gemes	Paper Bark Press (Director)
Gail Hannah and Kevin Pearson	Black Pepper Publishing (Directors and Publishers)
Susan Hawthorne	Spinifex Press (Director and Publisher)
Michael Heyward	Text Publishing (Director and Publisher)
Ivor Indyk	Giramondo Publishing (Director and Publisher)
Stephanie Johnston	Wakefield Press (Director and Publisher)
Craig Munro	University of Queensland Press (Publishing Manager)
Clive Newman	Fremantle Arts Centre Press (General Manager)
Jane Palfreyman	Random House Australia (Publishing Director, Head of Publishing and Executive Publisher)
Ron Pretty	Five Islands Press (Director and Publisher)
Bob Sessions	Penguin Books Australia (Publishing Director)
Bruce Sims	Magabala Books (Publisher) and Penguin Books Australia (Publisher)
Veronica Sumegi	Brandl & Schlesinger (Publishing Director)

Appendix D.

Case study template

Title

Author

Publisher [description of company and/or list]

Literature Board publishing subsidy [year/amount/category [first, second, third work of fiction, non-fiction, poetry, etc.] / other titles and genres assisted in the funding round]

Description of book [genre, format, pagination, initial print run, RRP]

Release date

Reviews and summary of critical reception

Awards [including shortlists]

Sales

Reprints

Rights sales [overseas markets, translations, other formats]

Other formats [audio books, broadcasts, film or television, e-books]

Educational adoptions

Author's literary career [previous work, Literature Board grants, awards, reputation]

Appendix E.

Major literary awards

National awards

Miles Franklin Literary Award

Australian Literature Society Gold Medal

ASAL (Association for the Study of Australian Literature):

Mary Gilmore Award for a First Book of Poetry

Walter McRae Russell Award for Literary Scholarship

Magarey Medal (for a biography on an Australian subject by a women writer)

The Australian/Vogel National Literary Award

(For unpublished manuscripts of fiction, history or biography by Australian authors under 35 years)

NBC Banjo Awards *(Discontinued in 1998)*

NBC Turnbull Fox Phillips Poetry Prize; Fiction; and Non-Fiction

Barbara Jefferis Award

(best novel by an Australian author that depicts women and girls in a positive way)

Nita Kibble Literary Award

(life writing by Australian women writers)

Children's Book Council Book of the Year Award

Book of the Year Award

Book of the Year: Older Readers

Eve Pownall Award

Book of the Year: Early Childhood

Book of the Year: Younger Readers; Picture Book of the Year

Colin Roderick Award

(For a book on any aspect of Australian life)

David Unaipon Award

(For unpublished manuscripts in any genre by Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander writers)

The Age Book of the Year Awards

Best Book

Fiction

Non-fiction

Dinny O'Hearn Poetry Prize

National Biography Award

Patrick White Award

State awards

(Most state-based awards are open to all Australian authors; entry to some is limited to residents of the state)

Western Australian Premier's Book Awards

Premier's Prize, Fiction Award, Poetry Award, Children's, Non-Fiction, Writing for Young Adults.

T. A. G. Hungerford Award for Fiction

(For unpublished manuscripts from West Australian writers not published before in book form)

Victorian Premier's Literary Awards

C.J. Dennis Prize for Poetry

The Nettie Palmer Prize for Non-Fiction

The Vance Palmer Prize for Fiction

Shaeffer Pen Prize for First Fiction

A. Phillips Prize for Australian Studies

Prize for Young Adult Fiction

Prize for an Unpublished Manuscript by an Emerging Victorian Writer

Dinny O'Hearn Prize for Literary Translation

Prize for Indigenous Writing

The Grollo Ruzzene Foundation Prize for Writing about Italians in Australia

Festival Awards for Literature (South Australia)

National Fiction Award

John Bray Award for Poetry

National Children's Award

Award for Innovation in Writing

Award for an Unpublished Manuscript by a SA Emerging Writer to be Published by Wakefield Press

Premier's Award for the Best Overall Published Work

Award for Non-Fiction

New South Wales Premier's Literary Awards

Book of the Year

Kenneth Slessor Prize for Poetry

Christina Stead Prize for Fiction

Douglas Stewart Prize for Non-Fiction

The Ethel Turner Prize for Young People's Literature

Gleebooks Prize for Literary or Cultural Criticism

Prize for Literary Scholarship

Translation Prize and PEN Medallion

Patricia Wrightson Prize for Children's Literature

UTS Glenda Adams Award for New Writing

Community Relations Commission Award

Queensland Premier's Literary Awards

Steele Rudd Australian Short Story Award

Judith Wright Calanthe Prize for Poetry

Best Children's Book

Best Fiction Book

Best History Book

Best Manuscript of an Emerging Queensland Author

Best Literary or Media Work Advancing Public Debate – the Harry Williams Award

Best Non-Fiction Book

Best Young Adult Book (from 1999)

Tasmania Book Prize (*Awarded from 2005*)

International awards

Commonwealth Writers' Prize

Best First Book Award, South-East Asia and Pacific Region

International IMPAC Dublin Literary Award

Orange Prize for Fiction

Man Booker Prize

Samuel Johnson Prize for Non-Fiction