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Maiden Voyagers: Exhibiting the Autonomy of Travelling Women to Western Australia, 1818-1830

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THE UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME AUSTRALIA

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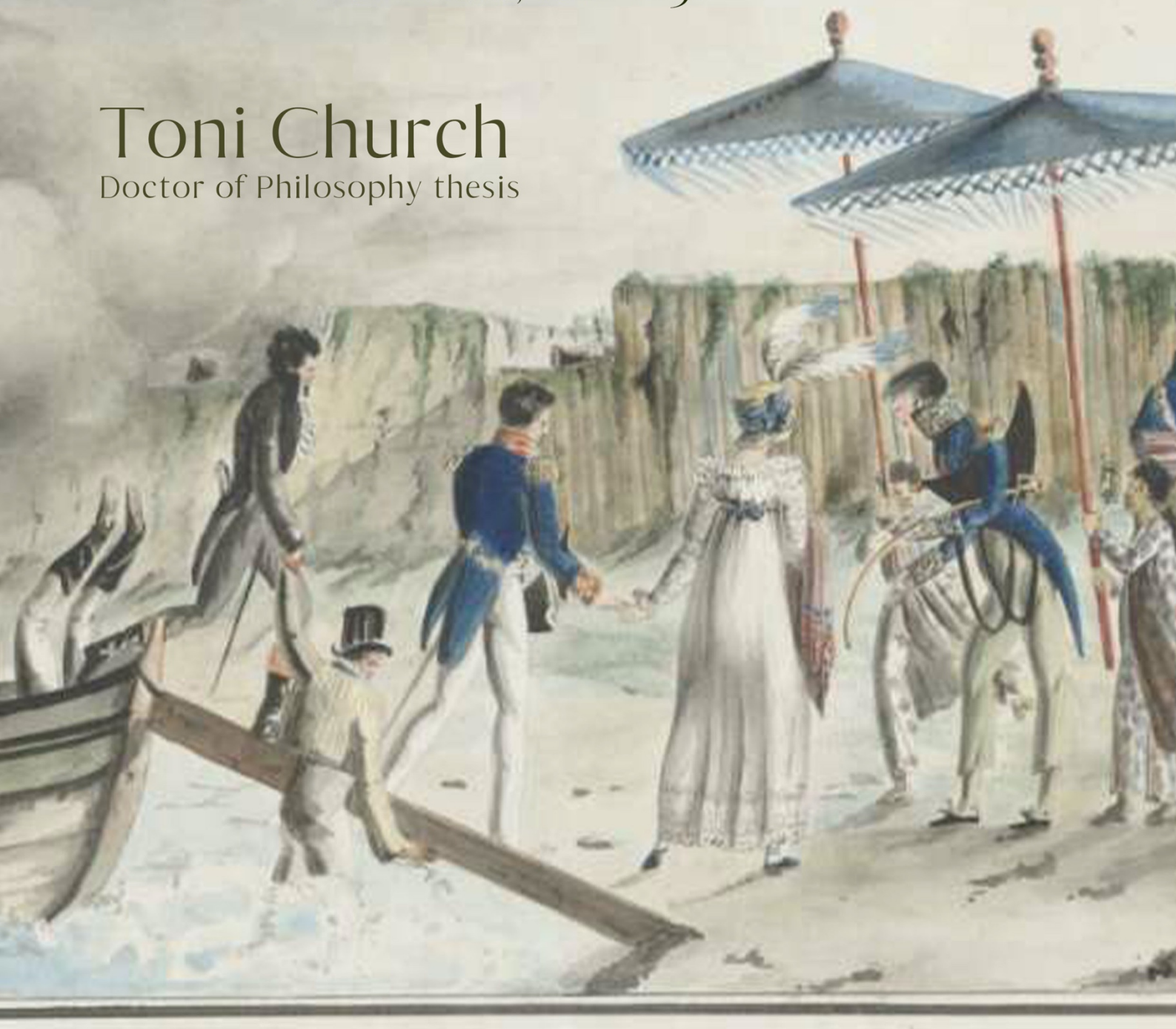
Doctor of Philosophy thesis



THESIS

Maiden Voyagers

Exhibiting the autonomy of travelling women to Western Australia, 1818-1830

A thesis submitted in the fulfilment of a
Doctor of Philosophy

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DECLARATION

To the best of the candidate's knowledge, this thesis contains no material previously published by another person, except where due acknowledgement has been made.

This thesis is the candidate's own work and contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any institution.

Signature _____

Date 7 December 2021

ABSTRACT

My thesis appraises critical problems of current museum practice concerning women, particularly interpretations of the physical female form and autonomous behaviours, through a wide-ranging field work study and in-depth analysis of recent Australian museum exhibitions and surveys of international exhibitions online. A working understanding of New Museology and empathetic museum practice was derived from this fieldwork experience and complemented by an academic study of museological theory to formulate future museum best practices. The second part of the thesis critiques written records and other artefacts to investigate autonomous behaviours in the experiences of European women who travelled to Western Australia in the early nineteenth century, in particular Rose de Freycinet and Mary Ann Friend. A critical analysis of Relational Autonomy theory was applied to these experiences and informed the treatment of the archival material in the third part of the thesis. Part three determines achievable methods of curating and displaying authentic representations of historical women in museum exhibitions and includes the design of a museum exhibition that applies empathetic best museum practices to stories of Freycinet, Friend and other autonomous travelling women.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to acknowledge all Aboriginal people on whose country this thesis was dreamt and delivered. Their sovereignty remains unceded, as it was when they were visited by the women whose stories are told in this thesis. I pay my respect to past elders and vow to walk alongside those in the present and future towards a shared history of truth-telling and treaty.

Thank you to my principal supervisor, Professor Deborah Gare, for your guidance, generosity and genuine friendship but most importantly, for one auspicious phone call in early 2016 that brought me home and set me on a life-changing path over the past five years. Many thanks also to Dr Leigh Straw for guiding me to the finish line. You are a remarkable woman and a true friend.

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To my friends and family: you'll see more of me now, I promise! Your love and support gives me the strength to do the mad things I continually over-commit myself to. My husband Paul, my partner in life and over-commitment, you inspire me every day with your intelligence, ambition, selfless empathy and by being an absolute dork.

I dedicate this thesis to my parents: Dario, for demonstrating that curiosity leads to a life well lived and instilling from a young age (by sticking it on the back of our family station wagon) that "chicks kick arse"; and Mum, for gifting me your tenacious spirit (it's not stubbornness) and instilling a drive to always do my best. It really does bring its own rewards.

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List of Publications

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INTRODUCTION

MAIDEN VOYAGERS

Left: "Emigrant Ship, Between Decks", lithograph, London, 1850. Sydney Living Museums.

INTRODUCTION

MAIDEN VOYAGERS

The Scientific Revolution and the Enlightenment were vital cultural forces that propelled European nations across the world in acts of exploration and colonisation. Religion dominated the lives of Europeans for centuries, providing social and cultural order until the sixteenth-century movement labelled as the Scientific Revolution provided an alternative intellectual basis to the understanding of life.[1] As scientific understandings modernised, it became fashionable to combine scientific methods with philosophical rationalism, which evolved into the Enlightenment.[2] From the middle of the eighteenth century, the Enlightenment brought with it widespread interest in the world, expanding the horizons of European nations, who competed in the gain of scientific enquiry, which fuelled international trade and competition for empire-building.[3] Colonial intent was often masked by scientific expeditions and prompted almost all European engagement in the Pacific and around the Australian continent—*Terra Australis* was largely uncharted by Europeans until the late eighteenth century.[4] Royal and government expeditions, particularly French, but also English and Dutch, increased the reach of favourable trade markets. The expertise of natural scientists, travelling aboard what were effectively "floating laboratories", was used to further colonial agendas, centralising

[1] John Gascoigne and Patricia Curthoys, *The Enlightenment and the Origins of European Australia* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 1-6.

[2] Marthe Melguen, "French Voyages of Exploration and Science in the Age of Enlightenment: An Ocean of Discovery Throughout the Pacific Ocean," in *30th Annual Conference of the International Association of Aquatic and Marine Science Libraries and Information Centers (IAMSLIC)* ed. J.W. Markham and A.L. Duda (Fort Pierce, FL2005), 32.

[3] Londa L. Schiebinger, *Plants and Empire: Colonial Bioprospecting in the Atlantic World*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009), ProQuest Ebook Central, 36; John Gascoigne, *Encountering the Pacific in the Age of the Enlightenment* (Port Melbourne, VIC: Cambridge University Press, 2014), xvii-xx.

[4] *Encountering the Pacific in the Age of the Enlightenment*, xvii-xx; Melguen, "French Voyages of Exploration and Science in the Age of Enlightenment: An Ocean of Discovery Throughout the Pacific Ocean," 33; Western Australian Museum, "Journeys of Enlightenment: French Exploration of Terra Australes, 17 October 2008 - 30 October 2009," Western Australian Museum, www.museum.wa.gov.au/exhibitions/journeys/index.html.

materials and intellectual resources through exploration and colonisation.[5]

Voyages of Enlightenment were intensely male experiences. Women were not often included in the masculine world of science and colonisation. Purported physical dangers to travelling European women and their exclusion from employment by trading companies and governments meant that very few women participated in expeditions.[6] While the fifteenth to eighteenth centuries marked a change in the status of women, through economic, political, religious and cultural upheaval throughout Europe, there was a near constant debate over the value and scientific nature of women, which largely reaffirmed existing cultural beliefs about the status of women in society.[7] Within this cultural context, the only acceptable way for European women to travel during the Enlightenment period was with their family, usually as the wife or daughter of diplomats or missionaries.[8] These women's lives were rarely recorded in detail, almost never because of their own actions, though sometimes as a footnote of their husband's work. One such woman was Lady Ann Monson (1726-1776), who accompanied her colonel husband to various British colonial postings during the 1770s and engaged in studies of exotic plant life while living the East Indies, Cape of Good Hope and India.[9] Another was the 'ardent naturalist', Maria Riddell (1772-1808), who travelled to the Caribbean and West Indies with her father William Woodley, the British governor of St Kitts and Leeward Islands in the 1790s. She published her poetry along with identification of exotic animals and plants used for medicines and cosmetics.[10] Sarah Bowdich (1791-1856) was one European woman who stepped outside the expectations of the domestic realm to engage with science. When her scientist husband died during an expedition in Africa, leaving her alone in a foreign country with their three children in 1823, Bowdich continued his scientific work; collecting plants, making engravings, drying specimens and arranging papers for publication, based on their work together, and published under both of their

[5] Schiebinger, *Plants and Empire: Colonial Bioprospecting in the Atlantic World*, 35-36; William Lawrence Eisler, *The Furthest Shore : Images of Terra Australis from the Middle Ages to Captain Cook* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1995), 53.

[6] Marina Benjamin, "Introduction," in *Science and Sensibility: Gender and Scientific Enquiry*, 1780-1945, ed. Marina Benjamin (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1991), 4; Schiebinger, *Plants and Empire: Colonial Bioprospecting in the Atlantic World*, 31-32.

[7] Natalie Zemon Davis and Arlette Farge, "Women as Historical Actors," in *A History of Women in the West: Iii. Renaissance and Enlightenment Paradoxes*, ed. Natalie Zemon Davis and Arlette Farge (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1993), 3; Bonnie S. Anderson and Judith P. Zinsser, *A History of Their Own: Women in Europe from Prehistory to the Present*, 1st ed., vol. 2 (New York: Harper & Row, 1988), 91-92.

[8] Londa Schiebinger, *Nature's Body: Gender in the Making of Modern Science* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1993), 202.

[9] Schiebinger, *Plants and Empire: Colonial Bioprospecting in the Atlantic World*, 30.

[10] Schiebinger, *Nature's Body: Gender in the Making of Modern Science*, 204-05; Schiebinger, *Plants and Empire: Colonial Bioprospecting in the Atlantic World*, 30-31.

names.[11] While female authors of scientific works were unusual, women of the higher classes were avid readers and, as the nineteenth century progressed, more women published books, particularly in travel writing.

Europeans increasingly travelled for leisure during the relative peace that followed the Napoleonic wars after 1815.[12] Men could travel alone, but even towards the end of the Enlightenment era, women had to be accompanied at all times, which often made organising travel cumbersome and difficult.[13] As well as social convention that required women to be accompanied by male relatives, issues such as physical protection, class restrictions and the logistical impact of nineteenth-century women's clothing to negotiate on long voyages and expeditions.[14] Prior to the late eighteenth century, women's travel writing was not widely published, although some produced private unpublished accounts in letters and journals.[15] Women travel writers increased in popularity towards the mid-nineteenth century, particularly British, French and German authors.[16] These women wrote travel memoirs as guides for one another, much like household management guides and almanacs which had been, and continued to be, popular for centuries.[17] These travel guides involved discussions of local politics, economics, social issues, histories and sciences, arts and aesthetics, which had previously been almost exclusively masculine areas, but into which women could now trespass.[18] Despite pushing the boundaries of expectations, women travel writers were inherently treated differently by their readers, particularly editors and publishers: "women faced satire or outright censure if they appeared to overstep the norms of contemporary femininity".[19] To counteract this treatment, women travel writers frequently adopted self-effacing apologetic language, or stated forthrightly in their preface

[11] T. Edward Bowdich and Sarah Wallis Lee Bowdich, *Excursions in Madeira and Porto Santo, During the Autumn of 1823, While on His Third Voyage to Africa*, (London: G.B. Whittaker, 1825), Smithsonian Libraries; Schiebinger, *Plants and Empire: Colonial Bioprospecting in the Atlantic World*, 31.

[12] Deborah Gare, "A Book of Empires: The Journal of Mary Ann Friend, 1829-31," *The Great Circle: Journal of the Australian Association for Maritime History* 36, no. 2 (2014): 6; Benjamin Colbert, "British Women's Travel Writing, 1780-1840: Bibliographical Reflections," *Women's Writing* 24, no. 2 (2017): 161.

[13] Alison Alexander, *The Ambitions of Jane Franklin: Victorian Lady Adventurer* (Crows Nest, NSW: Allen & Unwin, 2013), 35-42.

[14] David Seed, "Nineteenth-Century Travel Writing: An Introduction," *The Yearbook of English Studies* 34 (2004): 1-2.

[15] Carl Thompson, "Journeys to Authority: Travel Writing and the Rise of the Woman of the Letters a Special Issue of Women's Writing," Women's Writing 22, no. 1 (2015): 2.

[16] Helga Schutte Watt, "Ida Pfeiffer: A Nineteenth-Century Woman Travel Writer," *The German Quarterly* 64, no. 3 (1991): 339.

[17] Gare, "A Book of Empires: The Journal of Mary Ann Friend, 1829-31," 6; Isabella Beeton, The *Book of Household Management*, vols 1-3 (London 1859-1861), The Ex-classics Project, 2009, http://www.exclassics.com.

[18] Carl Thompson, "Journeys to Authority: Reassessing Women's Early Travel Writing, 1763-1862," 136.

[19] Ibid., 132.

their apology to the reader for not being professional writers, emphasising that "the author does not write for money or fame, but to provide pleasure and useful instructions for friends".[20] More commonly, women's travel accounts were written privately, addressed to close friends or family members, and reveal much about their experiences and true feelings of people and places visited.

The journal of Rose de Freycinet (1794-1832) is one such account, proving to be a significant resource in understanding the experiences and expectations of early nineteenth-century European women as they willingly engaged in the exploration and travel of the Enlightenment.[21] Freycinet stowed away on *L'Uranie*, conspiring with her husband, the captain, so they would not be parted during his planned three-year expedition around the world.[22] Her stowing away wasn't just for love. The journal Freycinet kept onboard—written as a series of letters to her close friend, Baronne Caroline de Nantueil (née Barillon)—demonstrated a keen spirit of enquiry and observation.[23] Freycinet was well educated, socially and politically engaged, and provided commentary on the scientific discoveries, international diplomacy and critical ethnography of colonial cultures she encountered.[24] Yet official records of the expedition did not include her account of the journey, and Freycinet did not publish her journal, so many of her contributions to the expedition have been forgotten by past accounts. Freycinet's encounters with the western coast of Australia are of particular interest in my research, as she provided an in-depth account of Western Australia prior to colonisation by the British in 1829. Her scientific, religious and ethnographic observations demonstrate her intelligence, the depth of her curiosity in learning about the world around her, and contribute to understandings of autonomous expression in early nineteenth-century women's travel writing.

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[20] Colbert, "British Women's Travel Writing, 1780-1840: Bibliographical Reflections," 155-56; Seed, "Nineteenth-Century Travel Writing: An Introduction," 1.

[21] Madame Rose Marie Pinon de Saulces de Freycinet, *Journal De Madame Rose De Saulces De Freycinet D'apres Le Manuscript Original / Accompagne De Notes Par Charles Duplomb* (Paris: Societe d' Editions geographiques maritimes et coloniales, 1927); Sir William Dixon, "Journal of a Voyage Round the World, 1817-1820 by Rose Marie De Saulces Freycinet a Translation into English by Sir William Dixson," ed. State Library of New South Wales; Marc Serge Rivière, *A Woman of Courage: The Journal of Rose De Freycinet on Her Voyage around the World 1817-1820*, trans. Marc Serge Rivière (Canberra: National Library of Australia, 1996).

[22] Rivière, *A Woman of Courage: The Journal of Rose De Freycinet on Her Voyage around the World 1817-1820,* xix; Marnie Bassett, *Realms and Islands: The World Voyage of Rose De Freycinet in the Corvette Uranie, 1817-1820* (London: Oxford University Press, 1962), 3.

[23] Rivière, *A Woman of Courage: The Journal of Rose De Freycinet on Her Voyage around the World 1817-1820*, vii; Michael McCarthy, "Rose and Louis De Freycinet in the Uranie: An Illustrated Research Essay for the W.A. Museum's Journeys of Enlightenment Exhibition 2008," (Fremantle, WA: Department of Maritime Archaeology, Western Australian Museum, 2008), 8.

[24] Rivière, *A Woman of Courage: The Journal of Rose De Freycinet on Her Voyage around the World 1817-1820*, vii; McCarthy, "Rose and Louis De Freycinet in the Uranie: An Illustrated Research Essay for the W.A. Museum's Journeys of Enlightenment Exhibition 2008," 8.

Equally, the diary written by Mary Ann Friend (1800-1838) during her voyage from 1829 to 1831 on the *Wanstead* is an extraordinary artefact of early nineteenth-century travel writing, by a well-educated woman of relatively humble means, whose strength of curiosity in the world around her spurred her writing. Her diary was addressed to her sister, Maria Cosgreaves, in open language, at times informal and even colloquial, and more revealing of true feeling than sanitised for public consumption or the eyes of officials who received formal reports from similar voyages made by imperial ships.[25] She accompanied her husband, the ship's captain, Lieutenant Matthew Curling Friend RN (1792-1871), in an expedition to colonial outposts of the British Empire. During that time she engaged in studies of science, art, ethnography, religion and the processes of colonisation.[26] In framing her narrative, Friend reinforced her nineteenth-century gender expectations—particularly those of a dutiful captain's wife—though simultaneously, by virtue of her active and autonomous participation in such a voyage, she is anathema to these expectations. Friend's experiences of Swan River are particularly significant, as she arrived in January 1830, just a few months after the initial settlement by the British. She details the international interest in the development of Britain's new imperial outpost, juxtaposed with the despondency and harsh conditions experienced by the early colonists.[27] Like Freycinet's account of her own expedition, Friend did not intend to publish her diary, and so her reflections are those written for consumption by family and close friends. Her husband's log, on the other hand, was kept as the official record of the voyage. Yet the personal nature of the communication in the women's journals provides the reader with a depth of insight not possible in official accounts and adds further layers of social and cultural understanding to the expeditions.

Curating Enlightened Women

Traditionally, museums have struggled to authentically interpret and represent women as autonomous individuals in their collections and exhibitions. That is, that women live through self-determined actions. Institutions have been slower to reflect and adapt to the social changes in attitudes towards the recognition of women in public life, particularly compared to university-based academic research (to which museum-based research is closely aligned). [28] This has become

[25] Mary Ann Friend, "Typescript of Mary Ann Friend's Journal of a Voyage to Hobart with Account of the Settlement on the Swan River, 1829-1831," in ACC4453A (J.S. Battye Library of Western Australian History, 1829-1831), 4.

[26] Gare, "A Book of Empires: The Journal of Mary Ann Friend, 1829-31," 10.

[27] Friend, "Typescript of Mary Ann Friend's Journal of a Voyage to Hobart with Account of the Settlement on the Swan River, 1829-1831," 11-18, 41-43, 65.

[28] Alison Bartlett and Margaret Henderson, "Feminism and the Museum in Australia: An Introduction," *Journal of Australian Studies* 40, no. 2 (2016): 130-32.

problematic as museums, increasingly since the 1990s, have been expected to engage more meaningfully with their audiences who, in turn, have adopted more modern social attitudes than have been displayed in exhibitions. French historian and museologist Hugues de Varine has summarised this audience interaction by stating that "at the center [sic] of this idea of a museum lie not things, but people".[29] To connect with people, curators and the museum administration must understand and actively engage with their broader community and culture.[30]

A striking example of aged curatorial language jarring with audience expectations of female representation was the display of the life and work of Elizabeth Gould (1804-1841), a scientific artist in colonial Australia. Gould featured in both Melbourne Museum, and a temporary exhibition titled *Bird Woman* at Allport Library and Museum of Fine Arts (State Library of Tasmania) in Hobart, on display from September 2017.[31] In both galleries, Gould was presented as the wife of John Gould, whose publication *Birds of Australia* was a definitive nineteenth-century text on native ornithology. Traditionally, Gould's work was overshadowed by her husband, as he assumed credit for her artistic work after her death which effectively removed her contribution within historical memory.[32] The permanent, and arguably out-dated, display at Melbourne Museum reinforces this narrative by giving little recognition to Gould's accomplishments as an artist, instead emphasising her domestic work as a wife and mother.[33] Alternatively, Allport Library and Museum characterised Gould as an artist in her own right, who developed her craft through travel with her husband and honed her scientific observation while in Tasmania in order to produce the acclaimed imagery in her husband's publication.[34] The difference in characterisation in these exhibitions is significant because it highlights the impact of interpretation of a single subject through language, and reflects the changes in museum practice towards greater inclusivity of feminist historiography and acceptance in wider historical memory in Australia.[35]

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[29] Hugues de Varine, quoted in Andrea Hauenschild, "Claims and Reality of New Museology: Case Studies in Canada, the United States and Mexico" (Hamburg University, 1988), 5.

[30] Michelle Henning, Museums, Media and Cultural Theory (Maidenhead, England: Open University Press, 2006), 3.

31 'Evolution Gallery,' Melbourne Museum; Jess Walters, 'Bird Woman: Elizabeth Gould and the Birds of Australia,' Tasmanian Archive and Heritage Blog, 7 November 2017, https://archivesandheritageblog.libraries.tas.gov.au/bird-woman-elizabeth-gould-and-the-birds-of-australia/; Toni Church, "Body and Language: Enlivening Exhibitions of Colonial Women in Australian Museums," Lilith: A Feminist History Journal, no. 26 (2020): 44-47.

32 Walters, 'Bird Woman'.

33 'Evolution Gallery,' Melbourne Museum.

[34] 'Bird Woman,' Allport Library and Museum of Fine Arts.

[35] Church, "Body and Language," 45.

Modern empathetic museum practice recognises that "the present always shapes the narrative of an exhibition", which means that museums can no longer maintain historical distance between their content and collections, and modern movements of social justice and oppression beyond the museum's walls.[36] Although rooted in modernity, this practice can also encompass revisionist historical interpretations of existing collections; reinterpreting curatorial content to encompass more diverse perspectives and representations of historical characters. Particularly for women's histories, this can mean drawing out their autonomy from behind the patriarchal framework that has previously dominated western interpretations of history, such as in the voyages of Enlightenment expanded upon elsewhere in this thesis. By promoting diversity within curatorial staff and focussing on "warm engagement" between objects and audiences, museums can broaden the focus of their collections and displays to be more inclusive of historical narratives that have existed, but have not traditionally been represented. [37]

Research Problem and Aims

Museums have been called 'memory machines': institutions that organise the past "for the purposes of the present".[38] In curating collective memory, museums develop and sustain 'imagined communities' that inform understandings of history, place, belonging and identity.[39] Now, New Museology insists that museum experiences must also be empathetic—that, through research, they create inclusive narratives to drive social, cultural and political dialogue. "The present always shapes the narrative of an exhibition", writes Amsterdam Museum curator Annemarie Wildt, which means that museums can no longer pretend their collections are distanced from modern movements of social justice.[40]

The human rights lawyer, Geoffrey Robertson, argues that nationalist narratives of the past are dangerous, particularly when used to defend the 'universal' or 'Enlightenment' museum. He points to the impossibility of retaining the Parthenon marbles in Britain—that is, "colonial loot"—in a post-

[36] Annemarie Wildt, "The City Museum as an Empathic Space," *Museum International* 70, no. 3-4 (2018): 75.

[37] Gordon Fyfe, "Sociology and the Social Aspects of Museums," ed. Sharon Macdonald, *A Companion to Museum Studies* (Chicester: Wiley, 2008), ProQuest Ebook Central. 42; Hilde Stern Hein, "Redressing the Museum in Feminist Theory," *Museum Management and Curatorship* 22, no. 1 (2007): 38.

[38] Henning, *Museums, Media and Cultural Theory*, 129.

[39] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism* (New York: Verso, 1991); Geoffrey Robertson, *Who Owns History? Elgin's Loot and the Case for Returning Plundered Treasure* (London: Knopf, 2019), EPub.

[40] Wildt, "The City Museum as an Empathic Space," 75.

colonial world.[41] But we can just as easily argue that the same kinds of narratives have denied women agency and disguised their autonomy within collections. Women have been curated as passive players; visitors read explicit and implicit messaging about women in the positioning of mannequins, exclusionary narratives, and assumptions of gender roles. Which points, also, to the impossibility of retaining out-dated interpretations of women's autonomy in a post-#MeToo world.

We are now within the decade of Western Australia's bicentenary. It is over two hundred years since Louis de Freycinet (1779-1841) commanded an expedition to Western Australia, and nearly two hundred years since Britain established settlements in Albany and Perth. The history and heritage sectors are actively preparing for inclusive and ethical 'truth-telling' in the commemorative activities of 2026-2029. In November 2020, the state completed a once-in-a-century investment in public history, with the opening of the new Western Australian Museum Boola Bardip. Other public, private and community works are underway in readiness for the commemorative, historical and heritage activities that will drive the bicentenary. An opportunity, within that context, exists to understand participants in that story who have not previously been well understood in our museums and galleries. Herein lies the research problem of this thesis: to understand the autonomous behaviours of European women who travelled to Western Australia in the early nineteenth century, and to determine how museums might empathetically and authentically communicate women's autonomy in curated exhibitions.

It is, therefore, my aim to:

1. appraise critical problems of museum practice concerning women, particularly interpretations of the female form and autonomous behaviours, to formulate future museum best practices;
2. critique written records and other artefacts to investigate autonomous behaviours of European women who travelled to Western Australia in the early nineteenth century; and
3. determine achievable methods of curating and displaying authentic representations of historical women in museum exhibitions; in order to
4. design an exhibition that applies empathetic, best museum practices to stories of autonomous, travelling women.

Structure and Method

Throughout this thesis, I refer to extensive fieldwork that I carried out in museums and galleries across Australia and others, including internationally, that I researched online. I also accessed written records

[41] Robertson, *Who Own History?*, EPub.

and other artefacts related to European women who travelled to Western Australia, including diaries, letters, sketches, engravings and museum collection items, which are used throughout.

Fieldwork undertaken from 2017 in museums and galleries across Western Australia, Melbourne, Tasmania, and Sydney informed the examples of modern best practices in Australian museums detailed in this thesis. Due to the impact of COVID-19, my exploration of exhibitions since 2020 has been limited to online surveys of collections and design. My professional experience working and volunteering in museums in Western Australia and New South Wales since 2009 further supplemented my knowledge of exhibitions and exhibition design. I gathered detailed notes and photographic records to evaluate design and visual communication methods, as well as to critique styles of language adopted to communicate exhibition text that either was, or could be, applied to women's narratives. Although the focus of my work is the early nineteenth century, there was much to learn from exhibitions of all themes. Examples of museums and cultural heritage sites that I have visited and/or worked at include the Immigration Museum, Melbourne Museum, State Library of Victoria and National Gallery Victoria (International and Ian Potter Centre) in Melbourne; Cascades Female Factory, Port Arthur Historic Site, Tasmanian Museum and Gallery, Battery Point Sculpture Walk, Allport Library and Museum and Museum of Old and New Art (MONA) in Tasmania; Museum of Sydney, Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences (Powerhouse Museum), State Library of New South Wales, Australian National Maritime Museum and Art Gallery of New South Wales in Sydney; Western Australian Maritime Museum, Old Court House Law Museum, State Library of Western Australia, Art Gallery of Western Australia and National Anzac Centre in Western Australia.

Written records and other artefacts held in various libraries and archives across Australia and the world were used to illustrate the experiences of travelling women. These include the diary of Mary Ann Friend, held in the State Library of Western Australia, digitised in both its original form and transcription. The State Library of New South Wales also contains a coloured lithograph by Friend depicting her encampment at Swan River. Swan River Colony material was made available from the State Records Office of Western Australia and the J.S. Battye Library at the State Library of Western Australia. Rose de Freycinet's diary, letters, and related artworks completed by artists aboard *L'Uranie* are held in numerous collections. A handful of translations are available online from institutions such as the State Library of New South Wales, Bibliothèque Nationale de France (Paris) and the State Library of Western Australia. Other related artefacts and museum collection items were accessed digitally and in-person from the National Library of Australia, Kerry Stokes Collection, State Library of New South Wales, Muséum Nationale d'Histoire Naturelle (Paris), Bibliothèque Nationale de France (Paris), The Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York), Ashmolean Museum Oxford and a small number of private collections made available online.

Part One: Autonomous Women and the Modern Museum

In Part One, to resolve the first aim of this thesis, I appraise critical problems of museum practice concerning women. In particular, I address interpretations of the female form and autonomous behaviours displayed in exhibitions, informing my suggestions for best museum practices of the future. Chapter One, 'Empathetic Museums and Imagined Communities' interrogates the evolution of current best practices in museums. This chapter focuses on the theoretical foundations of New Museology, as established by Peter Vergo's seminal publication in 1989, and more recent academic discussions of empathetic museum practice, particularly by authors such as Geerte Savenjie, Pieter de Bruin and Gretchen Jennings. These museological theories are rooted in visitor engagement and consideration of the meaning-making interface between the audience and the museum in all curatorial activities. Building on this, I will further study how museums are reaching beyond their walls to impact their broader social and cultural communities. This social impact work is vital to empathetic museum practice. These concurrent studies will be supplemented with real-world examples from my fieldwork.

In Chapter Two, 'The Female Form', I critically analyse the physical interpretation of women in museum exhibitions, focussing on the display of costume collections in which mannequins are used. Museums surveyed in this chapter include the National Gallery of Victoria, Art Gallery of South Australia, Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, National Anzac Centre and international travelling exhibitions. I chose to focus on costume collections as the experience and form of women in museums are frequently represented in relation to domestic or fashion collections. Further, as this chapter will elicit, there is proven emotional engagement between audiences and costume on display, a critical component of New Museology. I will engage with literature about the male gaze, beginning with Laura Mulvey and John Berger, adapting this theory to the display of costume by engaging with works by fashion historians Julia Petrov, Ingrid Mida, Joanne Entwistle and others. The purpose of this discussion is to study how mannequin displays of costume authentically reflect the historical wearer, given that the mannequins themselves mimic stereotypical and socially-constructed depictions of femininity that may not accurately represent the women who originally wore objects now held in a museum collection.

Finally, Chapter Three, 'Autonomy and the Nineteenth-Century Woman', provides a theoretical foundation to assess autonomous behaviours displayed in museum exhibitions about women. In readiness for Parts Two and Three, in which travelling women to Western Australia in the nearly nineteenth century are studied, this chapter establishes the contextual background of women's

social, cultural, and economic experiences in nineteenth-century Europe. I then apply an in-depth analysis of autonomy theories to assess the degree to which we can argue these women were autonomous. In particular, I will focus on modern Relational Autonomy theory as it has been widely applied to feminist histories as a way to demonstrate autonomy that is not recognised as being traditionally masculine. This section will rely on publications by feminist philosophy academics such as Andrea Veltman and Mark Piper, Catriona Mackenzie and Marilyn Friedman. I will then follow the example of Lynn Abrams and others, who have applied concepts of Relational Autonomy to the established contextual study of nineteenth-century European women earlier in this chapter.

Part Two: Travelling Women to Western Australia in the early nineteenth century

The second aim of this thesis is resolved in Part Two, which critiques written records and other artefacts to investigate autonomous behaviours of European women who travelled to Western Australia in the early nineteenth century. It is dependent on analysis of key primary source materials, including the journals of travelling women, published travel narratives, artwork from the expeditions and related museum collection items. Using these women's own records, such as diaries and letters, will allow for their intent, self-reflection and choices to be most clearly interpreted within the scope of Relational Autonomy, established in Part One.

Chapter Four, 'Explorers and Travellers', provides contextual background to the voyages of Enlightenment by establishing the autonomous behaviours and experiences of European women involved in the Scientific Revolution and Enlightenment. The women who travelled to Western Australia in the early nineteenth century were a product of these earlier women's active contributions to heavily masculinised academic and cultural movements. This chapter considers the impact of class, wealth and education on women's access to the scientific academies, the nature of work for European women during a period of immense social change, and how women were treated and expected to behave. A section on travel writing concludes this chapter, linking to the works of Rose de Freycinet and Mary Ann Friend.

The autonomous behaviours of Freycinet and Friend are investigated in Chapters Five and Six, respectively. These chapters are the outcome of the preceding chapters insofar as they reflect the application of Relational Autonomy theory in the critical analysis of written records and other historical materials. Freycinet and Friend's narratives are supplemented by the experiences of some of their travelling contemporaries. Themes such as their roles as wives, explorers and diplomats, scientific curiosity, ethnography and religion, among others, will guide my interpretation of their

words. This analysis will then form the curatorial subject of Part Three of the thesis and feature in simplified exhibition-style text in the Exhibition Catalogue.

Part Three: Exhibition

Part Three resolves the final aims of my research, which is to determine achievable methods of curating and displaying authentic representations of historical women in museum exhibitions, in order to design an exhibition that applies empathetic, best museum practices to stories of autonomous, travelling women. I achieve this by presenting a Curatorial Concept for a proposed exhibition, 'Maiden Voyagers: Travelling Women to Western Australia, 1818—1830', and Exhibition Catalogue.

The Curatorial Concept draws on current best practices in museums that align with New Museology and empathetic museum principles. Examples of these museums and cultural heritage sites are taken from my fieldwork and include site interpretations of the Cascades Female Factory in Hobart and travelling and temporary exhibitions at the Australian National Maritime Museum, Western Australian Museum, National Gallery of Victoria, Museums Victoria sites, State Library of Victoria, MONA and other museums and galleries. Inspired by these models of best practice, I frame my proposed exhibition within different interpretive and interactive elements in the Curatorial Concept, including the exhibition entry, textual interpretation and presentation, object display, images and soundscape, olfactory engagement, physical representation, technology and universal accessibility. This concept will be followed by an Exhibition Catalogue, which is a published representation of the exhibition's objects, themes and text, presented in an engaging and easy-to-read format.

Literature

This thesis balances museological fieldwork with multiple themes within academic literature. The key themes covered in this literature are empathetic museums theory and practice, the representation of women in museums, and autonomy and the nineteenth-century woman. These principal themes are interwoven with the aims of this thesis and thread through all three parts of the thesis structure.

Empathetic Museums

The most basic purposes of modern museums are to collect, preserve and exhibit objects for an audience.[42] Among the numerous activities in which collecting institutions engage, such as commercial enterprises, education, and conservation, their primary function is to display objects to their visitors.[43] Visitors view these objects, variously, as entertainment, education, even as a 'touchstone for their life experiences'.[44] As Macquarie University scholar Andrew Simpson has so aptly phrased "objects are 'sticky' with meaning", both intrinsic and extrinsic, with which visitors have unique engagement.[45] Engagement with objects in museums occurs through the senses—sparking memories, setting off an emotional response that ties deeply with a visitor's sense of identity and connection to the world around them.[46] Art Historian John Berger explains this sensation; "it is seeing which establishes our place in the surrounding world".[47] Through dynamic displays, museums 'activate clues' in their archives and collections, engaging with the historical consciousness of their audiences.[48] Peter Vergo has described this intellectual and emotional connection:

> Even the most cursory glance at the objects presented for our inspection, the most private act of communion between ourselves and a work of art represents a broadening of our intellectual horizons, a deepening and enriching of our experience—and hence of our education.[49]

Enriching historical consciousness builds a collective memory that is shared by communities that see themselves represented within the walls of a museum. Collective memory can bind together two people or entire nations, and although each individual visitor will have different cultural frames of reference, they will find content to engage and connect with inside the museum—such is the power of collective memory.[50] The power of museum displays then—in exhibition design, acquisition and

[42] Susan A Crane, "The Conundrum of Ephemerality: Time, Memory, and Museums," ed. Sharon Macdonald, *A Companion to Museum Studies* (Chichester: Wiley, 2008), ProQuest Ebook Central. 98.

[43] Vergo, "The Reticent Object," 41.

[44] Elizabeth Wood and Kiersten F. Latham, *The Objects of Experience: Transforming Visitor-Object Encounters in Museums* (Walnut Creek: Routledge Ltd - M.U.A, 2016), 24.

[45] Andrew Simpson, "'The Future of the Object': University of Melbourne Initiatives Lead Object-Based Learning," *Museums Galleries Australia Magazine* 25, no. 2 (2017): 59.

[46] Wood and Latham, *The Objects of Experience: Transforming Visitor-Object Encounters in Museums*, 24.

[47] John Berger, *Ways of Seeing* (London: Penguin Books, 1972), 7.

[48] Ross Gibson, *Memoryscopes: Remnants, Forensics, Aesthetic*s (Crawley, WA: UWA Publishing, 2015), vi.

[49] Peter Vergo, "The Reticent Object," in *The New Museology*, ed. Peter Vergo (London: Reaktion Books, 1989), 58.

[50] Henning, *Museums, Media and Cultural Theory*, 3.

selection of objects and their curatorial interpretation—is in the connection made between visitors and place to meaningfully connect a person with an object.

Traditionally, museum displays have reflected established power dynamics within society. In the late twentieth century there was a distinct shift in understandings of the social role and responsibilities of museums to become increasingly more diverse and embrace broader curatorial narratives. This approach evolved from the widespread dissatisfaction with, and perceived failings of, traditional ideas of museum practice, both within and outside the museum profession.[51] Elitist collections were regarded as more important than visitor engagement and representation of a wider museum audience.[52] New Museology, as it was named, became the theoretical underpinning of a movement that championed the museum as a safe space for democratic engagement with new ideas that challenged traditional tropes and encouraged interdisciplinary research.[53] Articulated by Peter Vergo in his 1989 edited publication *The New Museology*, "most exhibition-makers think too much about the content and presentation of their exhibition, and too little about their intended audience".[54] This focus on the influence of visitor-made meaning as equal to "expert" interpretation by museums sparked a wave of audience-focussed museology texts that had a profound influence on museum practice throughout the 1990s and 2000s.[55] By engaging their visitors more deeply with meaning - making in the museum and processes of collective remembrance, museums have become more socially-inclusive and more socially-responsible institutions.[56]

Evolving from these ideas of the significance of a museum's civic engagement role has come the concept of adopting empathy as a core museum principle of best practice.[57] Extending the

[51] Vergo, "Introduction," 3; Vikki McCall and Clive Gray, "Museums and the 'New Museology': Theory, Practice and Organisational Change," *Museums Management and Curatorship* 29, no. 1 (2014): 30.

[52] Janis Wilton, "Museums and Memories: Remembering the Past in Local and Community Museums," *Public History Review* 12 (2006): 58-59.

[53] Mark O'Neill, "Museums and Their Paradoxes," Royal Institute of Philosophy Supplement 79 (2016): 23-24.

[54] Vergo, "The Reticent Object," 52.

[55] Eileen Hooper Greenhill, *Museums and the Shaping of Knowledge*, (GB: Taylor & Francis Ltd - M.U.A, 1992), ProQuest Ebook Central; Deirdre C. Stam, "The Informed Muse: The Implications of 'the New Museology' for Museum Practice," *Museum Management and Curatorship* 12, no. 3 (1993); Eilean Hooper-Greenhill, *Museums and Their Visitors*, (New York: Routledge, 1994), ProQuest Ebook Central; David Dean, *Museum Exhibition: Theory and Practice*, (London: Taylor & Francis 1996), ProQuest Ebook Central; Timothy W. Luke, *Museum Politics: Power Plays at the Exhibition*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002), ProQuest Ebook Central; Gaynor Kavanagh, *Making Histories in Museums*, (New York: Continuum, 2005), ProQuest Ebook Central; McCall and Gray, "Museums and the 'New Museology': Theory, Practice and Organisational Change."

[56] Gibson, *Memoryscopes: Remnants, Forensics, Aesthetics*, vii; Henning, *Museums, Media and Cultural Theory*, 11-14.

[57] Gretchen Jennings, "The Museum Respondes to Ferguson Initiative, a Necessary Conversation," *Museums and Social Issues* 10, no. 2 (2015): 103.

theoretical understandings of New Museology, the empathetic museum has become more prominent in the last decade. As well as deepening connections to communities, empathetic museums emphasise their engagement and sustained action on issues of social justice affecting these same communities.[58] "The present always shapes the narrative of an exhibition", which proponents of the empathetic museum argue means that museums can no longer maintain historical distance between their content and collections, and with modern movements of social justice and oppression beyond the museum's walls.[59] American and European museums professionals and academics are leading these ethical discussions at a scholarly level, it is the museum audience and practitioners who are seen to take the most public action in encouraging change.[60]

In 2020, museums across the United Kingdom and America responded to the international Black Lives Matter social justice movement and associated removal of statues related to slavery. In August 2020, the British Museum removed the exalted statue of slave-owning founder Hans Sloane to a display that placed his actions in the context of the British Empire, adding a renewed layer of transparency to their interpretation of both their institutional and national history.[61] In the same month, the Houston Museum of African American Culture unveiled the display of a confederate statue that had been ordered for removal from a city park earlier that summer, in the wake of nationwide and international protests following the murder of George Floyd by a Minneapolis police officer.[62] John Guess Jr, the museum's CEO, stated that the reinterpretation of the statue signified a moment of healing for the city and the nation; "The way you get rid of the pain is not to bury it as if it had never existed, but to confront it and engage with it".[63] In Australia, this attitude to truth-telling within museums has been pointedly addressed in the co-curation of exhibitions with Aboriginal people about

[58] Gretchen Jennings et al., "The Empathetic Museum: A New Institutional Identity," *Curator* (New York, NY) 62, no. 4 (2019): 506-07.

[59] Wildt, "The City Museum as an Empathic Space," 75.

[60] Mary Katherine Scott, "Engaging with Pasts in the Present: Curators, Communities, and Exhibition Practice," *Museum Anthropology* 35, no. 1 (2012); Jenny Kidd, *Challenging History in the Museum: International Perspectives*, vol. New (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2014); Lisa Lee and Lisa Junkin Lopez, "Participating in History: The Museum as a Site for Radical Empathy, Hull-House," (University of Illinois Press, 2014); Geerte M. Savenije and Pieter de Bruijn, "Historical Empathy in a Museum: Uniting Contextualisation and Emotional Engagement," *International journal of heritage studies:IJHS* 23, no. 9 (2017); Gary Campbell and Laurajane Smith, "Fostering Empathy through Museums," (Routledge, 2017); Wildt, "The City Museum as an Empathic Space."; Jennings et al., "The Empathetic Museum: A New Institutional Identity."

[61] PA Media, "British Museum Removes Statue of Slave-Owning Founder," *The Guardian* https://www.theguardian.com/culture/2020/aug/25/british-museum-removes-founder-hans-sloane-statue-over-slavery-links.

[62] Juan A. Lozano, "Museum Says Displaying Confederate Statue Part of Healing," *Associated Press*, https://apnews.com/article/race-and-ethnicity-tx-state-wire-racial-injustice-us-news-lifestyle-de83079beffc51f98719bb25edc48b10.

[63] Ibid.

colonial Australia, such as the *Encounters* exhibition at the National Museum of Australia (2015) and *Unsettled* at the Australian Museum (2021).[64] This practice delves further with projects to reinterpret museum collections that have traditionally favoured settler-colonial narratives by broadly consulting with the Aboriginal communities who continue to be affected by colonisation. One example of this is the Western Australian Museum's involvement in the Australian Research Council grant-funded project *Entangled Knowledges in the Robert Neill Collection*, which aims to reconnect Menang Noongar Aboriginal people with fish specimens and drawings collected by Scottish Commissariat Robert Neill in Albany, Western Australia from the early 1840s.[65] Institutional change is slow, but the application of empathetic museum practices can be embedded in museums on a smaller scale by informing content production and audience experience. At the core of empathetic museum practice is personal stories, which can emotionally engage museum visitors through a single perspective in order to tackle broader issues affecting their communities.[66] Such "warm engagement" can be encouraged through curatorial text, exhibition design and digital elements so that an audience can engage with content on multiple levels.[67]

An empathetic museological approach is adopted in Part Three of this thesis, demonstrated through exhibition design principles that embrace universal accessibility via multi-sensory elements that physically place the audience into the experiences of travelling women. Physically interacting with these women, touching their (representative) belongings, smelling smells they encountered, hearing sounds that they heard will connect an audience more deeply with the curatorial subject on a human level. Translating universal experiences across historical and cultural timelines provides for greater empathy between worlds, allowing viewers to better understand the curatorial language and design that can, at times, be unapproachable to a non-academic audience.

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[64] National Museum of Australia, "Encounters: Revealing Stories of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Objects from the British Museum," https://www.nma.gov.au/exhibitions/encounters; Australian Museum, "Unsettled: Our Untold History Revealed," https://australian.museum/exhibition/unsettled/?gclid=Cj0KCQjw8eOLBhC1ARIsAOzx5cHogLac4ASyTU6B8M6-Idv0zFBtk9CZ-KTOnyeO5tTLc0IQV68woTAaAh6-EALw_wcB.

[65] Grant Connect, "Entangled Knowledges in the Robert Neill Collection," Commonwealth Government of Australia, https://www.grants.gov.au/Ga/Show/82f06889-ea93-4685-815f-a74bf362397d; "Australian Research Council Linkage Project Funding Awarded to a/Prof Tiffany Shellam," Alfred Deakin Institute for Citizenship and Globalisation, https://adi.deakin.edu.au/news/arc-linkage-project-funding-awarded-to-tiffany-shellam.

[66] Wildt, "The City Museum as an Empathic Space," 74; Savenije and de Bruijn, "Historical Empathy in a Museum: Uniting Contextualisation and Emotional Engagement," 834.

[67] Hein, "Redressing the Museum in Feminist Theory," 38; Wood and Latham, *The Objects of Experience: Transforming Visitor-Object Encounters in Museums*, 31.

Representation of women in museums

Since the 1970s, museums have undergone significant cultural change, not least in embracing the 'history from below' movement mirrored in the democratisation of social history in academia.[68] Contemporary museum culture and theory aims to be more representative, democratic and diverse. Museum practice has reframed recognition of minorities, being among the first to acknowledge the active role of Indigenous and colonised cultures in the creation of the nation, which is integral to the collections and stories represented in museums.[69] Alison Bartlett and Margaret Henderson, Australian academics involved with the Australian Women's and Gender Studies Association's 2013 symposium 'Feminism and the Museum', argued that in line with this 'history from below' movement, feminism deserves 'a place in the museological production of social memory'.[70] Collaborative museums sector stakeholders in the US have created MASS Action (Museum as Site for Social Action), a group that articulates this evolving recognition:

> Museums must come to recognise and understand the multiple strands of traditional white, male, Western, Judeo-Christian heteronormative ideals that permeate the institutional fabric of most museums. Threaded together, these strands form a tightly woven, change-resistant fabric of institutional racism and a monolithic worldview.[71]

Feminist research in museums is a fledgling discipline, but significant research has addressed varied concerns about depictions of women in exhibitions, and their representation in narratives of cultural heritage.[72] Amongst this research, there is a common focus on how museum materialities, as Arndís Bergsdóttir refers to them, as well as gendered power relations, conventionally place male figures at the centre of museum narratives.[73] Gaby Porter argues that these museum materialities, including text, objects, and design, which reduce or omit women from exhibition spaces not only occur at a curatorial level, but within museum processes and deeper knowledge production. This affects how objects are categorised, interpreted and employed within exhibition spaces and museum collections.[74]

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[68] Bartlett and Henderson, "Feminism and the Museum in Australia: An Introduction," 130-32; Church, "Body and Language," 42.

[69] Ibid., 131-32.

[70] Ibid., 132; Church, "Body and Language," 42.

[71] Janeen Bryant et al., "Moving toward Internal Transformation: Awareness, Acceptance, Action," ed. Elisabeth Callihan, The MASSAction Toolkit (2017), https://www.museumaction.org/resources. 18.

[72] Church, "Body and Language," 42.

[73] Arndís Bergsdóttir, "Museums and Feminist Matters: Considerations of a Feminist Museology," *NORA - Nordic Journal of Feminist and Gender Research* 24, no. 2 (2016): 128; Church, "Body and Language," 42.

[74] Gaby Porter, "Seeing through Solidity: A Feminist Perspective on Museums," *The Sociological Review* 43, no. S1 (1995): 105-26; Church, "Body and Language," 42-43.

A feminist approach to the collection, organising, display and interpretation of women's objects, material culture, and experiences, is key to the meaningful inclusion of women in museums.[75]

By recognising that museums have traditionally been characterised by patriarchal barriers and controls, curators have played a key role in initiating a transformation of this characterisation, initiating discussion of gender and inequality in the museum by exhibiting richer and more challenging histories.[76] However, this transformation is still incomplete.[77] In 1972, John Berger addressed the phenomenon of the male gaze to a popular audience through his book and television series on the BBC: *Ways of Seeing*.[78] Voicing to the general public, in language that was accessible yet grounded in academic research, that women in both art and life were restricted by patriarchal barriers and culturally viewed through the lens of the male gaze, Berger tapped into a wave of feminism that was becoming increasingly popular. Laura Mulvey's 1975 publication of "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema" in *Screen* journal cemented the concept of the male gaze in contemporary cultural productions.[79] Further, Mulvey's scathing assessment of modern sexuality and desire in this publication ensured its continued relevance through to the new millennium.[80] In the last decade, museologists Viv Golding, Anna Conlan and Amy Levin have taken this criticism of gendered overture further and suggested that the majority of museum studies texts continue to pay little attention to gender and to "queer and feminist cultures and concerns" in the framing and development of museum content.[81] This perspective has been reiterated by Bartlett and Henderson, who conclude that there is still much to be done in the training of museum staff in "conceptualising culture as a genderless domain".[82] Further, Gaby Porter has argued, even curators who have addressed this gender imbalance, have themselves largely reinforced cultural assumptions of gender.[83] Their exhibitions have reduced women to traditionally passive or shallow roles, idealising women who fitted the mould, and leaving behind those deemed to be more difficult, or granting them a disproportional focus inside

[75] Bartlett and Henderson, "Feminism and the Museum in Australia: An Introduction," 135.

[76] Viv Golding, "Museums, Poetics and Affect," *Feminist Review* 104, no. 1 (2013): 81; Gaynor Kavanagh, *Museum Provision and Professionalism* (London: Routledge, 1994); Bergsdóttir, "Museums and Feminist Matters: Considerations of a Feminist Museology," 129; Church, "Body and Language," 54.

[77] Church, "Body and Language," 54.

[78] Berger, *Ways of Seeing*; "Ways of Seeing, Episode 2," (BBC, 1972).

[79] Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," *Screen* 16, no. 3 (1975).

[80] "Dossier: Visual Pleasure at 40," *Screen* 56, no. 4 (2015).

[81] Golding, "Museums, Poetics and Affect," 83; Anna Conlan and Amy K. Levin, "Museums Studies Texts and Museum Sub Texts," in *Gender, Sexuality and Museums: A Routledge Reader*, ed. Amy K. Levin (New York: Routledge, 2010), 209, 308.

[82] Bartlett and Henderson, "Feminism and the Museum in Australia: An Introduction," 132-33.

[83] Porter, "Seeing through Solidity: A Feminist Perspective on Museums," 108-09.

exhibition narratives.[84] It is clear then, that addressing the inequality of gender representation within museums must move beyond the theoretical, and the mere inclusion of women within exhibition narratives, to a reframing of attitudes surrounding their involvement and inclusion in the collection and communication of these histories.

Feminist philosopher Hilde Hein argues that the disequilibrium evident in museum efforts to equalise representation of women's narratives in exhibitions requires more of a "conceptual restructuration".[85] This restructuration aims to radically revise the notions of subjectivity and otherness towards women. Hein states that these attitudes stem from the more traditional, "profound climate of ownership and entitlement implicit in the characterisation of the human subject relative to an object observed, desired, cultivated, possessed, feared, tamed, conquered, or even revered".[86] Golding has alternatively referred to this concept as a "phenomenon of freedom" which, when introduced into museums, allows for the inclusion of "women to bring their whole—minds, emotions and bodies—to the construction of fresh understandings of past and future times and places".[87] Museums can be safe and supportive spaces for the exploration of topics and frameworks sensitive to inequalities, which is a significant step in redressing gender representation and championing such freedoms to take place.[88] As Hein argues, exhibitions have the power to initiate and perpetuate discussions of social and cultural significance such as this. As ideas are communicated through both recognisable objects and new dialogue in the form of narrative that "uncover histories that are intertwined and mutually sustaining".[89] By embracing pluralism beyond merely tokenistic representations of women within exhibition narratives and curatorial selection, while also redressing the engrained notions of subjectivity within museum's processes and roles, museums have the potential to shift the perspectives of not just their content, but the perspective and understandings of their audiences.[90]

However, progress is slow. In 1992 the American Association of Museums published "Excellence and Equity: Education and the Public Dimension of Museums", a report that

[84] Ibid; Church, "Body and Language," 43.

[85] Hein, "Redressing the Museum in Feminist Theory," 32.

[86] Ibid.

[87] Golding, "Museums, Poetics and Affect," 81.

[88] Bergsdóttir, "Museums and Feminist Matters: Considerations of a Feminist Museology," 128.

[89] Hein, "Redressing the Museum in Feminist Theory," 39.

[90] Bergsdóttir, "Museums and Feminist Matters: Considerations of a Feminist Museology," 128; Hein, "Redressing the Museum in Feminist Theory," 31-34; Church, "Body and Language," 54.

recommended museums adopt more inclusionary practices and focus on their communities.[91] By 2019 little had changed according to Gretchen Jennings and her colleagues, whose research showed that American museums remained overwhelming white and patriarchal in structure across all facets of operations, staffing, collections and exhibitions.[92] Therefore, in the case of female representation in museum exhibitions, which is a key focus of this thesis, the male gaze continues to impact how women are made and displayed in exhibitions. John Berger has commented that men and women are made in culture, and within Western cultures, women exist in the restricted space of male desire—they are constantly under male surveillance and are thus portrayed in cultural spaces under the male gaze.[93] This can be embodied in many ways, with women existing in public spaces for male pleasure or money (or both) or, more commonly in historical exhibitions: women represented almost wholly in relation to men. Conventionally, male figures have been placed at the centre of museum narratives.[94] In fieldwork conducted as part of this thesis, it was rare to find female-focussed narrative content and when women were represented it was often in a physical form that undermined the significance of their contribution.

The physical representation of female bodies in museum exhibitions too often objectifies their form and detracts from curatorial intent. When objects are displayed in a museum they are removed from their original context and function, which ultimately changes an audience's perception of their purpose—When women are displayed within the walls of a gallery, they too become an object.[95] The physical representation of the female form is interpreted by cultural values when displayed in a museum. In a dominant patriarchal society, the male gaze influences interpretations of women on display, affecting representations of the female form, and how it appears (and appeals) to the museum visitor.[96] This gaze, in turn, alters the perception of both the woman and her story, affecting the accuracy of her representation and the degree to which her inclusion in the exhibition is deemed worthy and significant.

Mannequins are a popular form of physical representation of women in museums, as they are frequently used to display clothing in domestic scenes or as part of fashion exhibitions that largely

[91] American Association of Museums, "Excellence and Equity: Education and the Public Dimension of Museums," Washington DC, 1992, http://ww2.aam-us.org/docs/default-source/resource-library/excellence-and-equity.pdf?sfvrsn=0.

[92] Jennings et al., "The Empathetic Museum: A New Institutional Identity," 508.

[93] *Boundaries of Self: Gender, Culture and Spaces*, (Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2014), ProQuest Ebook Central. iix-ix.

[94] Bergsdóttir, "Museums and Feminist Matters: Considerations of a Feminist Museology," 128.

[95] Church, "Body and Language," 49.

[96] Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," Screen 16, no. 3 (1975); John Berger, *Ways of Seeing*.

target a female audience. The display of costume provides the visitor with a tangible connection with the past as they are recognisable items with universal lived experience. As Julia Petrov has explained, in museum exhibitions "Costume… due to its being a trace of the body, was particularly effective at enabling visitors to make tangible, meaningful mental links with the past". [97] Mannequins are used by exhibition designers to bring costume collections to life. However, as Ingrid Mida has similarly queried, the difficulty with this method of display is the restriction imposed by the mannequin form. Curators must address "how to indicate that a dress artefact was once worn by a living person and therefore embodies a complex interplay of cultural beliefs, identity, memory, and body imprints".[98] In early museum practice, live models were used to wear the costume collections but, for various ethical and conservation reasons, mannequin forms must now be manipulated into curatorial characters with stance, gesture, movement and attitude suggestive of a human body.[99] However, the readily-available female mannequins popularly seen in museums and galleries evolved as sales tools over the past two hundred years, developed as a form of (usually) hyper-feminised visual retailing that is ill-befitting of the historical character re-creation commonly intended by the costume's curation.[100]

Alone, "a dress artefact can only ever represent a fragment of its story", so mannequins are help to shape and fill visual gaps for the audience.[101] Therefore, these physical forms need to be curated in a way that authentically responds to the original wearer's form in order to "embody (literally) current understandings and expressions of gender." [102] Considerations of size, shape, colour and pose are integral to sub-conscious culturally-inferred interpretations of the curatorial narrative being expressed by using a mannequin body to represent a historical figure.[103] Too frequently, standard hyper-feminised mannequin bodies are employed across exhibitions as disparate as high fashion to nostalgic wedding dress displays to colonial history narratives.[104] This detracts from the curatorial intent of the exhibition. The visual power of mannequins is to make historical figures

[97] Petrov, "Cross-Purposes: Museum Display and Material Culture," 223.

[98] Ibid.

[99] Mida, "Animating the Body in Museum Exhibitions of Fashion and Dress," 46.

[100] Chloe Chapin, Denise Nicole Green, and Samuel Neuberg, "Research Report: Exhibiting Gender: Exploring the Dynamic Relationships between Fashion, Gender, and Mannequins in Museum Display," *Dress* 45, no. 1 (2019): 80.

[101] Mida, "Animating the Body in Museum Exhibitions of Fashion and Dress," 37.

[102] Chapin, Green, and Neuberg, "Research Report: Exhibiting Gender: Exploring the Dynamic Relationships between Fashion, Gender, and Mannequins in Museum Display," 81.

[103] Ibid., 83.

[104] Museum of Applied Arts & Sciences, "Love Is... Australian Wedding Fashion, 13 May 2017 - 20 May 2018," (Museum of Applied Arts & Sciences, Sydney, 2017-2018); National Gallery of Victoria, "The House of Dior: Seventy Years of Haute Couture, 27 August - 7 November 2017," https://www.ngv.vic.gov.au/exhibition/the-house-of-dior/.

"appear substantial in absentia", but the current industry trends in mannequin style and design of using modern styling and fashion poses clash with historically accurate representations of femininity.[105] Often, mannequins do not do justice to the historical figure they represent, unable to fully translate the lived experience of those who wore the costume collection. To more fully embody an accurate historical narrative, exhibitions require layered and more holistic interpretation that overcome the presiding social and cultural expectations that inhibit interpretations of the female form.

Relational Autonomy and Nineteenth-Century Women

Traditional notions and understandings of autonomy are deeply connected to culturally masculine ways of being in the world. Men such as Immanuel Kant and John Stuart Mill defined what it meant to be autonomous by their own experiences, not considering the nuances of social experiences across society, particularly in Europe during the period in which they wrote.[106] Based on these masculinist understanding, male *philosophes* (French philosophers of the Enlightenment) including Defoe, Diderot, Grimm and Helvétius debated the innate inferiority and inability of women to express reason due to scientific and bodily differences.[107] The perceived weakness of women essentially relegated them to the private sphere of domesticity from the early eighteenth century in Europe.[108] An independent woman was considered "unnatural and abhorrent".[109] Yet, these European women did possess and express autonomy—just not in the same way it had been understood by the men of their time.

Relational Autonomy is understood within an agent's social embeddedness, dependent on social and cultural reality and expectations. Scholars who have studied European women of the nineteenth century have found that these expectations were self-fulfilling prophecies written by the men who determined them. Katherine B. Clinton has analysed the feminist origins of the Enlightenment and found that philosophes such as Diderot, Grimm and Defoe defined women as

[105] Mark B. Sandberg, *Living Pictures, Missing Persons: Mannequins, Museums, and Modernity* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003), 4.

[106] Immanuel Kant, Mary J. Gregor, and Jens Timmermann, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, Rev. ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012); John Stuart Mill, *John Stuart Mill. The Subjection of Women* (Charlottesville, VA: InteLex Corporation, 1995); *Utilitarianism* (London: Electric Book Co, 2001).

[107] Katherine B. Clinton, "Femme Et Philosophe: Enlightenment Origins of Feminism," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 8, no. 3 (1975): 287-90.

[108] Deborah Simonton, *A History of European Women's Work: 1700 to the Present*, 1st ed. (London: Routledge, 1998), 7-14.

[109] Olwen Hufton, "Women, Work, and Family," in *A History of Women in the West: Iii. Renaissance and Enlightenment Paradoxes*, ed. Natalie Zemon Davis and Arlette Farge (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1993), 16.

inferior and weak, which ensured they were actively excluded from intellectual movements.[110] Feminist historians Bonnie Anderson and Judith Zinsser have summarised this intellectual 'catch-22' for European women of the time: "just as there was no Renaissance or Scientific Revolution for women, in the sense that the goals and ideals of these movements were perceived as applicable only to men, so there was no Enlightenment for women".[111] By ensuring there was no place for potential female colleagues, women's autonomy was further curtailed by moral overtures. Deborah Simonton, Olwen Hufton, Anderson and Zinsser have studied women's work and family obligations during this period and found that, overwhelmingly, domesticity was tied to notions of morality.[112] This meant that women were not only unnatural for seeking employment outside of the home (unless they were lower class and paid for domestic housekeeping work) but also socially immoral.[113] Women themselves reinforced these social, cultural and moral expectations by publishing household guides and manuals that remained popular through to the early twentieth century.[114]

Such restrictive cultural expectations defined how autonomy could be expressed, certainly not in a traditionally masculine manner, but these women can still be recognised as autonomous. Feminist studies of autonomy by academics such as Jennifer Nedelsky have argued that, as human beings, women have always been autonomous. It is the *way* society perceived this autonomy that needed to be reconceived. [115] Scholars of historical women's autonomy such as Natalie Zemon Davis and Arlette Farge have determined that, regardless of class or wealth, all women have lived within culturally restricted expectations of their lives. However, the way women have lived within these expectations (and even devised escapes from them) demonstrates their inherent autonomy.[116] While supportive of the notion of autonomy under oppression, Marilyn Friedman offers an alternative view that when women derived their sole identity from such cultural expectations—such as being a

[110] Clinton, "Femme Et Philosophe: Enlightenment Origins of Feminism," 287-90.

[111] Bonnie S. Anderson and Judith P. Zinsser, *A History of Their Own: Women in Europe from Prehistory to the Present*, 1st ed., vol. 2 (New York: Harper & Row, 1988), 113.

[112] Simonton, *A History of European Women's Work: 1700 to the Present*, 88; Hufton, "Women, Work, and Family," 17-30.

[113] Anderson and Zinsser, *A History of Their Own: Women in Europe from Prehistory to the Present*, 2, 113.

[114] Sarah Stickney Ellis, *The Wives of England: Their Relative Duties, Domestic Influence, & Social Obligations*, (London: Fisher, 1843), https://archive.org/details/wivesofenglandthe00elliuoft; Isabella Beeton, *The Book of Household Management*, vols. 1-3 (London, 1859-1861), The Ex-classics Project, 2009, http://www.exclassics.com.

[115] Jennifer Nedelsky, "Reconceiving Autonomy: Sources, Thoughts and Possibilities," *Yale Journal of Law and Feminism* 1 (1989): 7.

[116] Natalie Zemon Davis and Arlette Farge, "Women as Historical Actors," 4.

domestic labourer—their autonomy is constrained.[117] Linda Barclay's work on the social self, with Catriona Mackenzie and Natalie Stoljar, has refuted this notion of identity as a constrain on historical women's autonomy. Barclay has argued that even when women live within oppressed conditions, whether from patriarchal expectations or self-defined identity, their recognition of this oppression and ability to work within such social systems demonstrates their inherent autonomy.[118]

Studies of autonomy under conditions of oppression have proven popular with scholars of Relational Autonomy. Andrea Veltman and Mark Piper's edited anthology, including chapters from Mackenzie and Friedman, covered many aspects of Relational Autonomy but effectively summarised that the social character of humans cannot be separated from understandings of autonomy which, for historical women, reaffirms that autonomy exists under the oppression of social and cultural expectations.[119] Further, academics such as Diana Tietjens Meyers and Uma Narayan have demonstrated that autonomy can be expressed under oppression even if the oppressed person *chooses* to exist under such oppression.[120] This idea of autonomy under oppression was first published in 1792 by Mary Wollstonecraft, one of a small number of influential women who rose above restrictive cultural expectations (either through class, wealth, determination, or a combination of all three) to publish and engage with the intellectual movement of the Enlightenment.[121] The experiences of Wollstonecraft and her contemporaries, including Margaret Cavendish, Madame du Châtelet and numerous scientific women, will be expanded upon in Chapters Three and Four of this thesis.

Clearly, there are numerous and different scholarly understandings of Relational Autonomy that can be applied to the historical experiences of women in nineteenth-century Europe. Ultimately, as John Christman has elicited, every woman had different experiences, abilities and desire to express

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[117] Marilyn Friedman, "Autonomy, Social Disruption, and Women," ed. Catriona Mackenzie and Natalie Stoljar, *Relational Autonomy: Feminist Perspectives on Autonomy, Agency, and the Social Self* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2000), ProQuest Ebook Central. 39-46.

[118] Linda Barclay, "Autonomy and the Social Self," ed. Catriona Mackenzie and Natalie Stoljar, *Relational Autonomy: Feminist Perspectives on Autonomy, Agency, and the Social Self* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2000), ProQuest Ebook Central, 55.

[119] Andrea Veltman and Mark Piper, eds., *Autonomy, Oppression, and Gender* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014); "Introduction," ed. Andrea Veltman and Mark Piper, *Autonomy, Oppression, and Gender* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), Oxford Scholarship Online. 4; Marilyn Friedman, "Relational Autonomy and Independence,"ibid.; Catriona Mackenzie, "Three Dimensions of Autonomy: A Relational Analysis,"ibid.

[120] Uma Narayan, "Minds of Their Own: Choices, Autonomy, Cultural Practices, and Other Women," in *A Mind of One's Own: Feminist Essays on Reason and Objectivity*, ed. Louise M. Antony and Charlotte E. Witt (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2002), 425-29; Diana Tietjens Meyers, *Gender in the Mirror: Cultural Imagery and Women's Agency* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 11-16.

[121] Mary Wollstonecraft, A Vindication of the Rights of Woman with Strictures on Political and Moral Subjects, (1792), http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/3420; Veltman and Piper, "Introduction," 4.

their autonomy in different ways.[122] This overarching understanding that every woman's experience is not inherently the same is basic but integral to applying understandings of autonomy to my study of the written records of early travelling women to Western Australia. A guiding example of how to use such understandings in my own historical study will come from comparative publications, such as Lynn Abrams' study of German women in the nineteenth century and the work of Geneviève Fraisse and Michelle Perrot on emerging feminism in the scope of world-defining events of the past two centuries.[123] The concept of Relational Autonomy is therefore communicated throughout the exegesis and Exhibition Catalogue through the preferencing of female narratives, feminised language and feminist interpretation of artefacts. The simple preferencing of a woman's perspective of her own experience travelling to Western Australia, above that of her traditionally more esteemed husband's account, provides the reader with a predisposition towards the feminine perspective. By framing a curatorial subject in her own words, rather than as an addition to a favoured masculine narrative of the same events, the reader and exhibition audience can perceive this woman as self-determined.

Significance of this work

The finding and outcomes of this thesis will add to the knowledge of early nineteenth-century European women who travelled to Western Australia within the broader context of the legacy of women's contributions to the Enlightenment and Scientific Revolution. Further, with the inclusion of a Curatorial Concept and Exhibition Catalogue in Part Three, this thesis demonstrates how New Museology and empathetic museum practice focussing on visitor engagement, can be practically applied to autonomous interpretations of historical women to authentically represent their experiences within a museum exhibition. An understanding of their autonomy will be grounded in Relational Autonomy theory and demonstrated through written records and other historical artefacts.

There is significant potential for the widespread application of my approach in museums of all scales. By diversifying and refocussing curatorial interpretation of written records and museum collections, historically marginalised groups can be more authentically represented in both text and physical presence within institutions that have traditionally been exclusionary and elitist.

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[122] John Christman, "Relational Autonomy, Liberal Individualism, and the Social Constitution of Selves," *Philosophical Studies: An International Journal for Philosophy in the Analytic Tradition* 117, no. 1/2 Selected Papers from the American Philosophical Association Pacific Division, 2003 meeting (2004): 145.

[123] Lynn Abrams, "Finding the Female Self: Women's Autonomy, Marriage and Social Change in Nineteenth-Century Germany," in *Rewriting German History: New Perspectives on Modern Germany*, ed. Jan Rüger and Nikolaus Wachsmann (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015); Geneviève Fraisse and Michelle Perrot, "Orders and Liberties," in *A History of Women in the West: Iv. Emerging Feminism from Revolution to World War*, ed. Geneviève Fraisse and Michelle Perrot (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1993).

PART ONE

AUTONOMOUS WOMEN AND THE MODERN MUSEUM

Left: "Evening Dress" published by Rudolph Ackermann, hand-coloured etching, London, 1828. National Portrait Gallery (UK).

CHAPTER ONE
EMPATHETIC MUSEUMS AND IMAGINED COMMUNITIES

Museums reflect to their audiences the society they live in or are connected to, with a purposeful selection of content in the form of words, objects and design. Traditionally, museum content reflected established power dynamics within society, to the detriment of those for whom substantive social and economic barriers prevented them from freely contributing to western cultural narratives (in particular). However, the curatorial landscape is becoming more diverse. In turn, museums are becoming more actively empathetic and, in turn, encouraging empathy within their audiences by including broadened curatorial narratives. This movement became formalised as a museological theory in the past decade, born of an increasing critique of cultural heritage institutions appearing indifferent to local and international social justice issues.[1] Broadened inclusivity within museum processes and content production has become more commonplace with the evolution of New Museology, which, since the 1980s, has examined museums' social and political roles, and heavily influenced the relationship between museums and their wider communities.[2] While museums "presuppose, but do not normally profess their theoretical foundations", New Museology represents a change in museum understandings of their communities, actively engaging with social advancements and community issues that interplay with a museum's collections, exhibition content, administration, and public interaction.[3] By including traditionally marginalised narratives within the museum, in exhibition material, staffing, and the broadened reinterpretation of existing collections, museums can affect the historical consciousness of their audiences and contribute to a more inclusive collective memory. This chapter will investigate the application of New Museology and the empathetic museum model in recent Australian museum exhibitions. This critical analysis will balance the theoretical underpinnings with examples of curatorial content, to determine current best practice in

[1] Jennings et al., "The Empathetic Museum: A New Institutional Identity," 505.

[2] Vergo, *The New Museology.*

[3] Hein, "Redressing the Museum in Feminist Theory," 29.

the Australian museums industry. In turn, these findings will inform the Curatorial Concept developed in Part Three of this thesis.

The fundamental purposes of modern museums are to collect, preserve and exhibit objects for an audience.[4] In doing so, museums play an active role in developing their audience's historical consciousness and framing collective memory within their community.[5] For this reason, they have been called 'memory machines' by Michelle Henning: "a technical means by which societies remember, devices for organising the past for the purposes of the present. They are a product of societies with an historical consciousness, who treat material things as evidence or documents of past events".[6] Cultural theorists Chris Weedon and Glenn Jordan describe collective memory as the "narratives of past experience constituted by and on behalf of specific groups within which they find meaningful forms of identification that may empower".[7] Institutions that support collective memory, such as museums, develop and sustain resultant 'imagined communities' that contribute to an individual's sense of shared history, place, belonging and identity.[8] Historian Susan A. Crane has suggested that "all individuals participate in a changing plurality of collectives through their sentient lives".[9] Collective, in this sense, can be a nation, wider humanity, or as few as two people. Although visitors almost always have different cultural frames of reference, they will find within the walls of the museum material with which to engage and negotiate with their world.[10] This material (objects, narrative, interactive elements) is imbued with varying social meaning and qualitative cultural information.[11] Regardless of these differences, the museum can generate and reproduce collective knowledge and identity within its audience.[12]

[4] Crane, "The Conundrum of Ephemerality: Time, Memory, and Museums," 98.

[5] Ibid., 99.

[6] Henning, *Museums, Media and Cultural Theory*, 129.

[7] Chris Weedon and Glenn Jordan, "Collective Memory: Theory and Politics," *Social Semiotics* 22, no. 2 (2012): 143.

[8] Ibid.

[9] Crane, "The Conundrum of Ephemerality: Time, Memory, and Museums," 104-05.

[10] Henning, Museums, Media and Cultural Theory, 3.

[11] Church, "Body and Language," 49.

[12] Hilde Hein, quoted in ibid., 6-7; Adrian B. Evans, "Enlivening the Archive: Glimpsing Embodied Consumption Practices in Probate Inventories of Household Possessions," *Historical Geography* 36 (2008): 44; Bartlett and Henderson, "Feminism and the Museum in Australia: An Introduction," 131; Crane, "The Conundrum of Ephemerality: Time, Memory, and Museums," 99.

Imagined Communities

The connection a museum fosters between its content and visitors is the institution's most important work. Prioritising this imagined community within the audience ensures the museum's relevance. As Nicolas Bourriaud touted in the late 1990s, "museums are most relevant to everyday life when they help visitors grasp not the essential material qualities of the displays but the full potential of relations amongst people and artefacts".[13] Museum objects serve as touchstones for visitors' life experiences, a connection that transcends the senses to memory, emotion and, ultimately, identity.[14] The power of museum displays then—in exhibition design, acquisition and selection of objects and their curatorial interpretation—is in the connection made between visitors and place to meaningfully connect a person with an object. The feeling is almost inexplicable but can be best described as 'involvement' as emotive forces are generated between a visitor and objects within a museum. Cultural studies Professor Ross Gibson has poignantly phrased this feeling as the moment "remembrance happens to you and in you".[15] Just as art historian John Berger described the interaction between works of art and the viewer as stimulating the imagination "by way of memory or expectation", objects exhibited within a museum—and by extension, their curators—have the power to inhabit within the audience a sense of historical continuum, folding the past into the present.[16] Experiences that produce such collective historical consciousness fosters imagined communities, connecting the audience to broader society by engaging their thoughts and empathetic selves to consider their fellow citizens.

Engaging museum exhibitions that creatively draw in their audience to interact physically and emotionally with the content on display are crucial in producing imagined communities within society. The *Identity: Yours, Mine, Ours* exhibition on permanent display at the Immigration Museum in Melbourne is an example of demonstrative exhibition design which aims to engage the audience in shared experiences to encourage more empathetic citizens of their imagined community.[17] The Museum's aim is "to explore themes of migration, identity, citizenship and community through multiple perspectives", with an emphasis on community engagement that produces "powerful opportunities for social interaction, empathy and debate".[18] *Identity: Yours, Mine, Ours* accomplishes this through text panels designed to ask questions of the visitor, provoking empathetic self-reflection

[13] Gibson, *Memoryscopes: Remnants, Forensics, Aesthetics*, 72.

[14] Wood and Latham, *The Objects of Experience: Transforming Visitor-Object Encounters in Museums*, 24.

[15] Gibson, Memoryscopes: Remnants, Forensics, Aesthetics, 1.

[16] Berger, *Ways of Seeing*, 129; Gibson, *Memoryscopes: Remnants, Forensics, Aesthetics*, 64.

[17] Museums Victoria, "Identity: Yours, Mine, Ours," https://museumsvictoria.com.au/immigrationmuseum/whats-on/identity-yours-mine-ours/.

[18] "Immigration Museum: About Us," https://museumsvictoria.com.au/immigrationmuseum/about-us/.

within the audience to "find connections with others".[19] Separated into themes aimed at inclusivity, such as "Where we come from", the text panels employ backlit imagery with a related quote of personal testimony to connect with the theme and introduce the objects on display. These objects are grouped thematically, in small tableaus of varying materials and types, with their interpretation broadened to connect with multiple stories of various migrant backgrounds to demonstrate the shared experiences between the subject and the audience. Telephone audio interactives installed adjacent to gallery seating, set between these display cases, allows visitors to dwell and reflect while providing voices to these objects and their previous owners. These layers of interpretation have a personal effect, asking the gallery visitor to engage with these stories as if they are in direct conversation with the exhibition subjects. Equally, visitors are invited to share their stories within the gallery space. This design encourages self-reflection within the exhibition space, asking the audience to explore "how our cultural heritage, languages, beliefs, and family connections influence our self-perceptions and our perceptions of other people—perceptions that can lead to discovery, confusion, prejudice and understanding".[20] By eliciting an emotional connection with the audience, the Immigration Museum employs direct experiences with objects and, by extension, the people, cultures, and identities these belong to, encouraging their visitors to understand the different ways people come to know and see the world around them.[21] This deeper emotional engagement draws the audience into an imagined community within the Museum and promotes a more socially engaged citizenry in the world beyond the Museum's walls.

Empathetic Museum Practice

The role and use of empathy in museums is a relatively new theoretical concept, based on the idea that the museum's civic role in engaging with its community is more significant than the content on display.[22] Originating in the mid-2010s, the empathetic museum is, above all, a compassionate institution with deep connections with local communities and, secondly, maintains sustained action on issues of social justice that affect these communities.[23] This concept is grounded in understandings of historical empathy. Developed through pedagogical methods of personally engaging students with the past, historical empathy aims to gather research of a broader historical context and analyse a

[19] "Identity: Yours, Mine, Ours".

[20] Ibid.

[21] Wood and Latham, The Objects of Experience: Transforming Visitor-Object Encounters in Museums, 27-28.

[22] Jennings, "The Museum Respondes to Ferguson Initiative, a Necessary Conversation," 103.

[23] Jennings et al., "The Empathetic Museum: A New Institutional Identity," 506-07.

particular person's perspective for possible motives, beliefs and emotions.[24] As Amsterdam Museum curator Annemarie Wildt has written, "heritage not only encompasses sites, objects and practices, but also feelings—indeed, emotions are central to it".[25] Museums and their exhibition content cannot remain disconnected from the present because their visitors exist in a modern world. They bring with them their values and identity that shape their interactions with the Museum.

This connection with modernity in the new wave of empathetic museum practice was most recently embodied in collections related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Capturing these 'unprecedented times' for collective memory had to be sensitively and carefully balanced with the practical implications of closed facilities, heightened social restrictions and essential health and safety concerns.[26] In Australia, Museums Victoria led the collecting of pandemic-related objects and digital materials as the state of Victoria was the hardest hit by COVID-19 and extended lockdowns. This involved active curating, from calling for public donations related to panic buying to partnering with the state Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions to establish "Museum in my Neighbourhood" which gathered and exhibited how neighbourhoods across metropolitan Melbourne adapted to life with COVID-19.[27] These museum activities had the two-fold impact of connecting communities at a time of massive social and economic disruption when many felt isolated. The role adopted by Museums Victoria was one of reconnection through collections, with a people-first attitude that emphasised the empathetic museum movement.

"The present always shapes the narrative of an exhibition", which proponents of the empathetic museum argue means that museums can no longer maintain historical distance between their content and collections, and modern movements of social justice and oppression beyond the museum's walls.[28] As articulated by Jennings et. al., the aims of the empathetic museum involve dismantling legacies of oppression both within and outside of the museum by focussing on "internal institutional transformation and transforming sector discourse".[29] Practically, this means harnessing the museum's empathy to become more organisationally inclusive in both its cultural heritage practice

[24] Savenije and de Bruijn, "Historical Empathy in a Museum: Uniting Contextualisation and Emotional Engagement," 833.

[25] Wildt, "The City Museum as an Empathic Space," 80.

[26] Toni Church, "Old Court House Law Museum: Collecting During Covid-19," *Brief* 47, no. 5 (2020): 5; Craig Middleton, Bec Carland, and Jo Darbyshire, interview by Australian Museums and Galleries Association, 28 May, 2020.

[27] Michelle Stevenson and Fiona Kinsey, "Pandemic Panic Buying in Museums Victoria Collections," Museums Victoria, https://collections.museumsvictoria.com.au/articles/16884; Precincts and Regions Department of Jobs, "Museum in My Neighbourhood," https://engage.vic.gov.au/museum-in-my-neighbourhood/.

[28] Wildt, "The City Museum as an Empathic Space," 75.

[29] Jennings et al., "The Empathetic Museum: A New Institutional Identity," 507.

and institutional structure and outwardly towards its community by being in tune and reacting alongside broader social movements.[30] The institutional organisation of individual museums is beyond the scope of this thesis; however, the practice of empathy within memory keeping and exhibition development is important to consider.

At the core of empathetic museum practice is personal stories. "Empathy is an encounter", and personal accounts can bridge the gap between people, past and present.[31] Biographical approaches to museum exhibition development, such as narrating history through a singular perspective, enable curators to engage audiences with broader abstract social concepts of class, religion, gender with that of the individual.[32] This approach stimulates emotional engagement between subject and visitor, "allowing people to identify with the thoughts and feelings of historical actors".[33] Harnessing audience empathy, as a method of interpretation that influences visitor emotion through design and language choices, can enable curators to connect modern audiences personally with stories of the past. Certainly, there are challenges to this approach. Emotional engagement depends on an individual visitor's prior experience; their socio-cultural background, ethnicity, religion and varying aspects that make up their identity.[34] To account for these complexities within the audience and connect with all visitors, Geerte Savenije and Pieter de Bruijn have recommended allowing objects and historical subjects to speak for themselves. This method provides visitors with opportunities to investigate these sources as a form of evidence, critically engaging with the content to reconstruct an emotional connection with the historical actor on display.[35] This does not mean that objects are presented without interpretation. Instead, they receive a more nuanced design treatment and gently curated language to encourage broad visitor interaction.

Such is the pared-back design of the Cascades Female Factory in Hobart, Tasmania. With minimalistic site interpretation emphasising the stark environment experienced by thousands of convict women transported to the penal colony in the early to mid-nineteenth century, the Female Factory imbues within the visitor a sense of the women who lived in the prison. These feelings of empathy are elicited in the subtle design of the site, original elements of which are scarce but are pieced together with modern additions that combine the existing ruins to represent the continuity and change within the site itself. The audience's connection with the women begins at the front gate:

[30] Ibid., 509.

[31] Wildt, "The City Museum as an Empathic Space."

[32] Ibid., 74; Savenije and de Bruijn, "Historical Empathy in a Museum: Uniting Contextualisation and Emotional Engagement," 834.

[33] "Historical Empathy in a Museum: Uniting Contextualisation and Emotional Engagement," 834.

[34] Ibid., 834-35.

[35] Ibid., 842.

corroded metal panels flank the entrance to the Female Factory, inscribed with adjectives from convict records. When passing through these gates, visitors read and carry with them descriptive labels of the women who lived there: "face pockmarked", "front teeth rather prominent", "chin dimpled", so they begin to imagine them from the entrance. These physical descriptors are interspersed with words imposed on those women by the convict authorities: "unmanageable", "troublesome", "brat", which eroded the convicts' personal identity and encouraged a collective shame that was instilled in them by authorities from the beginning of their transportation to the colony. While visitors may accept these descriptors of the women at the outset of their tour of the Female Factory, the interpretation—through guided tours or self-guided visits—makes it difficult to hold onto these assumptions of convicts, as the audience is confronted with the personal stories of the convict women and their experiences in Tasmania.[36]

The guided tours at the site emphasise the harsh reality of prison life for women incarcerated at the Female Factory. Guides share stories of these women being paraded through the town of Hobart on the march to the Factory site, being heckled and spat on by the free townspeople. They outline experiences of harsh treatment within the prison walls as they worked at physically exhausting menial tasks and familiar tales of sexual assault when assigned to similar work at farms and estates across Tasmania. All experienced by the visitor while standing in the (more often than not) blustery grounds of the bare Female Factory site, atmospherically frozen and shaking in the lee of Mount Wellington.[37] Experiencing the environment these women lived in, coupled with descriptions of their faces, attitudes, and harsh lives gives the visitor a feeling of personal connection with the women of the Female Factory. It is difficult to remain unmoved by the experience when the very same cold winds are pulling at your clothes and turning your own face ruddy. The audience's empathy for these women is elicited from the entrance, in the bare reimagined forecourt that was the site of so much harsh treatment and deprivation shared through the minimalist reinterpretation of the site.

Similarly, the former convict settlement at Port Arthur employs minimalistic interpretation to encourage visitors to impose upon themselves the conditions experienced in the eery isolated prison. The isolation cells within the Separate Prison, adjacent to the main penitentiary building, were constructed as a new punishment focused on isolation and contemplation. Convicts remained in their cells for twenty-three hours each day, in single cells where they ate, slept and worked on menial tasks

[36] The Cascades Female Factory staff encourage visitors to view the grounds on a tour, but there are self-guided options available accompanied by a visitor guide pamphlet with an overview of the history of the site and the people who lived there.

Port Arthur Historic Site Management Authority, "Cascades Female Factory Historic Site Visitor Guide," (Hobart, Tasmania 2012).

[37] "Cascades Female Factory Historic Site," https://femalefactory.org.au/.

in silence before being released for one hour of exercise in the high-walled yard—alone.[38] As it was in the early nineteenth century, it would be inhumane for visitors to authentically experience this degree of deprivation. However, with audience cooperation, it was possible to enhance the experience of being in the Separate Prison site to more fully appreciate the lived experience of the convicts. Signage at the entry to the isolation cells asked visitors for silence inside the area to evoke the sheer quiet of the space and for the audience to begin to understand just how difficult it is to remain silent (especially children). Although many visitors did not heed the signage during my short time in the building, those moments of quiet in an area designed to be wholly oppressive was both eery and powerful. The limited site interpretation included small panels within the cells that highlighted individual convicts' stories, which spoke to the philosophy of the design of the prison and behavioural reform at that time. The sheer silence of the space, heightened by thick stone walls, and the cold feeling that seeps into you from the high walls that block the sun, as well as the philosophical intent of the building's design to remove the warmth from a person, draws the audience to understand, however little, the abject inhumanity of the prison. Visitors are encouraged to take tours through Port Arthur, which further layers the interpretation of the site, but the experience could be just as empathetically powerful to stand among the ruins and quietly contemplate the space and those who experienced it as a working prison.[39]

New Museology

The concept of empathetic museums is grounded in understandings of New Museology, a late-twentieth-century philosophy for museums' functionality and changing relationships with their communities, as articulated by Peter Vergo in his 1989 edited book, *The New Museology*.[40] A theoretical and philosophical approach centred on museums' social and political roles, *New Museology* radically re-examined the role of museums in society.[41] This approach evolved from the widespread dissatisfaction with, and perceived failings of, traditional ideas of museum practice, both within and outside the museum profession. As Vicki McCall and Clive Gray have summarised, museums were perceived as "isolated from the modern world, elitist, obsolete and a waste of public

[38] "Port Arthur Historic Site Visitor Guide," (Port Arthur, Tasmania2016).

[39] "Port Arthur Historic Site," https://portarthur.org.au/.

[40] Donald Preziosi, "Art History and Museology: Rendering the Visible Legible," ed. Sharon Macdonald, *A Companion to Museum Studies* (Chichester: Wiley, 2008), ProQuest Ebook Central. 57; Peter Vergo, *The New Museology*; Katherine Louise Gregory, "The Artist and the Museum: Contested Histories and Expanded Narrative in Australian Art Museology, 1975-2002" (PhD, The University of Melbourne, 2004-10), 185; McCall and Gray, "Museums and the 'New Museology': Theory, Practice and Organisational Change," 19.

[41] Vergo, "Introduction," 3.

money".[42] Traditional approaches to museology were two-dimensional: dominant histories prevailed as museums told stories of progress, to the detriment of alternative perspectives and experiences, with the assumption that all people agreed to and experienced a singular linear historical narrative.[43] In traditional, hierarchical models of museology, institutions regarded collections as more important than visitors.[44] In a challenge to these conventions, New Museology embraces interdisciplinary research of, and within, collections, including more democratic and representative narratives, championing the museum as "an impartial space for open engagement and debate".[45] New Museology defines a shift in understanding the museum's role, from traditional pedagogical stalwart to adopting more democratic materialities and building a mutual 'contact zone' relationship with audiences.[46]

New Museology adapts and transforms traditional attitudes towards museums, making these institutions more open; and acknowledging their role in modern society as spaces for collections and public service for their audiences.[47] To do so, understanding and engagement with audiences is key to New Museology. During his study of the changing role of the modern museum, Vergo established that "most exhibition-makers think too much about the content and presentation of their exhibition, and too little about their intended audience".[48] Working within New Museology frameworks, curators should aim to provide more than just a translation of objects within an exhibition space. Instead, they should engage with their audience's sense of historical and social consciousness, promoting "visitor experiences that activate stories and emotions about or with the object".[49] Elizabeth Wood and Kiersten F. Latham have explained this approach as a fundamental understanding of New Museology, that "both museums and visitors are interpreters and translators of objects."[50] By adopting this more modern, heuristic approach, museums engage directly with the very personal experiences of collective remembrance within their audience. As Ross Gibson has explained, "personal involvement in experiences and with artefacts is essential to grasping the definitive qualities of the processes of remembrance" so that exhibitions transform into spaces where

[42] Ibid.; McCall and Gray, "Museums and the 'New Museology': Theory, Practice and Organisational Change," 30.

[43] Wilton, "Museums and Memories: Remembering the Past in Local and Community Museums," 58-59.

[44] Wood and Latham, *The Objects of Experience: Transforming Visitor-Object Encounters in Museums*, 24.

[45] O'Neill, "Museums and Their Paradoxes," 23-24.

[46] James Clifford, *Routes: Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997), 188-219.

[47] Dean, *Museum Exhibition: Theory and Practice*. 2.

[48] Vergo, "The Reticent Object," 52.

[49] Wood and Latham, *The Objects of Experience: Transforming Visitor-Object Encounters in Museums*, 30-31.

[50] Ibid.

relationships between people and objects are both established and reignited.[51] Engaging audiences in processes of collective remembrance through exhibition spaces, object displays and museum narratives is what sets New Museology apart from traditional professional practice.

Despite containing objects and stories of the past that speak to collective memory, museums both reflect and actively contribute to current cultural and social relationships through their exhibition narrative. The cohesive positioning and location of objects and collective exhibitions within the walls of the museum communicate much more than is written on text panels or explained through object labels, which has a profound social impact through its display.[52] Cultural Theorist Michelle Henning has explained that "in and through museums and exhibitions, subject and object are reinvented".[53] By this, Henning refers to the social importance and academic weight of a museum's place within the broader community; by its very existence and the prestige associated with being enshrined in a museum, an object or story becomes more than itself.[54] The subject is transformed into that which now holds more merit. It has been placed on a pedestal, literally and figuratively, through its exhibition within the museum's walls, effectively reinventing its significance into something to be considered more deeply, becoming more valuable to the audience. By embracing the more representative and democratic narratives encouraged in New Museology, museums embody their social responsibility as institutions for all visitors. As Hugues de Varine has summarised, "At the center [sic] of this idea of a museum lie not things, but people".[55] Therefore, the responsibility for curators and the museum administration is to understand their complex relation to the broader culture and how their decisions influence and reflect this complexity.[56]

One of the more recent frontiers in understanding and accepting diverse cultural tropes of their audiences are Australian museums' acceptance of lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transgender, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ+) community narratives in collections and exhibitions. Until the early twenty-first century LGBTIQ+ narratives have been, internationally, absent from museum collections and exhibitions, which museum professionals Nikki Sullivan and Craig Middleton have stated, has

[51] Gibson, *Memoryscopes: Remnants, Forensics, Aesthetics*, vii; Henning, *Museums, Media and Cultural Theory*, 11-14.

[52] Church, "Body and Language," 43.

[53] Henning, *Museums, Media and Cultural Theory*, 2.

[54] Ibid., 5-7.

[55] Hugues de Varine, quoted in Hauenschild, "Claims and Reality of New Museology: Case Studies in Canada, the United States and Mexico," 5.

[56] Henning, *Museums, Media and Cultural Theory*, 3.

negatively impacted the LGBTIQ+ community, their families and allies.[57] The History Trust of South Australia (THTSA) has recently developed and enacted an LGBTIQ+ Inclusion Action Plan to address the social inclusion of all audiences, in line with the institution's vision and values. During the 2016 Fest Festival in Adelaide, THTSA put their plan into action by producing the pop-up exhibition *Queering the Museum*. THTSA invited eight LGBTIQ+ community members to choose objects from their collection and reinterpret these selected objects with an emphasis on sexuality and/or gender. Despite having no LGBTIQ+-identified objects in the collection, by curating objects with the LGBTIQ+ community the museums showed that object meaning is socially constructed. They acknowledged that such curatorial practice has significant implications for understanding traditional professional practice and engagement with the LGBTIQ+ community.[58] Similarly, to coincide with the Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey, the State Library of Western Australia displayed an experimental interpretation of intimate photographs from their heritage photographic collection titled *In Plain Sight*; presented to evoke questions about the lack of queer perspectives throughout history.[59] Using photographs of mostly unknown or anonymous subjects, the curators presented these studio images with limited textual interpretation to "suggest what queer relationships may have looked like in Western Australia's past, and challenge traditional understandings of historical perspectives".[60]

Such democratic narratives are increasingly popular in professional Australian museum and gallery institutions. Just as New Museology encourages "history from below", museums also are drawing more representative and commonplace narratives from their communities. From June 2017 until April 2018, the Museum of Old and New Art (MONA) in Hobart, Tasmania, hosted *The Museum of Everything*, a curated modern art exhibition with works by people who were not professional artists. The exhibition was advertised as "the world's first wandering institution for the untrained, unintentional, undiscovered and unclassifiable artists of the nineteenth, twentieth and twenty-first centuries".[61] By displaying their practice, MONA is questioning the idea of a 'real artist', the space between creativity and artistry, and the place of professional practice in the modern art world, where anything and everything can be art, given the proper curatorial interpretation. This democratisation of modern museum content applies to curatorial subjects as well. From 18 August 2017 to 18 February

[57] Nikki Sullivan and Craig Middleton, "LGBTIQ Inclusion and Action," *Museums Galleries Australia Magazine* 25, no. 2 (2017): 37; Jo Darbyshire, "The Gay Museum", http://www.jodarbyshire.com/other-projects/curatorial-work/the-gay-museum-2003.

[58] Ibid., 38.

[59] "In Plain Sight Exhibition, State Library of W.A., until December 5," *West Weekend Magazine*, October 21-22 2017; "What's on at the State Library of Western Australia, Oct-Dec 2017," (Perth: State Library of Western Australia, 2017).

[60] "In Plain Sight Exhibition, State Library of W.A., until December 5."

[61] Museum of Old and New Art (MONA), "Visitor Guide," (Berriedale, TAS, 2017).

2018, the Ian Potter Centre: National Gallery Victoria, Australia, hosted *The Pool*, Australian Institute of Architects' commission for the 2016 Venice Biennale. Despite being an architecturally produced exhibition, *The Pool* used the idea of the swimming pool as a microcosm of Australian society, as a place of social connection, and "offers a lens to explore our cultural identity".[62] Through photography, multimedia, and audio content, curators have represented the swimming pool as a site of "cultural exchange, with stories of segregation, competition, sustainability and design", that which many, if not most, Australians can directly identity.[63] The inclusion of a wading pool installation at the exhibition's entrance invited visitors to physically immerse themselves in the exhibition's content and involved them in making meaning from the content presented.

Once the realm of elite specialists, curatorship is increasingly practised by people with more diverse professional backgrounds in modern contemporary museums and galleries and more informal community spaces, leading to more democratic exhibitions and collections.[64] This malleability of museums and their curatorial staff's approaches are even more relevant in the face of the profound technological changes that shape the twenty-first-century museum. Sociologist Gordon Fyfe has reflected that "the contemporary museum operates in a mediated world of digital networking, of rapid flows of images and artifacts [sic], of marketization of culture, and of mass tourism where meanings patently escape the horizons of curatorial control".[65] In this way, curators have had to adapt their approaches to exhibitions as two-way streets. They understand that the audience is not wholly passive and that they arrive with preconceived ideas of the museum's content and the digital evidence and research to support their perspectives. [66] James Clifford has defined this close, mutual relationship between a museum and its audience as a "contact zone".[67] The traditional association of the museum as an educator has given way to the modern interactive relationship between communities, stakeholders and museums, in which museums change with and reflect the variability of their communities.[68] The fluidity of curatorial roles, and the relationship between the museum's traditional pedagogical responsibility and its technologically literate audience, has dynamically transformed understandings of the museum's role and place in the community.

[62] National Gallery Victoria., "What's on, Sep-Oct 2017," (Melbourne, VIC, 2017), 25.

[63] Ibid.

[64] Fyfe, "Sociology and the Social Aspects of Museums," 42.

[65] Ibid., 40.

[66] Rhiannon Mason, "Cultural Theory and Museum Studies,"ibid. 25.

[67] James Clifford, quoted in ibid.

[68] Ibid.

By crafting exhibition design to physically engage visitors with the subject, museum professionals invite their visitors to more deeply engage with content. In practice, New Museology aims for more thorough and meaningful audience participation through curatorial interpretation of objects and exhibition design. Ross Gibson has described the importance of this visitor connection as "essential to grasping the definitive qualities of the processes of remembrance", and therefore of building upon a sense of historical consciousness and collective memory of a museum's audience. [69] The concept is a simple one: through the display of exhibition content, the museum is addressing their visitor—but this, in itself, is a measured step away from traditional notions of museums as palaces of learning, in which knowledge was available but not catered to audiences.[70] New approaches to museology and exhibition design display objects in more vivid and communicative compositions for audiences not, as Henning has described, "dead beneath a glass coffin" of showcases.[71] Such displays should engage with visitors emotionally and cognitively by appealing to the senses to work as an effect.[72] The poetics of exhibition design should produce meaning through the interrelation of elements within the exhibition, beyond the chronological ordering or display of separate but related parts.[73] Drawing on her background as a cultural theorist, Rhiannon Mason has emphasised that such display methods mimic reality. By employing this design of interrelating elements, museums claim authenticity in visitors' eyes.

In practice, this authenticity is best achieved in detailed collaborations between curatorial and exhibition design staff. The more engaged design is with content, the more authentic and meaningful the visitor's experience will be. In Melbourne, Museums Victoria's Immigration Museum has achieved this authenticity through design, particularly in their *Journeys of a Lifetime* gallery. Situated in a vast minimalistic space with soaring high ceilings and echoing acoustics, exhibition designers have crafted a tactile, walk-through space shaped like a 1950s cruise liner. This 17-metre replica ship physically depicts changes in sea travel from the 1840s to the 1950s as visitors walk through the exhibit. Motion-activated voices speak to the experiences onboard within the berths, providing an emotional first-hand connection rather than broad descriptive statements. Instead of display cabinetry, elements of shipboard life such as chests of drawers or tea chests display objects—with visitors having to open drawers and actively seek out objects on display. This experience of stepping into the past, the personal touches of homeliness, coupled with the voices of those whose

[69] Gibson, *Memoryscopes: Remnants, Forensics, Aesthetics*, vii.

[70] Vergo, "The Reticent Object," 46.

[71] Henning, *Museums, Media and Cultural Theory*, 5.

[72] Ibid., 31.

[73] Mason, "Cultural Theory and Museum Studies," 20.

belongings you're looking through, affects the visitor emotionally. Given so many Australians arrived by boat, this exhibition design allows visitors to physically walk in the footsteps of their ancestors. Similarly, the Immigration Museum's exhibition *Identity: Yours, Mine, Ours*, poses questions alongside text panel content to provoke reflection among visitors; asking them to consider their own values, experiences and history in the creation of identity while providing objects and interpretive material that illustrate the complex and constantly changing identity of the Australian population.

This emotive and sensory power of exhibition design is crucial to New Museology. Such feelings make visitors care for exhibits and the historical consciousness being shared within them. Gibson has described this connection as a "transformative relationship to the world that has been intensified by the system of artefacts". [74] To promote an intensified and emotional experience in the museum, interpretation must go beyond a restatement of an object's history, composition, or origin.[75] As Vergo has established, museums should not merely display their treasures to the curious and make their collection accessible to those desirous of knowledge, but also actively engage in mass education, as well as providing entertainment and "public diversion".[76] The modern museum must compete with a vast array of entertainment options, remain fresh and exciting to an audience with a limited attention span and digital options that can often far outspend a museum budget. New Museology acknowledges the modern complexity of the museum's role in society. As a "contact zone", interacting with and between the community and stakeholders, museums must change as their community context changes.[77] This context has most recently turned digital, with museums embracing the digitisation of collections, including more popular entertainment elements and themes into exhibitions. Michelle Henning has highlighted the potential of this new approach to unbalance the museum experience, as an emphasis on experience displaces an emphasis on artefacts. She has argued that as museum design becomes more about such transformative encounters, objects become mere props for entertainment: "if the aim is to provoke feelings and associations in the visitor, a simulation will do just as well as an object".[78]

These changing dynamics between digital and material can benefit the visitor experience and authenticity of museums. Hilde Hein has explained that "warm engagement should not be incompatible with austere contemplation".[79] Digital engagement has been proven to encourage

[74] Gibson, *Memoryscopes: Remnants, Forensics, Aesthetics*, 66.

[75] Wood and Latham, *The Objects of Experience: Transforming Visitor-Object Encounters in Museums*, 31.

[76] Vergo, "Introduction," 2.

[77] Clifford, *Routes: Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century*, 188-219.

[78] Henning, *Museums, Media and Cultural Theory*, 112-13.

[79] Hein, "Redressing the Museum in Feminist Theory," 38.

visitors, and museums professionals alike, to increasingly engage with objects and their stories, a concept Andrew Simpson has labelled a "new materiality". [80] Through new and innovative display techniques, including digital engagement, meaning is not only elucidated but can be drawn out in more detail and allow visitors to engage with content on multiple levels.[81] Modern museums have adjusted their exhibition design to more minimalistic and sparse physical interpretation with increased digital engagement. Institutions such as the Museum of Old and New Art (MONA) in Tasmania use a smartphone application to replace object labels for displayed works. Located by GPS, visitors select the artworks they wish to know more about, with further options regarding the depth of reading and interests in the artists or related works.[82]

Similarly, the Australian National Maritime Museum and Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences in Sydney have developed tour guide smartphone applications for added digital interpretation. Text-heavy panels, object labels, and overt curatorial interpretation have given way to aesthetically open and imaginatively designed spaces that allow visitors to make their own meaning through informal learning methods. Wood and Latham have argued that this "transformative learning" will enable visitors to develop experiences within the museums that build upon their prior knowledge, leading them towards new ideas and concepts presented by museum material.[83] While museum professionals may often complain of mindless wandering visitors in these spaces, there is proof that this exhibition design encourages the participatory character of museums and their audiences.[84]

With an approach that strips back museums to their most basic purposes and radically re-examines their role and social responsibilities, New Museology also becomes a study of audiences.[85] A focus on the role of audience participation and engagement is essential for every museum. Modern museums engage with a broad range of subjects, interests, and audiences. Vergo has argued that there is an equal obligation to display treasures to these audiences and to "actively engage in mass education".[86] New Museology operates from an understanding that objects are "'mute and

[80] Simpson, "'The Future of the Object': University of Melbourne Initiatives Lead Object-Based Learning," 60.

[81] Wood and Latham, *The Objects of Experience: Transforming Visitor-Object Encounters in Museums*, 31.

[82] MONA, "The O," https://mona.net.au/museum/the-o

[83] Ibid., 25.

[84] Henning, *Museums, Media and Cultural Theory*, 104-06.

[85] Vergo, *The New Museology*, 1-2; Richard Sandell, "Museums as Agents of Social Inclusion," *Museum Management and Curatorship* 17, no. 4 (1998): 412.

[86] Vergo, *The New Museology*, 2.

unreadable" to visitors without some form of curatorial explanation and narrative involvement.[87] This narrative involvement encourages an ideas-rich approach to exhibitions, instead of a visual cacophony of objects such as a curiosity cabinet of overwhelming treasures, lacking curatorial interpretation or communication of any deeper meaning.[88] This approach has been reflected in major international institutions' attitudes and professional practices, including the British Museum and the National Gallery in London. Having been Director of both institutions, Neil MacGregor has summarised this balance between objects and narrative for the benefit of audiences:

> I think that the role … of scholars and curators is not to put themselves between the public and the objects, not in any very elaborate sense to explain the objects, but to exhort the visitor to a direct experience, to an unmediated vision.[89]

This direct, unmediated experience of audiences is the goal of New Museology. This goal enables museums to identify and critique their institution's inherent bias and the messages displayed by their exhibitions and collections and to present these to audiences with an understanding of the museum's social impact.[90]

Chapter Conclusions

This chapter has appraised critical issues in practice that affect interpretations of women by museums. In particular, I have demonstrated that the movements of New Museology and empathetic museum practice have evolved into expectations of best practice within the profession, encouraging museum professionals to curate their collections with their audiences in mind. This meaning-making connection between audience and object has been proven to produce an imagined community within the museum and connect to a broader collective identity. Such active engagement with communities and social issues beyond a museum's walls is a relatively new movement, named empathetic museum practice. Demonstrated in recent museum exhibitions and cultural heritage sites across Australia, empathetic museums draw their audiences into their narratives through emotional connection and social impact.

The harnessing of personal stories to elicit empathy within visitors, encouraging deep connections with curatorial content, will be adopted within the exhibition component of this thesis.

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[87] Gregory, "The Artist and the Museum: Contested Histories and Expanded Narrative in Australian Art Museology, 1975-2002," 267.

[88] Ibid., 272.

[89] Neil MacGregor, quoted in Henning, *Museums, Media and Cultural Theory*, 110.

[90] Wilton, "Museums and Memories: Remembering the Past in Local and Community Museums," 58-59.

This approach allows for the adaption of existing historical understandings of nineteenth-century womanhood to be overlayed with modern interpretations of autonomy, which can then be read into the lives of those earliest European women who travelled to Western Australia in such a way as to elicit feelings of empathy within the audience for these women's stories. While the empathic museum focuses on broader institutional change, adopting this understanding as an individual practitioner is vital to building a creative exhibition piece that is true to such empathetic values. The shaping of women's stories through textual interpretation will be the main form of encouraging empathy within the audience. However, the physical representation of women within the gallery is more complex, as will be discussed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER TWO
THE FEMALE FORM

By the very nature of their placement within an exhibition, objects in museums are divorced from their original function, isolated from their original context, and further layered with meanings and values through their curation and relationship to the constructed object of the museum itself.[1] Further, the curatorial interpretation relies upon the audience's cultural understanding and knowledge backgrounds, influencing how objects are understood within the museum's walls. When women are physically displayed within the walls of a gallery, they too become an object that is interpreted within this framework. Whether represented by artwork, material culture, or the models and mannequins that are the focus of this chapter, female forms are imbued with cultural significance and interpreted by cultural values. However, this physical representation often objectifies the female form and detracts from the curatorial intent. In a dominant patriarchal society, the male gaze influences interpretations of women on display—in particular, affecting representations of the female form and how it appears (and appeals) to the museum visitor.[2] This gaze, in turn, alters the perception of both the woman and her story. While used to humanise collections and provide appropriate conservation standards, feminine mannequins are laden with cultural signposts of the male gaze. More realistic physical representations of the female form are needed to add authenticity and depth to the display of women in museums and galleries. This can be achieved through revised display techniques and incorporating the embodied experiences and voices of the women on display.

Due to their historically domestic realm and popular nature of fashion exhibitions, museums frequently represent women in relation to clothing (known as costume collections). Audiences connect deeply with displays featuring costume collections. Julia Petrov has argued that fashion is one of the few examples that cannot be disconnected from its original context. People engage with dress in museums by remembering personal histories: as fashion, not collection.[3] This personal connection to such objects has been actively encouraged by museum best practice, in accordance with New Museology principles (expanded upon in Chapter One). In museums, fashion and costumes have been

[1] Hooper Greenhill, *Museums and the Shaping of Knowledge*. 46.

[2] Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema."; Berger, *Ways of Seeing*.

[3] Julia Petrov, "Cross-Purposes: Museum Display and Material Culture," *CrossCurrents* (2012): 219.

described as much as an anthropological collection as an aesthetic one.[4] Fashion reflects the social and economic changes of society but also represents the owner, designer, and even makers of the garment. Each person who interacted in the making and subsequent wearing of the garment leaves their mark on the object. As described by Fashion Institute of Technology's Associate Curator of Costume, Emma McClendon, "clothing is an embodied form of visual culture".[5] The embodied nature of costume collections enables a more personal connection with the audience. Simply, every visitor is wearing and will continue to wear clothing and so can relate to the feeling of those objects. They understand the care involved in preserving that piece to pass into a collection and comprehend the tangible link to the body who wore the costume. Understanding the collection's physicality draws the audience closer to the story on display. As Petrov has commented: "Costume… due to its being a trace of the body, was particularly effective at enabling visitors to make tangible, meaningful mental links with the past". [6] Visitors engage with fashion daily, so consumption barriers are no object with costume collections, even with elaborate historical period costumes or haute couture on display. However, while fashion is an ever-changing commodity to please (or entice) the consumer, it becomes 'frozen' as a historical object once placed within a museum exhibition. "Withdrawn from a system of commodity exchange", fashion becomes costume with a new historical meaning, set within a curatorial narrative. [7]

The challenge then, for museum professionals, is to balance fashion with costume. Although the physical connection between clothing and audience is omnipresent in such exhibitions, an emotional gap remains if the curatorial narrative is adversely affected by exhibition design. Joan Faber McAlister, reflecting on objects readily available to consumers but now presented as objects within the Women's Jail Museum in Johannesburg, commented on this discord: "the items are in a glass case where we may look at them, but they were not made for display. They are belongings, but they do not belong to us. They were made to be possessed, but we cannot possess them".[8] Museums are ahistorical places, where the configuration of time, events and the objects representing these moments are manipulated by curatorial narrative—consumer commodities are "lifted out of the flow of experience…and packaged in a way which creates a particular relationship" with the exhibition

[4] Roberta Smith, "Moma Plunges Headfirst into Fashion," *The New York Times*, 5 October 2017.

[5] Laura Neilson, "How Museums and Cultural Institutions Have Shaped the History of Body Diversity," *Fashionista*, https://fashionista.com/2017/12/mannequins-fashion-museum-fit-body-exhibit.

[6] Petrov, "Cross-Purposes: Museum Display and Material Culture," 223.

[7] Ibid., 225-26.

[8] Joan Faber McAlister, "Collecting the Gaze: Memory, Agency, and Kinship in the Women's Jail Museum, Johannesburg," *Women's Studies in Communication* 36, no. 1 (2013): 16.

audience, abstracted from the past.[9] Of course, the exhibition themes and curatorial intent for displays, including costume, may not be based on fashion. Clothing presents vast potential for interpretation, particularly in exhibitions focussing on the individual stories and historical imprint of women. The interpretive designs for standard objects, such as display cases or plinths, do not allow for the embodiment of clothing items to flesh out the person who once wore the costume and produce an emotional effect with the audience.[10] As McAlister has reflected, "the tactile nature of the objects, and their intimate relationship to a specific body that touched, handled, and wore them, resists the spectacular mode through which most visual displays are viewed".[11] Alternative display methods must be adopted to authentically reproduce the bodies, fashion, and tangible emotional connection in a costume display.

Mannequins

Mannequins 'bring to life' costume collections, making that link between the visitor and object an inextricably human connection. "Clothing is an embodied form of visual culture", providing a stage for the performance of identity. [12] Whether treated as a piece of artwork or representative of material culture, it's crucial to consider how these garments will be exhibited. Mannequins are the conventional method of costume display in modern museums and galleries, either as a stylised body or dress form. They provide both conservational support for the collection, "but also serves [sic] as a substitute for the former owner's living body".[13] However, mannequins are routinely sidelined as distracting, often uncanny, additions to gallery spaces. Further, the standard bodily forms and poses of these mannequins communicate social and cultural ideals of womanhood that can belie the curatorial intent of the display, even undermining the autonomy of people represented by mannequin forms. Ingrid Mida, Fashion Research Collection Coordinator at Ryerson University, has investigated the challenges posed for costume curators, particularly "how to indicate that a dress artefact was once worn by a living person and therefore embodies a complex interplay of cultural beliefs, identity,

[9] Susan M. Pearce, *Museums, Objects and Collections: A Cultural Study* (London: Leicester University Press, 1998), 208-09.

[10] Church, "Body and Language," 49.

[11] McAlister, "Collecting the Gaze: Memory, Agency, and Kinship in the Women's Jail Museum, Johannesburg," 16.

[12] Neilson, "How Museums and Cultural Institutions Have Shaped the History of Body Diversity"; Joanne Entwistle, "Fashion and the Fleshy Body: Dress as Embodied Practice," *Fashion Theory* 4, no. 3 (2000).

[13] Ingrid Mida, "Animating the Body in Museum Exhibitions of Fashion and Dress," *The Journal of the Costume Society of America* 41, no. 1 (2015): 37.

memory, and body imprints".[14] Mannequin or dress form-bodies provide a means to communicate these complexities. Still, they must balance this demonstration of character and dynamism intrinsic in the curatorial subject while maintaining sensitivity to professional conservation standards and exist within cultural, social and gender norms.

A typical early practice was for museums to host runway presentations of models dressed in historical artefacts, "offering both the wearer and the audience a multi-sensory experience of the garments".[15] The practice mirrored the work of models for fashion houses who, from the middle of the twentieth century, were named mannequins. Designers such as Christian Dior used mannequins to enliven his collections—selling not only the clothes but a lifestyle to his clientele, recognising that his mannequins were integral to the development and sale of each garment in conveying his designs: "They are the life of my dresses and I want my dresses to be happy". [16] Similarly, Sydney interior designer Marion Hall Best employed fashionable women to work in her stores to sell the colourful, modernist lifestyle she marketed from the 1930s. These women wore designers such as Marimekko, previously unknown to the Australian market, in Best's Woollahra store, appealing to the wealthy clients of the area who popularised the style until the mid-1970s.[17] As an extension of this practice, museums used live models to portray the character of a costume's provenance—bringing the static object to life through wear. However, live models posed a conservation risk to the costumes, with a heightened risk of potential damage to the clothing. Furthermore, there were issues of integrity within the collection itself, as "a garment that once belonged to another person is subtly altered when worn again. This could destroy critical evidence of the marks and imprints of the original wearer".[18] Until as recently as 2016, some private collections maintained the tradition of costume parades, including Sydney-based not-for-profit community organisation The Cavalcade of History and Fashion. Coupled with a high tea for volunteers and paying guests, models wore the costume collection from the late 1800s to bring the social history to life, in "particular, the history of women's lives and their families".[19] The organisation has since used mannequins and body forms to display their costumes or are carried

[14] Ibid.

[15] Ibid., 38.

[16] Katie Somerville, "Introduction," in *The House of Dior: Seventy Years of Haute Couture*, ed. Katie Somerville, Lydia Kamitsis, and Danielle Whitfield (Melbourne: National Gallery of Victoria, 2017), 12.

[17] Catriona Quinn, "Best, Marion Esdaile Hall (1905-1988)," Australian Dictionary of Biography, http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/best-marion-esdaile-hall-12205; "Marion Hall Best: Interiors (5 August - 12 November 2017)," Sydney Living Museums, https://sydneylivingmuseums.com.au/exhibitions/marion-hall-best-interiors-0.

[18] Mida, "Animating the Body in Museum Exhibitions of Fashion and Dress," 43.

[19] "Experience the Collection," The Cavalcade of History and Fashion Inc., https://www.thecavalcade.org/experience-the-collection-presentations/.

"through the audience during the presentation by white gloved assistants so audience members can get a closer look at the details of these gowns".[20]

Without live models, curators have to transform stagnant forms and mannequins into characters—with stance, gesture, movement and attitude suggestive of a human body.[21] This simulation of live bodies is essential to communicating the embodied history present in museum exhibitions: "once removed from the body, dress lacks fullness and seems strange, almost alien, and all the more poignant to us if we can remember the person who once breathed life into the fabric".[22] To convey the accurate remembrance of the characters represented by costume displays, museum professionals use various methods to mimic living bodies, complemented by additional design elements such as film, music, and even live performance.[23] The challenge of this accurate mimicry within a gallery space is operating within a gallery's budget and the availability of appropriate bodily forms and working within conservation parameters for the costume pieces.[24] However, the readily-available gendered mannequins popularly seen in museums and galleries evolved as sales tools over the past two hundred years. Their appeal, developed as a form of (usually) hyper-feminised visual retailing, remains an idealised human surrogate, however ill-befitting the historical character recreation intended by the costume's curation.[25] Whereas shop mannequins provided an ideal body for which women were encouraged to see themselves (and mimic), so too has this effect been translated into a museum.[26] As McClendon has commented, "the mannequin and the shape of the mannequins is a social construct". Such bodily forms strongly influence the interpretation of bodies, particularly female bodies, within the walls of a gallery exhibition.[27]

Museum mannequins wield this social force in many forms, through variations in the style of bodily design—full-bodied or half-formed, headless or facially distinct—but also in their curated surroundings, posing, characterisation, and even intentional invisibility within the gallery space.

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[20] Ibid.

[21] Mida, "Animating the Body in Museum Exhibitions of Fashion and Dress," 46.

[22] Entwistle, "Fashion and the Fleshy Body: Dress as Embodied Practice," 326-27.

[23] Jeffrey Horsley, quoted in Mida, "Animating the Body in Museum Exhibitions of Fashion and Dress," 46.

[24] Ibid., 50.

[25] Chloe Chapin, Denise Nicole Green, and Samuel Neuberg, "Research Report: Exhibiting Gender: Exploring the Dynamic Relationships between Fashion, Gender, and Mannequins in Museum Display," *Dress* 45, no. 1 (2019): 80.

[26] Alison Matthews David, "Body Doubles: The Origins of the Fashion Mannequin," *Fashion Studies* 1, no. 1 (2018): 24.

[27] McClendon curated FIT's exhibition *The Body: Fashion and Physique* in New York City (5 December 2017 – 5 May 2018), Fashion Institute of Technology, "The Body: Fashion and Physique," https://www.fitnyc.edu/museum/exhibitions/the-body-fashion-physique.php; Neilson, "How Museums and Cultural Institutions Have Shaped the History of Body Diversity".

Figure 1. "International Collection galleries", Krystyna Campbell-Pretty Fashion Gift, National Gallery Victoria—International, 2019. Photos by Toni Church.

Numerous Australian museums and galleries employ mannequins as integral modes of displaying costume collections, increasingly in spaces reserved for artwork and technological design. Here, the dresses are intended to be the focus of art or technology, yet the inclusion of stylised female bodies to display these collections changes the perception of both the objects and the women on display. The display of a portion of dresses held in the *Krystyna Campbell-Pretty Fashion Gift* is a purposefully feminised space. The curators have used stylised female mannequins to display the dresses, posed as models with petite moulded blank faces, among the nineteenth to twentieth-century International Collection galleries at the National Gallery Victoria—International (NGV).[28] Mirroring dress style, colours and aesthetics with the existing collection of paintings and decorative arts, the curators intended to "draw parallels between the collection areas and encourage audiences to view the wider collection in new ways".[29] Although treated as art, the inclusion of various female bodies in these gallery spaces changes the meaning of these costume pieces once more. Some appear as headless body forms, much like a blank canvas so as not to overwhelm the audience in a grand hall of multiple hung oil paintings. Others are gently posed figures, placed neatly besides artworks that complement

[28] "The Krystyna Campbell-Pretty Fashion Gift, 1 March - 14 July 2019," National Gallery of Victoria, https://www.ngv.vic.gov.au/exhibition/the-krystyna-campbell-pretty-fashion-gift/.

[29] "The Krystyna Campbell-Pretty Fashion Gift: Artwork Labels," (Melbourne: National Gallery of Victoria, 2019), 206.

Figure 2. *Paolo Sebastian: X*, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide. ABC News.

their colour and style—the romantic tea dress alongside the romantic seascape. Others still become personified with a striking otherness reflected in both the adjacent paintings and style of dress. Philanthropist and donor Krystyna Campbell-Pretty has commented that "if you walk through the exhibition, you will see a complete change of women's attitudes to themselves and people towards women".[30] Yet, the women of various eras represented by these dresses are purposefully anonymous modelled forms treated as pieces of art instead of recognised as embodied people.

The removal of personhood from mannequin costume displays is an effective display technique to highlight dress as art. Still, it does not succeed in completely stripping the feminised framing of the costume. The collection's inherent purpose of embodying a human experience and connection remains. *Paolo Sebastian: X*, a display of the Art Gallery of South Australia's acquisition of garments by Adelaide designer Paul Vasileff, purposefully adopted 'invisible' mannequins to focus on the artistry of the garments, not the model.[31] The purpose and narrative of this display, according to the curators, was to insert fashion into permanent gallery displays, mirroring the idea of fashion as art. Conservators purposefully made the mannequins invisible to focus on the artistry of the garment. Principal conservator Kristen Phillips commented that their intention in producing such figures, which

[30] Lisa Marie Corso, "Inside Krystyna Campbell-Pretty's Stunning Heritage Home," Domain, https://www.domain.com.au/living/inside-krystyna-campbell-prettys-stunning-heritage-home-830042/.

[31] "Paolo Sebastian: X, 7 October - 10 December 2017," Art Gallery of South Australia, https://www.agsa.sa.gov.au/whats-on/exhibitions/paolo-sebastian-x/.

took 16 hours each to prepare, was translucency: "When you come and look at the dress, you're blown away by it and shouldn't notice the mannequin at all".[32] An audience seamlessly accepts the transparency of mannequins and the representations of humanity. They see past the human form to the artistic direction or content intended by the curator. However, the femininity inherent in both the design and display of these costumes cannot be erased. Even as headless dress forms, the bodies in the gallery are apparent—the social narrative constructed by female bodies in the public sphere is an almost insurmountable challenge for exhibition design.

Some mannequins used to display costume collections are remarkably dehumanised; a dress form, skeletal wireframe, or simply a torso mannequin removes personal recognition. The human representation is distanced by positioning such a mannequin within the exhibition, contrasting with other installation pieces and content, but never wholly removed. In 2017, the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences' exhibition *Million Dollar Mermaid: Annette Kellerman* adopted such dehumanised dress forms in their interpretation of costumes worn by 1930s film icon, Australian swimmer (and professional mermaid) Annette Kellerman. By removing a recognisable body (and face) from the exhibition, the focus of this display became about the evolution of swimwear, not the woman who wore the costume. However, the purpose of displaying these costumes was precisely to highlight the work of Kellerman. This was made more explicit as the exhibition moved on to tell the story of Kellerman's career, from champion swimmer to silent film star, exhibiting her character's costumes on full-bodied, posed mannequins. Here, the costumes were related to Kellerman's film characters. As such, they were placed within a narrative that gave these fashionable poses a logical purpose: They are film stars, posed in character, and performing, so their stances make sense within the exhibition narrative. However, their shape does not. Kellerman had a stout, athletic build, not at all reflected in the designer's choice of mannequins who would look quite at home in a department store window display. As Chapin, Green and Neuberg have commented, "retail mannequins make the display of historical silhouettes and postures challenging (if not impossible); moreover, they tend to reinforce hyperbolic representations of masculinity and femininity through posture, body size, and shape".[33] Although the exhibition embodies Kellerman's story through the careful curation of objects, the

[32] Sowaibah Hanifie, "The Delicate Process of Taking High Fashion Paolo Sebastian Pieces from Catwalk to Art Gallery," *ABC News*, 7 October 2017.

[33] Chapin, Green, and Neuberg, "Research Report: Exhibiting Gender: Exploring the Dynamic Relationships between Fashion, Gender, and Mannequins in Museum Display," 86.

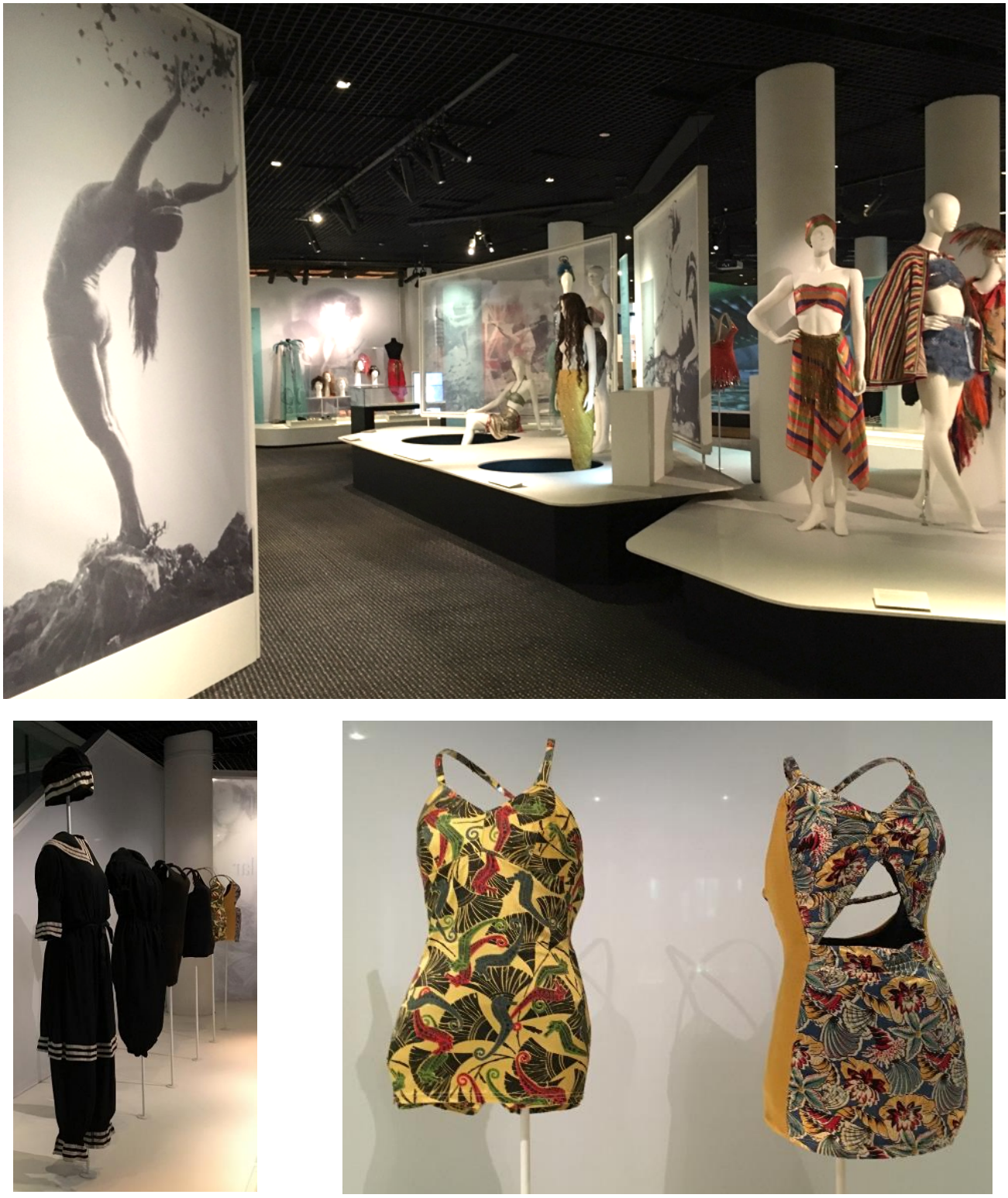


Figure 3. *Million Dollar Mermaid: Annette Kellerman* Exhibition, Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, Sydney, 2017. Photos by Toni Church.

selection of disembodied forms juxtaposed with hyper-feminised and strikingly different posed bodies to that of Kellerman evokes a disjointed visual narrative within the viewer.

Due to the often-fragmentary nature of dress and costume displays, the mannequin body

within an exhibition, whether as a dress form, partial or full-bodied, can evoke feelings of unease for visitors, distracting from the curatorial narrative.[34] Adverse reactions to the uncanny presence of mannequins are common. When these silent, plastic, stylised forms of femininity don't appear as expected or breach an unspoken rule of allowing themselves to be observed, they confront the visitor with an uncanny, unsettling and profoundly uncomfortable experience.[35] In a survey of museum professionals, Chapin, Green and Neuberg found there was no consensus amongst exhibition creators about types of mannequins, except for feelings of the uncanny:

> Some respondents said that "faces are distracting," preferring headless forms. Other curators wanted realistic faces "to tell more of a story in an exhibit." One exhibit designer expressed the belief that museum-goers were "generally bothered by the faces of mannequins when they are realistic," whereas others pointed out that headless and faceless mannequins are disturbing and disconcerting.[36]

The design and selection of mannequins are largely dependent upon existing stocks within the host institution. Still, some galleries afford their designers more flair in mannequin production, affecting the exhibition's visual narrative. *The Fashion World of Jean Paul Gaultier: From the Sidewalk to the Catwalk*, developed by the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts and hosted as a travelling exhibition by the NGV, displayed an "unprecedented development of animated mannequins" to bring to life Gaultier's designs in 2011.[37] Video clips of faces were projected onto mannequins. Some laughed, cried, winked, smiled, and flirted with visitors, others spoke, in French and English, they whistled and sang—visitors remarked that these mannequins had an uncanny presence—"creepy", "fascinating", "bizarre".[38] Alternatively, although no less uncanny, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa developed mannequins of enormous scale in collaboration with film production house Weta Workshops to detail the gesture, emotion and human experience of First World War soldiers and nurses in *Gallipoli: The scale of our war.* [39] By purposefully eliciting feelings of the uncanny within their visitors, these exhibitions control the visual narrative and impart a purposeful, emotional connection within the visitor who may otherwise find the presence of these bodies in the gallery to be a

[34] Mida, "Animating the Body in Museum Exhibitions of Fashion and Dress," 38; Matthews David, "Body Doubles: The Origins of the Fashion Mannequin," 5.

[35] Kelley Swain, "Exhibition: Hold That Pose," *The Lancet* 385 (2015).

[36] Chapin, Green, and Neuberg, "Research Report: Exhibiting Gender: Exploring the Dynamic Relationships between Fashion, Gender, and Mannequins in Museum Display," 85.

[37] Mida, "Animating the Body in Museum Exhibitions of Fashion and Dress," 47.

[38] Ibid.

[39] "Gallipoli: The Scale of Our War/ Karipari: Te Pakanga Nui Exhibition Information," Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, https://www.tepapa.govt.nz/visit/whats-on/exhibitions/gallipoli-scale-our-war/gallipoli-scale-our-war-exhibition-information.

distraction. Overwhelmingly, however, the effect of the uncanny experienced by visitors results from the bodies in galleries not behaving as expected—recognisably human, but not acting human in a space constructed to reflect our humanity to us, in the form of collective memory in museum exhibitions.

It can be seen, then, that visitors perceive mannequin bodies as human and expect them to reflect our social ideas of bodies, which becomes particularly pronounced in the studies of women's figures in museums. A challenge for curators of costume and bodies is to bridge the distraction of a mannequin figure with the values-laden social meaning implicit in its body shape and the knowledge the exhibition aims to impart to the visitor. Amy Levin has commented that "regardless of the type of museum, its objects become subjects of gaze", with museums taking their place as a "cultural apparatus" instructing visitors in approved culture and behaviours.[40] When women's costumes are displayed on stylised mannequin bodies within a gallery space, the male gaze dominates the social lens through which they're curated and observed. According to John Berger, men and women are made in culture.[41] Within Western cultures, women exist solely in the restricted space of male desire. They are constantly under male surveillance and are thus portrayed in cultural spaces such as museums under the male gaze.[42]

Male Gaze

The male gaze was solidified as a theoretical concept with Laura Mulvey's career-defining paper "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema", published in 1975, which drew attention to the glaringly obvious (as Mulvey put it): "that images of woman, produced for male pleasure, have been circulated widely within commodity capitalism".[43] This concept is reflected in museums, as the accepted social ideas of bodies in galleries are overwhelmingly patriarchal. Numerous academics, across disciplines, have reinforced that in western patriarchal societies, "men have controlled who looks at whom".[44] Because of this overarching influence, it's not only men who do the looking but society that has been provided with what Beth Eck has labelled "readily available cultural scripts" for interpreting and

[40] Amy K. Levin, "Introduction," in *Gender, Sexuality and Museums: A Routledge Reader*, ed. Amy K. Levin (Oxon: Routledge, 2010), 5.

[41] Berger, *Ways of Seeing.*

[42] *Boundaries of Self: Gender, Culture and Spaces*. iix-ix.

[43] Mulvey, "Dossier: Visual Pleasure at 40," 481-82.

[44] Beth A. Eck, "Men Are Much Harder: Gendered Viewing of Nude Images," *Gender and Society* 17, no. 5 (2003): 691-93; Rosalind Coward, *Female Desires: How They Are Sought, Bought and Packaged* (New York, NY: Grove Weidenfeld, 1985); Melody D Davis, *The Male Nude in Contemporary Photography* (Philadelphia, PA: T emple University 1991).

responding to femininity on display.[45] This is evidenced by feelings of the uncanny elicited within visitors when female mannequins are unsightly or misbehaved; or, equally, seen as beautiful when performing with propriety in gallery spaces such as *Krystyna Campbell-Pretty Fashion Gift*.[46]

The creation of museum content is subject to gaze that must be mindfully addressed, particularly acknowledging that curatorial intent directs visitor perceptions of female forms such as mannequins. Museum practice often reflects the society in which it is placed, meaning that colonial, imperialist and masculinist interpretations are privileged in a western context.[47] Hilde Hein has argued that "unless museums are explicitly feminist in their practices", this inevitable participation in the male gaze continues: "simply updating the subject matter in exhibits is not enough when the conventional mode of viewing them is the source of the problem". [48] Changing the viewing processes and social conditioning of an audience is well beyond the scope of a single curator. However, acknowledging that the dressed mannequin is not passive in the meaning-making process is an important step. The choice of a body to display costume influences meaning by providing societal indicators, such as those shaped by the male gaze, and how that body is presented to the public is essential.[49] When not on display, the mannequin form does not purvey a particular meaning. However, the impact of the male gaze becomes evidence once that feminised figure is curated, accompanied by a design aesthetic, recognisable social indicators such as pose, and accessorised in such a way as to produce meaning.[50] As Joanne Entwistle has highlighted, "our experience of the body [within a gallery setting] is not as an inert object but as the envelope of our being, the site for our articulation of self", for which curatorial and exhibition design staff are not immune.[51] The distinct relationship between body and identity and identity and dress must be individually understood and then applied with care by those in positions of power who influence the meaning-making of an exhibition.[52]

Alone, "a dress artefact can only ever represent a fragment of its story", so mannequins are employed to help shape and fill gaps in this story as representations of human beings.[53] In representing the wearer's body, mannequins reflect both their shape and habits and need to be

[45] Eck, "Men Are Much Harder: Gendered Viewing of Nude Images," 691-93.

[46] "The Krystyna Campbell-Pretty Fashion Gift, 1 March - 14 July 2019".

[47] Hilde Hein, "Looking at Museums from a Feminist Perspective," in *Gender, Sexuality and Museums: A Routledge Reader*, ed. Amy K. Levin (Oxon: Routledge, 2010), 53-64.

[48] Ibid.; McAlister, "Collecting the Gaze: Memory, Agency, and Kinship in the Women's Jail Museum, Johannesburg," 4.

[49] Neilson, "How Museums and Cultural Institutions Have Shaped the History of Body Diversity".

[50] Church, "Body and Language," 49.

[51] Entwistle, "Fashion and the Fleshy Body: Dress as Embodied Practice," 335.

[52] Church, "Body and Language," 49.

[53] Mida, "Animating the Body in Museum Exhibitions of Fashion and Dress," 37.

curated in a way that authentically responds to the original wearer's form to "embody (literally) current understandings and expressions of gender".[54] Therefore, understanding and actively curating against the concept of the male gaze in the creation and perception of feminised mannequin bodies within a gallery space is essential. The choices made about costume display and broader exhibition design are equally important to the curatorial choices of costume, object, and artefact if that exhibition accurately reflects the person on show.[55] As Entwistle has argued, "dress is an embodied practice, a situated bodily practice that is embedded within the social world".[56] However, in reproducing this persona within a gallery setting, their embodiment and autonomy can be lost amongst the inevitable projections of feminised social and cultural interpretation of public display. Representations, in and of themselves, are based on social reality—they are social constructs. There are always inherent assumptions and beliefs, influenced by culture, behind every representation.[57] If a curated costume is to depict a person accurately, it must also reflect the social reality, and autonomy, of that personhood beyond the socio-cultural white noise of public display.

By dressing a mannequin within an exhibition, the person represented by the garment becomes an object herself—observed by an audience in a manufactured and designed gallery setting imbued with social meaning. Without a physical form, the visitor sees only the object on display. With the addition of limbs, skin colour, accessories, a face—the object is personified. This anthropomorphic lump of PVC, wire framing and cloth are seen as recognisably human. Therefore, it is attributed to a character aligned with the story and curatorial interpretation provided by the museum and produced through visitor experience. In particular, Levin has argued, the innate gendering of dress form mannequins "takes place in a complex interplay of exhibition planner (or curator), spectator, and objects… curators and exhibition designers have the ability to render objects curiously sexual or to strip them of any sexual power by constructing the visitor's gaze in various ways".[58] A subtle but effective means of gendering is through a mannequin's pose. Stance, gesture, movement and attitude can be interpreted by exhibition curators and designers through the production, positioning and posing of mannequins to more effectively characterise the focus of their exhibition narrative. Further to the concept of the male gaze discussed above, Berger has commented that a woman's presence "is manifest in her gestures, voice, opinions, expressions, clothes, chosen surroundings, taste—indeed

[54] Chapin, Green, and Neuberg, "Research Report: Exhibiting Gender: Exploring the Dynamic Relationships between Fashion, Gender, and Mannequins in Museum Display," 81.

[55] Ibid.

[56] Entwistle, "Fashion and the Fleshy Body: Dress as Embodied Practice," 325.

[57] Usha Bande, "Introduction," in *Boundaries of the Self: Gender, Culture and Spaces*, ed. Debalina Bannerjee (Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2014), 4.

[58] Levin, "Introduction," 5.

there is nothing she can do which does not contribute to her presence".[59] In capturing the female presence within costume exhibitions, it is not only the costume objects used to display femininity but the social cues upheld by the mannequin bodies in their stance.

Pose is a uniquely "gendered style of bodily posture", which makes it an important—and problematic—aspect of exhibition design and meaning-making in the museum.[60] In Chapin, Green and Neuberg's study of museum professionals' attitudes towards exhibiting gender, they found frequently raised problems surrounding the aesthetics of body posture during discussions of mounting costume exhibitions.[61] Respondents reflected that pose is critically important because it "adds something to how the garment is interpreted, whether you want it to or not".[62] Many of these same museum workers criticised the pre-determined poses of mannequin stocks as "awkward", "sultry", and "fashion-y", portraying hyperbolic femininity (and masculinity) that often detracted from the meaning of an exhibition.[63] These poses result from the male gaze's inherent influence over the perception of female bodies in the gallery spaces—the figures reflect societal expectations of womanhood, regardless of how ridiculous they fit with the curatorial narrative. Not only are they often an uncanny contrast with the intended meaning of an exhibition, but they also detract from this meaning, distracting the visitor from the embodied purpose of the costume on display. In the study, a director of a university costume and textile collection expressed frustration about these limited poses: "most female mannequins have graceful, dance-inspired poses, and that is not always dynamic enough to represent the character of the clothing or the donor".[64] If visitors are to understand costume as an embodied experience, then mannequins and dress forms used in the display of these objects must be an accurate reflection of the historical actor's character and autonomy.

Pose

Recent Australian fashion exhibitions illuminate the challenges of curating costume collections using mannequins and the effect of pose on reproducing female characterisation within a gallery space. Both the NGV retrospective exhibition for fashion house Dior, titled *The House of Dior: Seventy Years*

[59] Berger, *Ways of Seeing*, 46.

[60] Entwistle, "Fashion and the Fleshy Body: Dress as Embodied Practice," 329; Shelly Uhlir, "Articulated Solutions for Mannequins in the Circle of Dance Exhibition at National Museum of Ths American Indian - New York," *Journal of the American Institute for Conservation* 56, no. 1 (2017): 53.

[61] Chapin, Green, and Neuberg, "Research Report: Exhibiting Gender: Exploring the Dynamic Relationships between Fashion, Gender, and Mannequins in Museum Display," 83.

[62] Ibid.

[63] Ibid.

[64] Ibid.

Figure 4. *The House of Dior: Seventy Years of Haute Couture*, National Gallery Victoria—International, Melbourne, 2017. National Gallery Victoria.

of Haute Couture, and The Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences' (Powerhouse Museum) exhibition *Love Is… Australian Wedding Fashion* will be studied to demonstrate the power of pose in communicating meaning and purveying gendered expectations of womanhood through the male gaze.[65] The NGV collaborated with the House of Dior to celebrate the fashion designer's history, designs, and development into an internationally acclaimed sartorial icon over the past seventy years. the result was a display of over 140 garments and design notes and tools, highlighted collectors and subsequent designers under the Dior label, atelier details, and other primary documentation.[66] Marketed almost exclusively for a female audience, the exhibition targeted the fashion-conscious above all else. A variety of mannequin designs were used throughout the show, depicting stages of fashion production (such as the atelier, ready-to-wear, runway and international marketing), as well as following a linear narrative of Dior's growth as a fashion house, from the first collection in the 1940s through to the most recent 2017 collection. The use of mannequins in the gallery spaces was all-

[65] National Gallery of Victoria, "The House of Dior: Seventy Years of Haute Couture, 27 August - 7 November 2017"; Museum of Applied Arts & Sciences, "Love Is... Australian Wedding Fashion, 13 May 2017 - 20 May 2018."

[66] National Gallery of Victoria, "The House of Dior: Seventy Years of Haute Couture, 27 August - 7 November 2017".

Figure 5. *The House of Dior: Seventy Years of Haute Couture*, National Gallery Victoria—International, Melbourne, 2017. National Gallery Victoria.

pervasive, with a transformation of styles and pose denoting changes in design and the associated luxury of the brand, but also with social connotations that are linked to the male gaze as they project the ideal Dior woman and sell this to the audience.

The earlier years of Dior's work used torso mannequins, evocative of shop display dress forms that were often just a body form, without distinct facial features or overtly posed bodies. The figures were positioned in mirrored window displays and raised on plinths like in a department store, with minimal facial formation. This section was the garment stage of Dior's narrative, where fashion

was conservative and often austere due to post-war frugality. The methods of displaying the female frame were less focussed on overt sexuality but more aligned with the social expectations of women in this period. The more demure, quite literally buttoned-up figures are the blank canvasses upon which women are invited to project themselves. Stepping into the modern display of costume, stretching from the 1960s to 2017s, the mannequins changed. Their faces became more formed, their poses more assertive, but still angled to the best advantage of their figure and form of the garment. Their faces were blank, with little adornment of features or accessories added to their bodies. Yet, they are captured as if in the lens of a camera, posing as if they're being watched. Despite existing in an almost expressly female space, their poses were not at ease, and their bodies were held as if under surveillance.

The poses of these mannequins added another layer of character and personality to both the costume and the person the curator aimed to represent in the exhibition. These were not the stances of the casual. They were self-aware and self-conscious, which raises questions about their purpose in an exhibition that proclaimed to focus on the clothes, not the women wearing them. Indeed, the mannequin figures reflected and embodied the social and cultural expectations of the women portrayed in the gallery. This is a common thread in responses from museum professionals who struggle to source dress forms for costumes that aren't "influenced by gendered beauty ideals in the cultural moment of their manufacture".[67] The aesthetics of mannequins, particularly their posing, misaligns the creative design with the curatorial narrative. Chapin, Green and Neuberg's respondents highlighted this discord as a critical issue for the accurate portrayal of historical characters within their museums, commenting on the "tensions between the look of the mannequin and the time period, identity, or activity the dressed mannequin was supposed to display. Many pointed out the anachronistic appearance of mannequins and the challenge of using contemporary bodies and stylized postures for the display of historical dress and accompanying silhouette."[68]

Conversely, in the Powerhouse's exhibition, *Love Is…Australian Wedding Fashion* curators chose mannequins to display costumes spanning from colonial Australia to modern weddings, but with an emphasis on embodying individual bride's (and some groom's) love stories. Again, marketed as an almost exclusively female space within the museum, the exhibition aimed to appeal to the romantic and fashion-conscious audience. As with the *Dior* exhibition at NGV, mannequin bodies as object supports was common throughout the show. Still, the selection of bodies and their poses distracted the curatorial narrative and purpose by providing an inaccurate reflection of the owners of

[67] Chapin, Green, and Neuberg, "Research Report: Exhibiting Gender: Exploring the Dynamic Relationships between Fashion, Gender, and Mannequins in Museum Display," 83.

[68] Ibid., 82.

Figure 6. *Love Is… Australian Wedding Fashion* Exhibition, Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, Sydney, 2017. Photos by Toni Church.

the garments on display. The exhibition began with colonial wedding fashion, with the focal pieces being colonial wedding dresses mounted on mannequins who had adopted the expected persona of a lady at that time. The figures had been designed and positioned to adopt a stereotypical female personality of the nineteenth century. Their demure poses and delicate features projected a gentle demeanour, not taking up a lot of space with their bodies, and placed at rest, certainly not behaving as influential, autonomous figures.[69] The poses of these mannequins added another layer of character and personality to both the costume and the historical figure the curator represented in the exhibition. The poses used to display these colonial weddings dresses did not fully communicate the complexities of these historical figures.[70] They represented the ideal woman of this period: small and diminutive in physicality and behaviour, but this is not representative of the original owners of the garments worn by the mannequins, some of whom flaunted social convention in their choice of husband, let alone fashion.[71]

Moving through the chronology of costume through the exhibition, the curatorial narrative guided the visitor to consider the changes in wedding fashion and engage with the love stories of those who wore the dresses. However, the exhibition design choices belied this curatorial intent by distracting the viewing with overtly sexualised posed mannequins, more befitting a fashion runway than a treasured wedding day. The mannequins had their chests thrust forward, hips popped to the side, and arms akimbo. They seemed to be waiting to be photographed for a fashion magazine or

[69] Church, "Body and Language," 51.

[70] Ibid.

[71] Museum of Applied Arts & Sciences, "Love Is... Australian Wedding Fashion, 13 May 2017 - 20 May 2018"; ibid.

Figure 7. "Soldier and Nurse Mannequins", National Anzac Centre, Albany. Photo by Thylacine Design (left) and Toni Church (right).

posing at the end of a runway. But this was not an exhibition of a fashion house, as in the *Dior* exhibition. While the narrative traced the development of wedding fashion, it was sentimental at heart, conveying the social history of love and Australia and the lives lived after these wedding 'snapshots'. The posing of mannequins, and as an extension of the historical characters they represent, as fashion models was a questionable and confusing juxtaposition with the curatorial narrative. For the same reason models pose in these (often ridiculous) movements in the pages of a fashion magazine, the female bodies within the exhibition were presented as commodities of consumerism, artfully playing into the expectations inherent in male gaze theory. As Berger has stated, the male gaze is an unequal cultural relationship that is "so deeply embedded in our culture that it still structures the consciousness of many women. They do to themselves what men do to them. They survey, like men, their own femininity", in doing so making objects of themselves.[72]

[72] Berger, *Ways of Seeing*, 63.

Male Mannequins

In comparison, male bodies are displayed in equally stereotypically forms, but to advantage: playing to culturally established power structures and expectations of strength and leadership. With the recent flood of World War One centenary exhibitions, 'the soldier' is the most recognisable identity portrayed in these kinds of displays. In exhibitions of war and combat, they are displayed to embody a character, one with purpose, action, and 'the spirit of Anzac' (Australian and New Zealand Army Corps). The National Anzac Centre (NAC) in Albany is a key example. There was a concerted effort by curators of the NAC to step away from the tableaus of older war-focussed displays and place the *real* soldiers of the war, their objects and testimony, at the centre of the NAC's storytelling. There were in-depth discussions between the curators about the posing of the two Anzac soldier mannequins: the need for a solid head that could wear an army cap, broad enough shoulders to fill out the reproduced uniforms, be heavy enough and well-secured to the base of the showcase so as not to tip over while wearing a full pack, and they must have articulated fingers to hold rendered rifles.[73] Curators decided the soldiers would be standing in military pose 'at ease', though dressed and prepared for battle—right down to their polished boots and firewood tucked into their kit bags. These are strong characters. Their poses reflect action and purpose. Yet, it is external to them, and the visitor assumes their character from their clothing, kit and, most importantly, their pose. As Berger has said, a man's presence and object are "always exterior to the man", based on the power he embodies in society. [74] The showcase of the Anzac nurse in the NAC, on the other hand, lacks this power and purposeful pose. She stands with a neutral posture, blank-faced and without her medical kit, not part of the action of the surrounding gallery. The nurse mannequin has the same articulated parts as the male soldiers. She was capable of adopting an active pose but was left without. Compared to the male soldiers, she is a distinctly less powerful figure in the gallery, her importance shrinking in line with her physical statures. She is a passive character. Feminist scholar Usha Bande has described social constructions of gender that place men as decision-makers, represented as powerful and in control, "whereas women are represented as objects, rather than subjects; passive rather than active".[75] This is reflected in the importance and even the curatorial thought processes given to positioning male and female bodies in gallery spaces.

This was similarly reflected in the exhibition *Reigning Men: Fashion in menswear, 1715—2015*, organised by the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, displayed at the Powerhouse in Sydney in

[73] As registrar for the National Anzac Centre project, I was privy to, and involved in, such discussions.

[74] Berger, *Ways of Seeing*, 45.

[75] Bande, "Introduction," 5.

Figure 8. *Reigning Men: Fashion in menswear, 1715-2015* Exhibition, Museum of Applied Arts & Sciences, Sydney, 2018. Photos by Toni Church.

2018.[76] An exhibition focussed purely on fashion but, strikingly, without the overt fashion modelled poses seen in the women's fashion exhibitions. The stances of the male mannequins in *Reigning Men* were strong, at ease poses that are not dissimilar to those of a soldier in the NAC. They were posed with arms by their sides, held loosely behind their backs, emphasising the strength of their chests and legs—denoted by a broad stance. These men's heads were positioned to stare into the middle distance or look down upon the viewer from a raised plinth—not a demure positioning, but one that addressed the audience directly. There wasn't a distinct difference in posing across the chronology on display. These men were equally powerful and in control throughout the exhibition. Such visual signposts embodied by the costume props in the display "establish a fundamentally modern relationship to the traditional past", drawing the viewer to make connections between current social conditions and the dated costumes before them.[77] As an audience member, it was a marked change from the female bodies presented in previous fashion exhibitions. It denoted a clear and conscious choice by the curatorial and design team to embody their costume collection in this masculinised way. As established throughout this chapter, this curatorial choice communicates subtle cultural signposts to the viewer, reflecting a world permeated by the male gaze, which is reflected on both male and female bodies. For the male mannequins in *Reigning Men*, the male gaze is evident in the strength of their pose and positioning, reflecting both their historical and modern dominance in society.

[76] Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, "Reigning Men: Fashion in Menswear, 1715-2015," https://maas.museum/event/reigning-men-fashion-in-menswear-1715-2015/.

[77] Mark B. Sandberg, *Living Pictures, Missing Persons: Mannequins, Museums, and Modernity* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003), 17.

Museum curators and designers employ mannequin forms to embody the characters represented in an exhibition. However, due to the social and cultural influences of the male gaze, the story and autonomy of these actual historical figures are often lost in the bodily translation. The optical power of a mannequin is to make historical figures "appear substantial in absentia", but the current industry trends in mannequin style and design often detract from the curatorial intent of an exhibition by using modern styling and fashion poses that clash with historical representations of femininity.[78] These choices in mannequin design communicate social and cultural perceptions of femininity, as influenced by the male gaze, often with illogical, even uncanny, results. The use of mannequins and dress forms doesn't fully translate the lived experience of those who wore the costumes, both representing them as fully autonomous living beings and their wearing of the object. A corseted mannequin cannot communicate how the original wearer of the garment chose to lace it tightly or what bodily sensations were produced by such pieces of clothing in varying climates and circumstances. [79] Complementing the visual artefact with written expression is one way to more fully embody costume collections when using mannequins to display the garments. Industry studies have shown that the ideal mannequins are affordable ones, but aside from the obvious budgetary constraints, most museum professionals felt that body forms that can be manipulated to suit the curatorial narrative were preferred: "squishy bodies that could be manipulated; soft surfaces that could take pins; invisible custom mounts; adaptable and adjustable parts that could be added or removed… and body types and postures that were less extreme in the expression of contemporary gender and beauty ideals".[80] A more holistic interpretation of costume exhibition will provide the audience with tools to overcome presiding social and cultural expectations and influences when viewing an exhibition, allowing for the historical figures on display to be more accurately portrayed once their embodied experience of the garment piece is authentically depicted.

Chapter Conclusions

This chapter has critically analysed problems in past and current museum practices relating to the physical interpretation of women in costume exhibitions. Due to women's historically domestic nature and female audiences' enthusiasm for fashion exhibitions, museums frequently represent women in relation to costume collections and exhibitions. Fashion is a unique artefact, as visitors closely identify

[78] Ibid., 4.

[79] Entwistle, "Fashion and the Fleshy Body: Dress as Embodied Practice," 330-31.

[80] Chapin, Green, and Neuberg, "Research Report: Exhibiting Gender: Exploring the Dynamic Relationships between Fashion, Gender, and Mannequins in Museum Display," 88.

with clothing on both a physical and emotional level. Therefore, establishing empathetic engagement with historical wearers and owners of costume collections can be more easily achieved. However, the existing styles and methods of display using mannequins can undermine the authenticity of historical representations of women. Mannequins mimic social constructs of (often stereotypical) femininity that often do not accurately reflect the historical narrative of the original wearer. By placing female bodies within a museum or gallery space, these bodies become subject to the male gaze, further distorting their historical authenticity. A study of fieldwork examples was provided from the National Gallery of Victoria, Art Gallery of South Australia, Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, National Anzac Centre and international travelling exhibitions.

A balance must be found to maintain audience engagement with these popular exhibitions and provide appropriate conservation support for the artefacts, while accurately representing historical women and their stories in an authentic manner. This chapter has suggested changes to achieve this balance through altered display methods and deeper curatorial engagement with the women as subjects—separate from their costume collection. Such engagement will encourage a more empathetic connection between the audience and the wearer of the garment, which can be developed through heightened understandings of the wearer's life and autonomous actions.

CHAPTER THREE
AUTONOMY AND THE NINETEENTH-CENTURY WOMAN

To inform a proposed museum exhibition about nineteenth-century travelling European women to Western Australia, both textual and physical representations of these women's stories must be considered. The Curatorial Concept in Part Three is grounded in the principles of empathetic museum best practice, keeping in mind the lessons learned from traditional methods of physical representation of women in museums, and with textual interpretation expressed in the Exhibition Catalogue informed by a theoretical framework developed from compiled understandings of autonomy. Women were historically characterised in relation to their husbands, without a clear expression of their own agency in their own stories. Many were omitted from history altogether. Yet, it's commonly understood that human beings have rich inner lives to which women are not exempt. The basic tenants of autonomy theories all presuppose the existence of such an inner life and, in particular, are expressed in historical records of European women of the nineteenth century in Relational Autonomy theory. Relational Autonomy provides a language of self-determination, particularly when applied to historical women, which incorporates the inescapable social embeddedness of the human condition that defines traditional European gender roles. It is this social determinism, in fact, that has prevented women from expressing their autonomy in traditionally masculine forms rather than an assumed inherent lack of their autonomy. With this social and cultural context in mind, a theoretical understanding of Relational Autonomy will guide the academic interpretation of the writings of nineteenth-century travelling European women to Western Australia and inform their interpretation in the Curatorial Concept. Further, to enhance their best practice of the empathetic museum model, modern museums should consider Relational Autonomy when addressing social justice issues and connecting with marginalised communities. This understanding will greatly benefit both their engagement with and display of such autonomous behaviours that have traditionally not been captured in curated exhibitions.

The "cult of true womanhood": Autonomy and the nineteenth-century European woman

To develop a framework of autonomy through which to interpret the records of the women at the focus of the proposed museum exhibition, an understanding of their social embeddedness and cultural reality must first be established. These European social norms characterised women as subordinate to men: victims of their biological weaknesses that demarcated them as physically, as well as mentally inferior, unruly or uncontrollable creatures.[1] In reality, the characteristics of nineteenth-century women were highly nuanced, with cultural, social and economic distinctions, as well as national and regional differences, affecting their experiences.[2] The Scientific Revolution and Enlightenment reaffirmed traditional premises and conclusions about femininity, and brought about more robust ideological justifications for the legal, economic, social and educational subjugation of women.[3] Women were actively excluded from the Enlightenment's transforming philosophies of equality, greater education and reforms. As feminist historians Bonnie Anderson and Judith Zinsser have commented: "just as there was no Renaissance or Scientific Revolution for women, in the sense that the goals and ideals of these movements were perceived as applicable only to men, so there was no Enlightenment for women".[4]

The Enlightenment philosophies of rationalism and liberal individualism fuelled the formalisation of feminist theory but placed limits on the role of women in society, effectively putting them in an almost unlimited subjugation to men.[5] The Enlightenment philosophes fiercely debated the place of women in society; what political rights and level of education they should enjoy, their status in marriage, and the innate qualities and characteristics the female sex possessed. From the fourteenth century, the status of women declined as their lives became increasingly legislated. In France, women were subjected to the 'protection' of men throughout their lives; first, with their fathers, and later, their husbands, for whom the law made a "domestic monarch".[6] This presumed feminine inferiority derived from belief in the physical weakness of women, who possessed unpleasant traits such as being easily swayed by superstition and public opinion, having violent passions and being artificial and "full of trick".[7] Katherine B. Clinton has identified the arguments of

[1] Simonton, *A History of European Women's Work: 1700 to the Present*, 1.

[2] Ibid., 87.

[3] Anderson and Zinsser, *A History of Their Own: Women in Europe from Prehistory to the Present*, 2, 95.

[4] Ibid., 113.

[5] Lynn Abrams, "Finding the Female Self: Women's Autonomy, Marriage and Social Change in Nineteenth-Century Germany," 144; Simonton, *A History of European Women's Work: 1700 to the Present*, 88.

[6] Clinton, "Femme Et Philosophe: Enlightenment Origins of Feminism," 286-87.

[7] Diderot, Grimm quoted in ibid., 287.

philosophes against this innate inferiority, dividing the causes of such beliefs into Enlightenment reappraisals of education, marriage and the female identity.[8] According to Clinton's research, philosophes generally agreed there was little difference in the mental ability between the sexes, with philosophes such as Defoe regarding a lack of education and opportunity as reasoning for women's lack of contribution to the arts and sciences.[9] On the other hand, Baron de Grimm and Claude Adrien Helvétius argued that socialisation was the cause of women's ill-preparation for public life, as they were trained to be submissive, passive and instilling in them the undesirable traits for which they were criticised.[10] While many philosophes favoured bourgeois ideals of marriage for companionship and affection over arranged unions, they rejected the notions of marital fidelity deriving from female morality and chastity, and sought to broaden women's roles outside of their home and husband.[11]

From the early 1700s, gender roles were defined by public and private spheres, with women restricted by their inherent weaknesses to positions of domesticity.[12] Deborah Simonton, a historian of modern women's work, elaborates: "innate female timidity was ascribed to female physical weakness, from which followed a desire for peace, tranquillity and the safety of domestic life… Their energies, interests and moral force were to be directed to men's virtue and well-being and to children's upbringing".[13] Conversely, an independent woman was seen to be "unnatural and abhorrent".[14] Women held moral responsibility for society, with immodest women said to be the cause of men's immorality, and children's moral education the primary responsibility of mothers alone. Working-class mothers attracted particular criticism for working outside the home, which was thought to endanger the morals and manners of their children, to the detriment of wider society, as these women often served the middle and upper classes. As Simonton has commented, "the character of female domestic servants merged with anxiety about the lower orders in general and female ideology in particular. The influence of servants, particularly untutored young females, on children raised problems for employers".[15] Although women's work caused social anxiety in the eighteenth century, it was common for most women to contribute to the family economy, either as labourers outside the home or in the management of the household as unpaid work.[16] As Olwen Hufton has

[8] Ibid.

[9] Defoe in ibid., 288-89.

[10] Grimm & Helvétius in ibid., 290.

[11] Ibid., 291-95.

[12] Simonton, *A History of European Women's Work: 1700 to the Present*, 7-14.

[13] Ibid., 14.

[14] Olwen Hufton, "Women, Work, and Family," 16.

[15] Simonton, *A History of European Women's Work: 1700 to the Present*, 14-16.

[16] Ibid., 17-20.

written, "an idle wife was seen as a curse upon her husband".[17] The economic viability of many European households from the eighteenth century onwards relied heavily on the "active role of a wife"; her skills, work capacity, dowry and fertility were all economic assets within a marriage.[18] These prescribed gender roles became increasingly more constrictive in the early nineteenth century.

The "cult of true womanhood", idealised in the nineteenth century, was a bourgeois ideology that did not account for the complexities of middle or lower-class lives but became the definition of womanhood required by all classes.[19] For almost all nineteenth-century women, their identity centred around the home: domesticity and family defined their economic and moral boundaries, as well as their gentility and respectability, regardless of class.[20] While men were judged by their creative energy, endurance and intelligence, true womanhood was considered to reside in piety, modesty, purity, obedience, subservience and domesticity, which was characterised as the source of women's happiness, regardless of their other achievements, wealth or fame.[21] Social roles were allocated by gender: where men worked in public affairs, women organised the household and raised children. [22] The family unit was central to maintain this established, patriarchal social order.[23] As Abrams' research into the autonomy of German women within marriage has shown; the separation of gendered spheres within marriage at this time "more explicitly privileged the male as economic producer with the female positioned within the reproductive sphere, arguably ideologically diminishing the female role".[24]

While social conditions across Europe after the Napoleonic wars encouraged a retreat into private life across the continent, the increased wealth of the nineteenth century enabled larger numbers of women to live the traditional ideal of being domestic creatures, wholly devoted to their husbands and families.[25] Women's roles were to bear children and do housework (appropriate to their husband's status) in the private world of the home, with their individual needs and desires subsumed

[17] Hufton, "Women, Work, and Family," 30.

[18] Simonton, *A History of European Women's Work: 1700 to the Present*, 21.

[19] Ibid., 87-88.

[20] Ibid., 165.

[21] Anderson and Zinsser, *A History of Their Own: Women in Europe from Prehistory to the Present*, 2, 113.

[22] Simonton, *A History of European Women's Work: 1700 to the Present*, 88.

[23] Ibid.

[24] Abrams, "Finding the Female Self: Women's Autonomy, Marriage and Social Change in Nineteenth-Century Germany," 148.

[25] Anderson and Zinsser, *A History of Their Own: Women in Europe from Prehistory to the Present*, 2, 143; Priscilla Robertson, *An Experience of Women: Pattern and Change in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1982), 13.

by marital obligations.[26] While the economic changes of the nineteenth century transformed men's lives with the expansion of their work, civil liberties and land-holding opportunities, women's lives were enforced as unchangeably traditional, with the home characterised as a "precious refuge" from the male world of business and industry.[27] As Simonton's research has suggested "domesticity stressed the significance of woman's place in the home, her moral responsibility for home and children's upbringing and the conduct of a range of domestic tasks in ways which enhanced the family's gentility and respectability".[28] In England, especially, this moral responsibility was tied with the nation's renewed evangelical religious zeal, and women's traditional roles within the home were defined as the Christian way of life.[29]

Marriage was expected as a woman's natural destiny.[30] The nineteenth century provided a unique problem for young women, as there were more unmarried women in the privileged classes than there were eligible men. Anderson and Zinnser believe this is due to many factors, including the better treatment of female babies at the time, and the emigration of a significant number of single men.[31] Still, traditional gender roles demanded that marriage be a woman's main achievement in life, with unmarried women seen as failures and burdens to their families as they were not trained or sufficiently educated (nor allowed the freedom within business and industry) to support themselves.[32] The purpose of a single woman's working life was to accumulate both a dowry and the skills to attract a husband, particularly for poorer women.[33] In all countries in Europe, the husband maintained power over their wife upon marriage (when they legally became their wife's guardian) with their wife relinquishing all property, inheritance and legal rights to him.[34] Generally, British marriages were more individualistic, with the husbands maintaining control over key decisions, whereas the French tended towards "family democracy" wherein decisions were made together (although the wife was expected to defer to her husband's decision if there was total disagreement).[35]

[26] Abrams, "Finding the Female Self: Women's Autonomy, Marriage and Social Change in Nineteenth-Century Germany," 148; Simonton, *A History of European Women's Work: 1700 to the Present*, 87.

[27] Anderson and Zinsser, *A History of Their Own: Women in Europe from Prehistory to the Present*, 2, 143.

[28] Simonton, *A History of European Women's Work: 1700 to the Present*, 165.

[29] Robertson, *An Experience of Women: Pattern and Change in Nineteenth-Century Europe*, 17.

[30] Hufton, "Women, Work, and Family," 29.

[31] Anderson and Zinsser, *A History of Their Own: Women in Europe from Prehistory to the Present*, 2, 158.

[32] Ibid., 159.

[33] Hufton, "Women, Work, and Family," 17.

[34] Robertson, *An Experience of Women: Pattern and Change in Nineteenth-Century Europe*, 150; Anderson and Zinsser, *A History of Their Own: Women in Europe from Prehistory to the Present*, 2, 149.

[35] Robertson, *An Experience of Women: Pattern and Change in Nineteenth-Century Europe*, 153-60.

A woman was expected to remain sexually innocent until marriage, whereupon she would quickly fall pregnant and find her greatest pleasure in motherhood. Nineteenth-century social history scholar Priscilla Robertson describes women's central position in the home as being "tied to a new regard for the child"; women were encouraged to treat their children as objects of devotion, paying them far greater individualised attention than was previously customary in Europe.[36] At least two-thirds of a woman's married life was spent bearing and raising children.[37] While motherhood provided women with status and prestige, Clinton points out that even the prestigious warring philosophes of the day such as Montesquieu, Voltaire and Diderot agreed that maternity was not the "ultimate in feminine fulfilment".[38] Whether fulfilled by motherhood or not, women were urged to devote themselves to their children's upbringing, with the moral authority of mothers seen as having lasting effects on the successes of their children.[39] They were especially charged with the upbringing of their daughters, as enabling a daughter to marry well was seen as a mother's chief goal. She was responsible for making her daughters as feminine, sensitive, loving, kind and gentle as possible for them to become obedient, self-sacrificing and deferent wives and mothers themselves.[40]

Mothers provided both social and more formalised education for their children, until they reached school (if at all), as Hufton has noted "a literate mother invariably has literate children".[41] The influential Napoleonic code of 1804 limited women's freedoms but encouraged mothers to educate their girls in domestic duties, training them beyond social accomplishments to prepare them for a life of domesticity.[42] Anderson and Zinsser describe the gendered separation of children's education:

> Boys were trained to be physically strong and courageous, to read Latin, to learn how to support themselves. Girls were given an opposite curriculum: they were to be taught to be good housewives and mothers, to master the elegant accomplishments which signalled social status, to be religious, obedient, and self-effacing.[43]

[36] Ibid., 12-17.

[37] Louise A. Tilly and Joan W. Scott, *Women, Work, and Family* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1978), 57.

[38] Clinton, "Femme Et Philosophe: Enlightenment Origins of Feminism," 295-97; Anderson and Zinsser, *A History of Their Own: Women in Europe from Prehistory to the Present*, 2, 161.

[39] Anderson and Zinsser, *A History of Their Own: Women in Europe from Prehistory to the Present*, 2, 155-56.

[40] Ibid., 156-59.

[41] Hufton, "Women, Work, and Family," 38.

[42] Robertson, *An Experience of Women: Pattern and Change in Nineteenth-Century Europe*, 15.

[43] Anderson and Zinsser, *A History of Their Own: Women in Europe from Prehistory to the Present*, 2, 144.

Infant mortality rates were a recurrent fear in all classes.[44] High mortality rates and lower standards of nutrition kept family sizes relatively small prior to industrialisation, as labour historians Louise A. Tilly and Joan W. Scott poignantly noted "death was the natural regulator of family size in early modern England and France".[45]

Housekeeping in the nineteenth century became professionalised, with all classes of women engaged in the regular patterns of activities during the day, however different their roles in this work might have been. A clean home was thought to reflect a woman's moral purity (even when servants completed this work) and the tasteful decoration of the home conveyed both economic and moral worth: "the shining interior mirrored the character of the woman".[46] Sarah Stickney Ellis, one of many women who translated this order and regimen into published household manuals wrote that "the perfection of good domestic management required so many excellencies both of head and heart, as to render it a study well worth the attention of the most benevolent and enlightened human beings".[47] Household management was a defining feature of class distinction. A nineteenth-century lady (the female equivalent of a gentleman), has been defined by Anderson and Zinsser as "a woman with pretensions to refinement who did not have to labour with her hands, whether for wages, in a family business or at heavy housework".[48] Instead, she spent an increasing amount of time tending to her home and family, managing her household as a mistress with at least one maidservant. The middle class was defined by their ability to employ at least one maidservant, as Robertson has described "household service was a necessity to anyone who wanted to live a life of comfort or intellectuality".[49] The division between lower and middle classes, therefore, was defined by their work, either as a servant or mistress.

From the late eighteenth century, the demand for domestic servants grew rapidly with a rise in commercial capitalism and industrialisation that led to increased urbanisation, population growth and improvements in the standard of living across western Europe.[50] It has been estimated that female domestic servants made up approximately 12 per cent of the workforce of any European town or city in the eighteenth century.[51] While details of life in service are largely under-recorded, the typical live-

[44] Hufton, "Women, Work, and Family," 35.

[45] Tilly and Scott, *Women, Work, and Family*, 26-27.

[46] Simonton, *A History of European Women's Work: 1700 to the Present*, 93.

[47]Sarah Stickney Ellis, *The Wives of England: Their Relative Duties, Domestic Influence, & Social Obligations*, (London: Fisher, 1843), https://archive.org/details/wivesofenglandthe00elliuoft, 242-43.

[48] Anderson and Zinsser, *A History of Their Own: Women in Europe from Prehistory to the Present*, 2, 130-35.

[49] Robertson, *An Experience of Women: Pattern and Change in Nineteenth-Century Europe*, 134.

[50] Anderson and Zinsser, *A History of Their Own: Women in Europe from Prehistory to the Present*, 2, 129.

[51] Hufton, "Women, Work, and Family," 19.

in domestic servants were young women from rural backgrounds in the mid-teens to mid-20s, who joined domestic service as young as seven years of age: "young, unmarried and dependent" innocents.[52] Unless the employer was quite wealthy, it was common for the maid of all work to be the family's only servant: cleaning, washing, cooking, laundering and general heavy household tasks, as well as caring for children or acting as a lady's maid or valet.[53] These duties involved heavy manual labour, including preparing fires for heating and cooking required the hauling of wood or coal from cellars, stoking and cleaning stoves, carrying out ashes and cleaning soot from interiors; with flush toilets not standard until the 1880s in major cities, female servants emptied and cleaned chamber pots and water closets; before gas and electric lighting became standard, maids made candles from saved fat and required skills and experience to operate kerosene lamps; laundry work involved boiling all clothes, sheets and other cloth such as menstrual rags, scrubbing on washboards, wringing by twisting or using a roller, and either hanging or ironing dry.[54]

Most employers of such domestic servants were from middle or upper classes, and provided their servants with room, board and work clothes, while keeping them under near-constant scrutiny, expecting them to work long hours with scarce holidays and payment of a lump sum at the end of each working year.[55] Despite this constant scrutiny, there was little personable interaction between servants and their employers, with the English attitudes towards individualism and privacy keeping the classes separated, despite often living all together.[56] Many servants, especially young maids, lived a life of little comfort being so isolated from their family and friends while working in domestic service, making them extremely vulnerable to the charms, and sometimes sexual demands, of their master or male fellow servants.[57] Tensions often arose between servants and employers due to the close personal contact between them, and servants who "saw the body beneath the show and the hypocrisy that underpinned the system" of demonstrating public respectability of the privileged classes.[58] Mistresses strived to maintain authority over their servants, while playing into the traditional subservient role to their husbands, effectively their masters; if successful, Anderson and Zinsser's research has proven that "by upholding the most traditional female virtues—modesty, chastity,

[52] Simonton, *A History of European Women's Work: 1700 to the Present*, 97-99; Tilly and Scott, *Women, Work, and Family*, 141.

[53] Simonton, *A History of European Women's Work: 1700 to the Present*, 103.

[54] Anderson and Zinsser, *A History of Their Own: Women in Europe from Prehistory to the Present*, 2, 132-33.

[55] Simonton, *A History of European Women's Work: 1700 to the Present*, 99-105.

[56] Robertson, *An Experience of Women: Pattern and Change in Nineteenth-Century Europe*, 136.

[57] Simonton, *A History of European Women's Work: 1700 to the Present*, 106.

[58] Ibid., 109.

domesticity—women acquired the authority of the virtuous. With that power, they were able to expand women's influence beyond the family and the household".[59]

With servants to do most of the housework, women of the privileged classes devoted their time to their families, household management, charitable work and various other "accomplishments". Accomplishments were leisure activities such as music, drawing, embroidery, learning foreign languages, and reading.[60] By the middle of the eighteenth century, women were acknowledged as a significant proportion of Europe's reading public, with "ladies' libraries" gaining increasing popularity into the nineteenth century. These bound anthologies were a balance of educational material (such as religion, literature, history, arts, geography and science) and entertainment (short stories and novellas) and formed somewhat of a formal education for women.[61] A proliferation of reading by educated European women was naturally followed by a steady rise in the number of female authors being published in the nineteenth century. Women writers often wrote novels, primarily read by other women, which reflected their social circumstances and upheld traditional beliefs at the time (although some used their more assertive characters to challenge expected conventions of behaviour, and portray women as having individual rights and moral authority over their fate—such as Jane Austen's character of Elizabeth Bennet in *Pride and Prejudice*).[62] Feminist and gender studies scholar Lynn Abrams has described this shift in women's writing, and even speaking practices, as providing "women with the tools to resist the silencing they experience in a culture which does not recognise women's ways of speaking or which places constraints on women speaking for themselves".[63] Their leisure activities became a form of passive resistance to the very gendered expectations that they were encouraged to partake in—they were told to read and write, as ladies, which, in turn, gave them power to resist through their words.

The constrictive social and cultural boundaries that defined the lives of nineteenth-century women have equally defined historical understandings of their agency, impact on social change and cultural evolution, as well as influence continuing modern notions of western femininity. However, there was power in their abiding by these boundaries. Within the realms of work, motherhood, leisure and many other aspects of life, women found ways to express their autonomy. Whether this was through the creation of their social hierarchy, development of new skills, creative expression of self-

[59] Anderson and Zinsser, *A History of Their Own: Women in Europe from Prehistory to the Present*, 2, 122.

[60] Ibid., 131.

[61] Ibid., 139-40.

[62] Ibid., 172-73; Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, Rev. ed. (London: Penguin Books, 2003).

[63] Abrams, "Finding the Female Self: Women's Autonomy, Marriage and Social Change in Nineteenth-Century Germany," 147.

reflection, these women were enacting change and control over even the smallest part of their lives. While every woman was socially defined by her situation in life, they had the inherent agency to make this life their own. As Natalie Zemon Davis and Arlette Farge explained,

> The space in which women lived, appeared, and worked, whether they were princesses or peasants (and notwithstanding the considerable differences between the two), was one staked out by norms, prohibitions, and controls; but women devised ways of living within these constraints and even ways to escape from them.[64]

Understanding autonomous behaviour

Historically, women have had far fewer opportunities to act and live autonomously. However, that does not mean that these same women have lacked agency, or that female autonomy did not—does not—exist.[65] Autonomy is developed and expressed within a social context and is thus socially determined. Traditionally, Western society has not afforded women the public space within which to express their autonomy, as demonstrated by the domestic inhibitions placed on most European women in the nineteenth century. Marilyn Friedman has argued that social relationships from which women have derived their sense of identity and purpose, such as domestic work, have constrained and even oppressed them (even when women themselves work to sustain such relationships).[66] However, Linda Barclay's work with Natalie Stoljar and Catriona Mackenzie have refuted that this concept of their identity means that these women have no autonomy; according to relational autonomy theories, while an agent cannot escape from social influence, it is their recognition of this influence and reflective engagement with social and cultural forces that define their identity, and therefore, illustrate their autonomy.[67] Ultimately, every European woman in the nineteenth century had differing experiences, abilities and even desire to express their autonomy in different ways.[68] In order to develop a theoretical framework through which to interpret the experiences and written expression of nineteenth-century European women who travelled to early Western Australia the

[64] Davis and Farge, "Women as Historical Actors," 4.

[65] Marilyn Friedman, "Autonomy, Social Disruption, and Women," ed. Catriona Mackenzie and Natalie Stoljar, *Relational Autonomy: Feminist Perspectives on Autonomy, Agency, and the Social Self* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2000), ProQuest Ebook Central, 39.

[66] Ibid., 46.

[67] Linda Barclay, "Autonomy and the Social Self," 55.

[68] John Christman, "Relational Autonomy, Liberal Individualism, and the Social Constitution of Selves," 145.

concept of personal autonomy will be explored more deeply with particular consideration of relational autonomy theories as a strong common thread in the historical experiences of these women.

Personal autonomy can be defined, simply, as self-determination. It is the capability of sentient human beings (agents) to shape and take action in their lives by acting on their motives, values and reasons, rather than live at the will and mercy of external, manipulative forces.[69] It is a term widely used, and with an enormous range of meanings, having been first identified in the Greek city-state as autonomia, giving citizens the power to make their own laws (autos meaning self, and nomos meaning rule or law).[70] Traditional definitions of autonomy from philosophers such as Immanuel Kant and John Stuart Mill have valued the moral responsibility of agents, emphasising their competencies, values and self-regarding attitude, and assumed control of their circumstances.[71] Although, as Marilyn Friedman has asserted, "autonomy is a matter of degree. No finite being is thoroughly self-determined", and, further, the degree to which an agent is acting autonomously is often difficult to gauge, especially concerning particular cultural or historical practices.[72] External conditions influence the degree to which a person is autonomous, and definitions of autonomy traditionally have not taken into account external social, political and/or economic forces that could impede the self-control of an autonomous agent.[73] Friedman builds upon the work of feminist philosopher Marilyn Frye, who argues that while no human is free of limiting social structures, this oppression is specifically structural or systemic forms "interrelated barriers and forces that reduce, immobilise and mould people…[to] effect their subordination to another group".[74] This includes economic and political processes of marginalisation, exploitation; as well as psychological barriers that distort or damage an agent's self-conception, effectively undermining their feelings of self-respect so that they inhabit inferiority, ending up adopting the values and desires of others, alienating them from their authentic selves.[75] As first published by Mary Wollstonecraft in 1792: historically, women have

[69] Andrea Veltman and Mark Piper, "Introduction," 1-2; Catriona Mackenzie, "Three Dimensions of Autonomy: A Relational Analysis,"ibid. 16-17; Jane Dryden, "Autonomy," The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy (University of Tennessee at Martin), http://www.iep.utm.edu/autonomy/.

[70] Gerald Dworkin, *The Theory and Practice of Autonomy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 5-13.

[71] Immanuel Kant, Mary J. Gregor, and Jens Timmermann, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, Rev. ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012); Immanuel Kant and H. J. Paton, *The Moral Law: Groundwork of the Metaphysic of Morals* (London: Routledge, 2005); John Stuart Mill, *Utilitarianism* (London: Electric Book Co, 2001); Veltman and Piper, "Introduction," 1.

[72] Marilyn Friedman, *Autonomy, Gender, Politics*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), ProQuest Ebook Central. 7; Uma Narayan, "Minds of Their Own: Choices, Autonomy, Cultural Practices, and Other Women," 431.

[73] Veltman and Piper, "Introduction," 1.

[74] Marilyn Frye, *The Politics of Reality: Essays in Feminist Theory* (Trumansburg, NY: Crossing Press, 1983), 10, 33.

[75] Veltman and Piper, "Introduction," 3.

been among these oppressed groups whose autonomy was subordinated by external forces, and for whom definitions of autonomy excluded 'self-other relations' such as the personal and social connections that are integral to the identity and nature of many women.[76] Autonomy has "long been coded masculine", but, as described by philosophers Andrea Veltman and Mark Piper, feminist philosophers have rehabilitated autonomy "to accommodate the social character of human agency", so that modern interpretations, such as relational autonomy, reaffirm the ability of women's autonomy to exist under oppression.[77]

The assumption that women, generally, live with oppression does not preclude them from having autonomy or leading autonomous lives. As philosophy professor Uma Narayan has poignantly stated, "women's responses to patriarchal cultural practices involve constraints on choices, but also choice within constraints".[78] Further, Diana Tietjens Meyers has emphasised that while oppression has impeded women from acting autonomously, it has not stripped "women of that autonomy which they have managed to wrest from a patriarchal, racist, heterosexist, ageist, class-stratified world".[79] Modern definitions of autonomy have broadened to take into account its existence under oppression, and even grapple with concepts of autonomy that accepts agents who choose to live under oppressive conditions as autonomous beings. However, Meyers herself has identified key problems with this value-neutral account of autonomy (that respects women who choose subservience), as too closely emphasising the stringent procedural processes of reflection in the proof of agency, which is largely incompatible with the agent's lifestyle. This concept ignores the entirety of a person's existence in favour of aspects that do not require inherent values of independence and equality.[80] Similarly, Meyers argues, value-saturated definitions of autonomy (which stigmatises women as victims and highlights their lack of autonomy while oppressed), does not take into account the agency these women do have while living in oppressive circumstances.[81] Narayan has supported this view, arguing that a person's choice is autonomous, even if made "under considerable social or cultural pressure, and even if it were the only morally palatable option open to her".[82] Friedman had previously emphasised this point, that coercion, such as that experienced while living in oppressive circumstances, does not preclude an agent's agency. Although Friedman does make distinct from the

[76] Mary Wollstonecraft, A Vindication of the Rights of Woman with Strictures on Political and Moral Subjects, (1792), http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/3420; Veltman and Piper, "Introduction," 4.

[77] Dryden, "Autonomy"; Veltman and Piper, "Introduction," 4.

[78] Narayan, "Minds of Their Own: Choices, Autonomy, Cultural Practices, and Other Women," 425.

[79] Diana Tietjens Meyers, *Gender in the Mirror: Cultural Imagery and Women's Agency* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 16.

[80] Ibid., 11.

[81] Ibid.

[82] Narayan, "Minds of Their Own: Choices, Autonomy, Cultural Practices, and Other Women," 429.

arguments of Meyers and Narayan that such coercion does undermine the agent's ability to lead an autonomous life.[83] Certainly, it must be conceded that the degree of coercion, oppression and forced subservience of an agent's life, does have a profound effect on the degree to which they are capable of expressing their agency and leading a fulfilled, autonomous life.

Simply put, oppressive conditions prevent people from acting according to what matters to them, effectively limiting their capacity for autonomy.[84] While Gerald Dworkin has asserted that autonomy is not equal to liberty or freedom, he has affirmed that these are "necessary conditions" for individuals to effectively pursue their values.[85] Oppression takes many forms, including economic and political marginalisation and exploitation, as well as psychological barriers that limit or mould people into a subordinate existence.[86] Specifically, Catriona Mackenzie has defined gender oppression as the "systemic pattern of hierarchically structured social relations, institutions and practices of gender-based domination and subordination that constrain women's abilities to lead self-determining lives".[87] These obstructive social conditions can prevent an agent's choices or actions from reflecting her deeper values and concerns, effectively restricting her autonomy and enforcing her subservience.[88] This can damage and distort an agent's sense of self, to the point that they adopt "adaptive preferences" that have kept them oppressed (the values of their oppressor) as their own.[89] Frye identified this as internalised or "self-monitored oppression", '"part of our adaptions to the requirements and expectations imposed by the needs and tastes and tyrannies of others" to form and abide by socially required behaviour.[90] Parallels can be drawn from Narayan's more recent discussion of feminists who have "correctly insisted that patriarchal structures not only pose serious external obstacles to the life options available to women; they also internally handicap, distort, and impoverish women's expectations, desires, sense of entitlement, and sense of self", while distinguishing between the freedoms of the west and the 'other' (which, arguably, can be applied to the differences between the lives of modern and nineteenth-century European women).[91] Further, Veltman and Piper have described how this oppression can then become a part of the agent's identity: "the oppressed internalise a message of inferiority, as when… women are regarded by others and come to regard

[83] Friedman, *Autonomy, Gender, Politics*, 5-6.

[84] Ibid., 18.

[85] Dworkin, *The Theory and Practice of Autonomy*, 18.

[86] Veltman and Piper, "Introduction," 3.

[87] Mackenzie, "Three Dimensions of Autonomy: A Relational Analysis," 20.

[88] Friedman, *Autonomy, Gender, Politics*, 18.

[89] Ibid.; Veltman and Piper, "Introduction," 3.

[90] Frye, *The Politics of Reality: Essays in Feminist Theory*, 14.

[91] Narayan, "Minds of Their Own: Choices, Autonomy, Cultural Practices, and Other Women," 422.

themselves as childlike, as cheap labour, or as objects for the gaze and sexual pleasure of others".[92] Friedman argues, however, that an oppressed person can still have autonomy competency, even if her social conditions restrict the expression of her values and concerns.[93] Therefore, to produce a credible definition of autonomy; one that can be effectively used to evaluate women who may have adopted the "adaptive preferences" of gender oppression, or defined themselves through unequal personal relationships; an agent's autonomy competency must be explored.[94]

To be autonomous, an agent must have the capacity to own, understand, and pursue personal values and commitments. In short, they must have the competency to be self-determined.[95] Veltman and Piper, in paraphrasing Immanuel Kant, have furthered this definition of competence to include the capacity "to control ourselves through the exercise of our autonomous wills".[96] However, as explained above, oppressive circumstances can prevent an agent's ability to express their autonomous will and to be self-determined. Friedman does not see this oppression as a barrier to being autonomous, though. She highlights that as long as an agent undertakes some action to commit to their self-determination, they are autonomous: "someone is more autonomous the more she can succeed in pursuing her concerns despite resistance… an autonomous person is one who has these capacities and exercises them as least occasionally". [97] Such self-determination is the product of an agent's capacity for self-reflection, which is both self-monitored and self-regulated. Autonomous agents identify their values for themselves, without external interference, and can monitor and regulate how these change throughout their lives, as they grow and develop. As Friedman has emphasised, "When she chooses or acts in accord with wants or desires that she has self-reflectively endorsed… [then] she is behaving autonomously".[98] The difficulty with defining these capacities within agents is that oppressive circumstances often constrain an individual's sense of self, to the point that, as Mackenzie has described, "the internalisation of these constraints can shape individuals' sense of who they are and what they can be and do". [99] As well as warping an agent's sense of personal identity, such restricted opportunities to develop the capacity for self-reflection, and thus self-determination, severely limit their ability to act autonomously.

[92] Veltman and Piper, "Introduction," 3.

[93] Friedman, *Autonomy, Gender, Politics*, 13,18.

[94] Veltman and Piper, "Introduction," 2.

[95] Friedman, *Autonomy, Gender, Politics*, 13.

[96] Veltman and Piper, "Introduction," 2.

[97] Friedman, *Autonomy, Gender, Politics*, 13.

[98] Ibid., 4-6.

[99] Mackenzie, "Three Dimensions of Autonomy: A Relational Analysis," 30.

An agent's identity is defined by their autonomy; as Friedman has explained, "autonomous action is action that reflects who someone is".[100] The actions of an autonomous agent reflect their values and commitment to the pursuit of their desires. These desires may simply be the necessities of life, such as working for money to feed and house themselves, with how they achieve this action also reflecting an agent's values, such as the type of work they are engaged with to earn this money. The capacity to take such action in pursuit of one's such desires, without external meddling, has been identified by Mackenzie as self-governance; a key tenement in establishing an autonomous identity. [101] An autonomous identity grows and changes over time, as an agent develops their sense of self; their values, beliefs and commitments. [102] More traditional definitions of autonomy have assumed that an autonomous identity cannot be influenced by external forces. However, it is impossible to separate an agent from the social or cultural context in which they develop. As Friedman has argued, "human self-determination does not require humanly impossible self-creation"—external influence over an agent's developing sense of self, such as those values enforced during their upbringing, do not remove the autonomy from the agent. [103] Human beings are products of socialisation. However, as an autonomous agent is self-reflective, these external forces are not a harm to their autonomy—the agent can reflectively consider their value systems and behaviour and can effectively choose which social and cultural beliefs they maintain as part of their self-identity.[104]

An agent's sense of self is vital in defining them as autonomous beings, but this self-identity cannot stand in individualistic isolation, as has frequently been touted in traditional definitions of autonomy. Jennifer Nedelsky defines autonomy as "finding one's own law", based on an agent's values and demands, which have not been imposed upon them.[105] However, Nedelsky argues that true independence, living wholly and completely alone, is incompatible with the human condition. People are socially, historically and culturally embedded, and, as argued by Mackenzie, their identities cannot be developed in isolation from these factors.[106] Similarly, Friedman has highlighted that individualistic interpretations of autonomy fail to treat human relationships as an integral part of being human—dependence and interdependence are pervasive in all human lives—a person cannot

[100] Friedman, *Autonomy, Gender, Politics*, 10.

[101] Mackenzie, "Three Dimensions of Autonomy: A Relational Analysis," 17.

[102] Ibid., 18.

[103] Friedman, *Autonomy, Gender, Politics*, 8.

[104] Ibid., 11.

[105] Jennifer Nedelsky, *Law's Relations: A Relational Theory of Self, Autonomy, and Law*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), Oxford Scholarship Online, 46; Marilyn Friedman, "Relational Autonomy and Independence," 44.

[106] Mackenzie, "Three Dimensions of Autonomy: A Relational Analysis," 21.

develop in complete disconnection from society.[107] Nedelsky's relational theory of autonomy has clearly established that an agent's own law (or sense of self) cannot be developed in isolation from their social surroundings and person83al relationships; the content of which becomes meaningful only when in reference to shared societal norms, values and concepts.[108] Thus, in practice, autonomy can only exist as "a mode of interacting with others".[109] Friedman furthers this definition, to encompass the idea of agents as members of a community, she writes: "we are each distinct bodies and, therefore, distinct individual entities, however much we interact with each other, depend on each other, and engage in collective endeavours". [110] This recognition of agents as autonomous actors, while still being dependent upon, and a product of, their social, historical and cultural communities is a much more realistic, and relational, conception of autonomy. "With varying degrees of naïveté or self-consciousness", write Geneviève Fraisse and Michelle Perrot,

> women refused to accept as normal a life that was presented to them as an ideal. And even when they believed in that ideal and sought to live by it, they transformed its nature. Some cultivated their minds, and not only to dazzle society with their wit. Others left of missionary voyages or simply went off in a spirit of adventure. Still others went to town in search of work, thereby losing the support of their families.[111]

Relational Autonomy

Although there are numerous definitions of autonomy, the autonomous agent has been traditionally idealised as ruggedly self-sufficient, rationalistic, and bound up in masculine character ideals such as independence, individuality, and even isolationism, coming at the expense of emotion and human connection.[112] These concepts of autonomy are inherently individualistic and masculinist—to the detriment of female experiences and motivations.[113] While traces of traditional understandings of autonomy can be identified in the lives of historical women; such as choices to remain in the domestic

[107] Friedman, "Relational Autonomy and Independence," 43-44.

[108] Ibid., 45.

[109] Nedelsky, *Law's Relations: A Relational Theory of Self, Autonomy, and Law*, 55.

[110] Friedman, *Autonomy, Gender, Politics*, 16.

[111] Geneviève Fraisse and Michelle Perrot, "Orders and Liberties," 4.

[112] Lauren Freeman, "Reconsidering Relational Autonomy: A Feminist Approach to Selfhood and the Other in the Thinking of Martin Heidegger," *Inquiry* 54, no. 4 (2011): 363; Catriona Mackenzie and Natalie Stoljar, "Introduction: Autonomy Refigured," ed. Catriona Mackenzie and Natalie Stoljar, *Relational Autonomy: Feminist Perspectives on Autonomy, Agency, and the Social Self* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2000), ProQuest Ebook Central. 3-6; Friedman, "Autonomy, Social Disruption, and Women," 35-38.

[113] Mackenzie and Stoljar, "Introduction: Autonomy Refigured," 3-9.

sphere or adventure beyond established social boundaries, or the use of education and writing to demonstrate self-reflection; it is the subsidiary concept of Relational Autonomy that most strongly aligns with the expressions of choice, reason and identity in the experiences of nineteenth-century European women who travelled to early Western Australia. Described by academic philosopher Jane Dryden as "a feminist attempt to rehabilitate autonomy as a value", Relational Autonomy has become the most widely accepted (although, changeable) and applicable feminist autonomy theory.[114] Certainly, as Jennifer Nedelsky has argued, the basic value of autonomy is central to feminism, however feminist critiques of autonomy theory are equally varied and complex.[115] Identified by Catriona Mackenzie and Natalie Stoljar, a multifaceted approach that reconfigures the concept of individual autonomy from a feminist perspective, Relational Autonomy brings together related understandings that share the conviction that all agents are socially embedded, and thus are formed within the context of social relationships.[116] Mackenzie and Stoljar's definition rests on the assumption that humans are fundamentally social beings, and that a person's identity is shaped by complex intersecting social determinants, such as race, class, gender and ethnicity.[117] Relational Autonomy rejects the notion of the autonomous man whose goal in life is the realisation of self-sufficiency and individuality, as detrimental to values of dependency, interconnection, and personal relationships that have been historically central to women's lives, and feminine behaviours, such as mothering.[118] Instead, Mackenzie and Stoljar have presented a model of autonomy as characteristic of "emotional, embodied, desiring, creative, and feeling, as well as rational" agents, who are internally and socially complex and differentiated.[119] Relational Autonomy regards the social and interpersonal environment of an agent as necessary to their autonomy.[120] Recognising these complexities requires a reassessment of traditional ideals of autonomy, in particular relating to women's historical and social contexts.[121]

Relational Autonomy provides a language of self-determination, particularly for women, which incorporates the inescapable social embeddedness of the human condition. This definition of autonomy builds upon one of the oldest feminist arguments that "women are not seen and defined

[114] Dryden, "Autonomy".

[115] Jennifer Nedelsky, "Reconceiving Autonomy: Sources, Thoughts and Possibilities," 7.

[116] Mackenzie and Stoljar, "Introduction: Autonomy Refigured," 3-4; Andrea C. Westlund, "Rethinking Relational Autonomy," *Hypatia* 24, no. 4 (2009): 26; Roger Frie, "Introduction," ed. Roger Frie, *Psychological Agency: Theory, Practice, and Culture* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2008), ProQuest Ebook Central, 6.

[117] Mackenzie and Stoljar, "Introduction: Autonomy Refigured," 4; Friedman, "Autonomy, Social Disruption, and Women," 40.

[118] Mackenzie and Stoljar, "Introduction: Autonomy Refigured," 6-9; Friedman, "Autonomy, Social Disruption, and Women," 36.

[119] Mackenzie and Stoljar, "Introduction: Autonomy Refigured," 21.

[120] Christman, "Relational Autonomy, Liberal Individualism, and the Social Constitution of Selves," 147-48.

[121] Mackenzie and Stoljar, "Introduction: Autonomy Refigured," 21-22.

as themselves, but in their relations to others". [122] Agents cannot be separated from their pervasive social and cultural environment, with women in particular rarely separated from their prescribed gender roles. As most famously espoused by philosopher Simone de Beauvoir, "one is not born, but rather becomes, a woman".[123] Relational Autonomy theorists have embraced understandings of autonomy which take into account this social embeddedness of human relationships, as Nedelsky termed it when she called for a reimaging of autonomy that avoids such "blind literalness of the liberal concept". [124] Dryden similarly reinforced this criticism of traditional liberalism, arguing that while autonomy has often been associated with individualism and independence, "it does not necessarily entail these" in practice. [125] In practice, argues John Christman, humans are "intimately related to other peoples, groups, institutions, and histories" that influence their values, "as part of ongoing narratives and long traditions…that can only be fully defined with reference to other people and things".[126] As established, traditional understandings of autonomy expend such values of dependency, care and interconnection that are historically central to women's lives and experiences, as Linda Barclay has made clear: "what is denied is that the self is essentially social".[127] Friedman takes this criticism further by stating that autonomy "cannot emerge except out of social relationships". Despite autonomy being focussed on the individual effect on a person, that agent can never be isolated from their society and culture: "socially deracinated, autonomy would be a pointless and meaningless notion". [128]

A meaningful definition of autonomy, Mackenzie and Stoljar argue, realises the traditionally populist concept of radical individualism is incompatible with the human condition, and specifically clashes with the gendered social norms set out for women: "agents are socially embedded, and are at least partially constituted by the social relations in which they stand".[129] Indeed, it has long been a feminist argument that to be relevant to at least half the population, theories of autonomy must be more sensitive to traditionally feminine traits, such as the relations of care, interdependence and mutual support.[130] Nedelsky voiced this criticism of liberalism in her work "Reconceiving Autonomy":

[122] Nedelsky, "Reconceiving Autonomy: Sources, Thoughts and Possibilities," 9.

[123] Friedman, *Autonomy, Gender, Politics*, 18; Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex* (New York: Vintage Books, 1973), 301.

[124] Nedelsky, "Reconceiving Autonomy: Sources, Thoughts and Possibilities," 9-10.

[125] Dryden, "Autonomy".

[126] Christman, "Relational Autonomy, Liberal Individualism, and the Social Constitution of Selves," 144.

[127] Mackenzie and Stoljar, "Introduction: Autonomy Refigured," 8-9; Barclay, "Autonomy and the Social Self," 52.

[128] Friedman, *Autonomy, Gender, Politics*, 17.

[129] Mackenzie and Stoljar, "Introduction: Autonomy Refigured," 7.

[130] Christman, "Relational Autonomy, Liberal Individualism, and the Social Constitution of Selves," 143.

"liberalism takes atomistic individuals as the basic units of political and legal theory and thus fails to recognise the inherently social nature of human beings". She emphasised that a person is constituted by their social upbringing, further arguing that an agent's very basis on which to view and communicate with the world was given and developed through social and cultural interaction; people are not self-made. [131] Friedman furthers this argument by emphasising that these social relations are fundamentally "constitutive of persons", and that agents cannot be essentially disconnected from one another, as required by individualistic interpretations of autonomy. [132] In this regard, Friedman builds upon the earlier work of Carol Gilligan, as she distinguished between the autonomous ideals of independence and separation from others. In particular, Gilligan reflected that individualism reflected male achievements, and not the experiences of women, who were more socially and culturally likely to balance their interests with those of others: "for women, identity has as much to do with intimacy as with separation".[133] This balance is key, because, historically, the western gendered social norms have enforced subservience and deference to their male counterparts, with cultural understandings of autonomy not applying to women.

Traditionally populist understandings of autonomy, combined with oppressive gendered cultural practices, have not allowed for expressions of women's self-sufficiency, or self-determination. However, Relational Autonomy critiques the characterisation of this autonomous (traditionally, masculine) figure, breaking down the ideal of self-sufficient independence to a view of autonomy driven by social determinism, putting forth an understanding of autonomy which can be expressed by agents living within oppressive conditions. [134] Feminists have long supported this view of social determinism, because, as Barclay has written, "our identities—our aims, aspirations, and capacities—are socially determined", therefore allowing feminists to challenge historically entrenched views that women have naturally, even biologically, specific social roles which are equally used to disqualify them from other cultural realms. [135] However, this is not to say women are passive to social determinants, Barclay clarifies that her autonomous woman is an active participant in her life, reflectively engaging in her choices and critically evaluating her decisions (even if they maintain her perceived oppression).[136] Christman builds upon Barclay's work, acknowledging her social determinism argument, but broadening this discussion of autonomy to encompass those women who self-

[131] Nedelsky, "Reconceiving Autonomy: Sources, Thoughts and Possibilities," 8.

[132] Friedman, "Relational Autonomy and Independence," 43.

[133] Carol Gilligan, *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), ACLS Humanities E-Book, 98; Dryden, "Autonomy".

[134] Mackenzie and Stoljar, "Introduction: Autonomy Refigured," 6.

[135] Barclay, "Autonomy and the Social Self," 66-67.

[136] Ibid., 55, 60-61.

reflectively choose lives of strict obedience to social, cultural and gender norms. [137] While Relational Autonomy accepts that social influence affects an agent's decision making, it is precisely this act of choice that defines an agent's autonomy, even when that choice may limit an agent's possibilities or freedoms.[138]

Chapter Conclusions

This chapter has surveyed the social, cultural and economic experiences of women in nineteenth-century Europe to establish how such social and cultural (as well as religious and bodily) expectations influenced and framed their lives. An in-depth analysis of autonomy theories informs our understanding of their lives, particularly in the theoretical grounding of relational autonomy being best applied to these women's experiences. Relational Autonomy theory clarifies that European women of the nineteenth century are, indeed, able to be read as autonomous. Still, their social and cultural context prevented many of them from expressing this autonomy in recognisable ways (traditionally coded as masculine) that are recorded by historical evidence. The findings of this chapter will inform my approach to the critique of written records and other artefacts to investigate autonomous behaviours in the experiences of European women who travelled to Western Australia in the early nineteenth century.

This theoretical basis for interpreting nuanced and subtle expressions of autonomy will be applied to the written records of European women who travelled to early Western Australia. Travel writing, such as diaries and letters, by women allows for their intent, self-reflection and choices to be most clearly interpreted. Using a foundation of Relational Autonomy will enable women to become the central characters, preferencing their stories before—or in replacement of—their husbands who have often received the sole accolades for the couple's journey in the past. This framework will also inform how these women's stories are interpreted as part of the museum exhibition proposal, such as the preference for their name to be listed first or for their surname to reference them and not their husband. The critical message for proposed exhibition audiences is that these women defined their own experiences. Even if their reasons for joining the voyages were in consideration of their social, marital or familial relationships, it was their choice that was being expressed.

[137] Christman, "Relational Autonomy, Liberal Individualism, and the Social Constitution of Selves," 155.
[138] Barclay, "Autonomy and the Social Self," 60-61.

PART TWO

TRAVELLING WOMEN TO WESTERN AUSTRALIA, 1818 - 1830

Left: Mary Ann Friend,"View at Swan-River. Sketch of the Encampment of Matw. Curling Friend, Esqr., R.N., 1830", coloured lithograph, 1830. State Library of New South Wales.

CHAPTER FOUR
EXPLORERS AND TRAVELLERS

The expansion of scientific knowledge was a dominant cultural force of the Enlightenment era, but, more practically, it was also a pathway to greater importance and wealth.[1] Developing from the Scientific Revolution, the age of Enlightenment, as Miriam Estensen has written, brought "a new spirit of reason and humanistic inquiry [that] stirred widespread interest and eager investigation into every aspect of science".[2] This confidence in science provided an intellectual foundation for a more secular understanding of civilisation by the West, in which our actions determined our place in the universe more than faith alone.[3] European countries expanded their horizons, driven by trade and colonial competition, promoting scientific inquiry and knowledge.[4] John Gascoigne has argued that the quest for empire prompted European engagement with the Pacific, including Australia, and elsewhere, as "empire brought with it greater trade (and hence wealth), but also provided greater knowledge, valuable for its sake", as well as another potential source of wealth.[5] In particular, France sent royal or government-sponsored expeditions worldwide to strengthen its economic, trade and agricultural dominance in Europe and elsewhere, especially after the loss of its American colonies to Britain in the Seven Years War (1756-1763).[6] Specifically, the French spent almost 100 years pursuing this obsession with Australia, sending antipodean expeditions as early as 1766 (under Bougainville) and concluding in 1840 (under D'Urville).[7] Dorinda Outram explains that this understanding "of world history had existed before, but was written as an account of God's will working itself out in the world of men.

[1] Gascoigne, *Encountering the Pacific in the Age of the Enlightenment*, xvi.

[2] Miriam Estensen, *Discovery: The Quest for the Great South Land* (St Leonards, NSW: Allen & Unwin, 1998), 219-20.

[3] Gascoigne and Curthoys, *The Enlightenment and the Origins of European Australia*, 1-6.

[4] Schiebinger, *Plants and Empire: Colonial Bioprospecting in the Atlantic World*, 36.

[5] Gascoigne, *Encountering the Pacific in the Age of the Enlightenment*, xvii-xx.

[6] Michael T. Bravo, "Mission Gardens: Natural History and Global Expansion, 1720-1820," in *Colonial Botany: Science, Commerce, and Politics in the Early Modern World*, ed. Londa Schiebinger and Claudia Swan (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005), 49.

[7] Peter Reynders, "From Janszoon to De Freycinet: Concise Database of Selected Landings on the Australian Coast and Related Events from 1606 to 1814," Project Gutenberg Australia, http://gutenberg.net.au/landing-list-detailed.html.

Now, world history was being reworked as the global history of men".[8] And yet, women were present and active in the burgeoning Scientific Revolution, some playing a significant role in the development of the Enlightenment, variously through education, scientific advancement, hosting salons, or embarking on their own journeys of exploration and inquiry. Women's travel and published travel writing gained popularity towards the middle of the nineteenth century. They can be directly traced to the Scientific Revolution and Enlightenment, which sparked a global interest in humanism, education, and scientific and anthropological exploration.

This chapter establishes the scientific and philosophical foundations of women's travel in the early nineteenth century. It charts the development of the Scientific Revolution and the role of women as both *salonnières* and scientists during a period that reinforced their subjugation by replacing patriarchal perceptions of "God's will" with "nature". The development of Enlightenment philosophies towards women's role in society will be balanced with the contributions these women made to understandings of the world, mainly through travel to newly discovered lands. The nineteenth-century popularisation of travel writing can then be understood as the culmination of previous centuries of discovery. As travel for leisure became more common during relative peace between European nations in the early decades of the nineteenth century, a market for travel writing was born. Women participate as eager readers of travel journals, but few produce memoirs until later in the nineteenth century. This contextual understanding is vital to case studies of Rose de Freycinet and Mary Ann Friend, who are discussed elsewhere in the thesis.

Scientific Revolution to Enlightenment Beginnings

For centuries, religion framed the lives of Europeans, affecting law, social and intellectual discourse, and domesticity; religion provided order.[9] The Scientific Revolution provided an intellectual foundation for secular understandings of European society, with scientists working to illuminate the nature of God.[10] Yet, as science reached modernity, it became exalted, even fashionable, to combine scientific methods with philosophical rationalism, which evolved into the Enlightenment.[11] The Enlightenment informed new critical "systems of thought" for political and social order to replace traditional religious justification in the wake of catastrophically destructive wars of Reformation

[8] Dorinda Outram, *The Enlightenment*, 3rd ed. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 8.

[9] Gascoigne and Curthoys, *The Enlightenment and the Origins of European Australia*, 1-6.

[10] Ibid., 2.

[11] Melguen, "French Voyages of Exploration and Science in the Age of Enlightenment: An Ocean of Discovery Throughout the Pacific Ocean," 32.

across Europe.[12] Enlightenment philosophes believed "a wide use of reason would open the perspective of perpetual progress in fields of knowledge, technical achievements and moral values", which began with the cultural elites of Europe, and soon spread beyond the frontiers of European civilisation.[13] This new world view, based on science and rationality, not guided by religiosity and tradition, manifested differently across Europe, as it spread through the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, nurtured by royal courts and noble networks, and in universities, academies and artisanal workshops.[14] Increased familiarity with the written word, either through reading or verbal exchange, assisted the rapid spread of new ideas of science and rationality.[15] However, this was a masculine experience. As Anderson and Zinsser have commented:

> Just as there was no Renaissance or Scientific Revolution for women, in the sense that the goals and ideals of those movements were perceived as applicable only to men, so there was no Enlightenment for women.[16]

Although these modern ideas rejected traditional rationalisations, humanism and the Scientific Revolution reaffirmed pre-existing notions about women in society.[17] While the fifteenth to eighteenth centuries marked a change in the status of women through economic, political, religious and ultimately cultural upheaval throughout Europe, there was a near-constant debate over the value and scientific nature of women.[18] The *querelles des femmes* (the debate over women)—in which women themselves participated—argued over the traditional premise of female inferiority.[19] Arguably driven by the need to control or subordinate women, the *querelles* ended in the late eighteenth century with traditional notions of femininity firmly intact and the vast majority of European society

[12] Gascoigne and Curthoys, *The Enlightenment and the Origins of European Australia*, 1-6.

[13] Melguen, "French Voyages of Exploration and Science in the Age of Enlightenment: An Ocean of Discovery Throughout the Pacific Ocean," 32-33.

[14] Outram, *The Enlightenment*, 3-7; Londa Schiebinger, "The Philosopher's Beard: Women and Gender in Science," in *The Cambridge History of Science:*, ed. Roy Porter (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 184.

[15] Outram, *The Enlightenment*, 14.

[16] Anderson and Zinsser, *A History of Their Own: Women in Europe from Prehistory to the Present*, 2, 113.

[17] Ibid., 95.

[18] Davis and Farge, "Women as Historical Actors," 3; Anderson and Zinsser, *A History of Their Own: Women in Europe from Prehistory to the Present*, 2, 91-92.

[19] Anderson and Zinsser, *A History of Their Own: Women in Europe from Prehistory to the Present*, 2, 91-94; Katherine B. Clinton, "Femme Et Philosophe: Enlightenment Origins of Feminism," 288-90; Daniel Defoe, *An Essay Upon Projects*, (London: Cassell & Company 1887), https://www.gutenberg.org/files/4087/4087-h/4087-h.htm; Claude Adrien Helvétius, De L'esprit, (Paris1758), https://archive.org/details/delesprit03helvgoog; Friedrich Melchoir Freiherr von Grimm, Historical & Literary Memoirs and Anecdotes, (London, 1814), https://play.google.com/books/reader?id=ZgQaAQAAMAAJ&pg=GBS.PP8&hl=en_AU.

assuming that "women would accept the roles and functions assigned to them since ancient times".[20] Biological differences were equated with traditional gender roles, effectively replacing religious tradition with science to continue the cultural subjugation of women in Europe. Numerous Enlightenment thinkers and texts increasingly relied on medical evidence to support their ideas of feminine inferiority.[21] Women were deemed to suffer from "natural inequalities", such as narrow craniums (a measure of lacking intelligence) and a wider pelvis (a measure of womanliness); natural laws preventing women from learning and contravening these laws were "said to hold dire consequences. Women's desire to develop their intellect was considered the highest form of egoism, threatening to undermine their own health and the health of the race".[22] Gender roles were perceived as God-given, with nature seen as an expression of God's ordering hand in his provision of a benevolent habitat for man. This good became as much a moral idea as a scientific one, producing the cultural expectations of morality in European women that stretched well into the nineteenth century.[23]

Despite the Scientific Revolution and Enlightenment periods reinforcing cultural gender stereotypes of the inferiority, and consequent subjugation, of women, there were detractors to this movement, with numerous philosophes, aristocrats and women themselves working to vindicate women's position in modern European society. While the disruption of social hierarchy was a threat elucidated in 1672 by Jean-Baptiste Molières in *Les Femmes Savants*, who mocked Cartesian women who had gone mad after exposure to philosophy; in the same decade, François Poullain de La Barre used Descartes' musings on the separation of mind and body to argue that "the mind has no sex".[24] Mary Wollstonecraft (1759-1797) became the most prominent advocate of this idea, with the popularisation of her published contradictions of Enlightenment thoughts on gender and weakness, most notably *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792).[25] Wollstonecraft argued that reason and virtue were innate in all human beings, challenging philosophes such as Rousseau, Voltaire, Kant,

[20] Clinton, "Femme Et Philosophe: Enlightenment Origins of Feminism," 283; Anderson and Zinsser, *A History of Their Own: Women in Europe from Prehistory to the Present*, 2, 95.

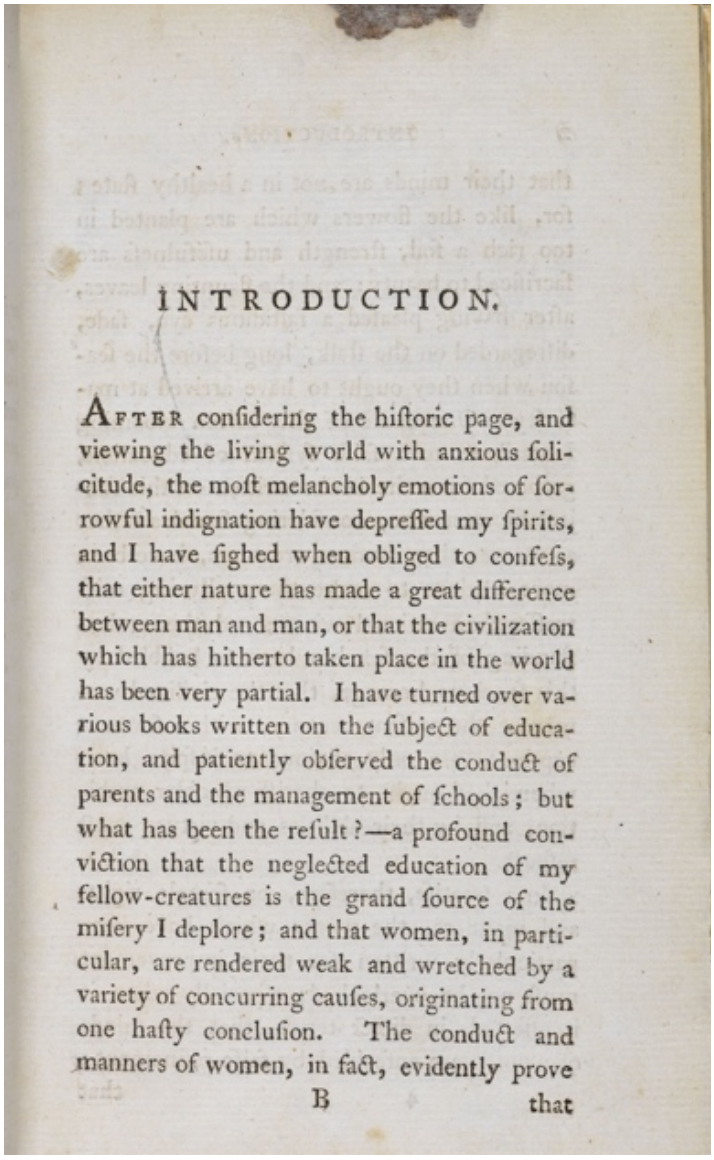
[21] Outram, *The Enlightenment*, 90-91.

[22] Schiebinger, "The Philosopher's Beard: Women and Gender in Science," 200.

[23] Outram, *The Enlightenment*, 102; Benjamin, "Introduction," 1.

[24] Davis and Farge, "Women as Historical Actors," 3; Schiebinger, "The Philosopher's Beard: Women and Gender in Science," 189.

[25] Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman with Strictures on Political and Moral Subjects*, (1792), http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/3420.



INTRODUCTION.

AFTER conſidering the hiſtoric page, and viewing the living world with anxious ſolicitude, the moſt melancholy emotions of ſorrowful indignation have depreſſed my ſpirits, and I have ſighed when obliged to confeſs, that either nature has made a great difference between man and man, or that the civilization which has hitherto taken place in the world has been very partial. I have turned over various books written on the ſubject of education, and patiently obſerved the conduct of parents and the management of ſchools; but what has been the reſult?—a profound conviction that the neglected education of my fellow-creatures is the grand ſource of the miſery I deplore; and that women, in particular, are rendered weak and wretched by a variety of concurring cauſes, originating from one haſty concluſion. The conduct and manners of women, in fact, evidently prove

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Figure 9. Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman. With Strictures on political and moral subjects*, second edition, 1792. British Library.

Montesquieu, Fichte, Hegel and Locke, who reduced women's value to their sexuality, declared them to be subordinate and restricted them to their "nature".[26] Wollstonecraft was not alone in her assertions, having been preceded by Théodore de Hippel's writings on franchise for women from 1790 and Olympe de Gouges call for the abolition of all male privilege in 1791.[27]

[26] Outram, *The Enlightenment*, 85-86; Schiebinger, "The Philosopher's Beard: Women and Gender in Science," 184; Anderson and Zinsser, *A History of Their Own: Women in Europe from Prehistory to the Present*, 2, 113-14; Clinton, "Femme Et Philosophe: Enlightenment Origins of Feminism," 283; Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman with Strictures on Political and Moral Subjects*.

[27] Clinton, "Femme Et Philosophe: Enlightenment Origins of Feminism," 283; Theodor Gottlieb von Hippel, Über Die Bürgerliche Verbesserung Der Weiber, (Berlin: Project Gutenberg, 1792), https://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/53912/pg53912-images.html; Olympe de Gouges, "Les Droits De La

Women of the Enlightenment

Despite warnings and derision from Enlightenment philosophes, European women were active consumers of science and philosophical discussions. Informal networks of upper-class women took advantage of their social prestige to access scientific knowledge through meetings and letters with other educated noblewomen or dealings with common patrons—most prominently through Salons.[28] *Salonnières* were wealthy and socially prominent women who hosted intellectual scientific or literary gatherings in their homes. They selected promising, talented young male philosophes or natural scientists to engage in discussions of their work with the socially elite. They were effectively informal scientific academies (to which women were formally banned), run exclusively by women.[29] Well-established by the end of the seventeenth century, *Salonnières* actively engaged in the circles of power who frequented their home. They had control over their patrons' artistic, literary or scientific reputations—statesmen, ambassadors, artists, intellectuals, philosophers and scientists—even influencing political policies, as government ministers were appointed from the most prominent and exclusive salons.[30] The Enlightenment ensured that science was an indistinguishable part of government.[31] Aristocratic women were able to wield such power due to their class: "in a world organised on the basis of birth, well-born women simply outranked scholars".[32] However, as the Enlightenment era progressed, so too did the rising rank of scientists, which quickly left behind noblewomen. As *Salonnières*, women were following, not creating, the scientific and intellectual movements of the Enlightenment. Just as their birth privilege granted them only limited access to royal and political power, their social standing gave them only limited access to a meaningful education that could turn their patrons into their peers.[33]

Indeed, some aristocratic women had access to education, and women formed a sizeable audience for the Enlightenment through the reading and exchange of ideas. Scientific and philosophical tomes were published exclusively for women, perhaps reflecting the control of morally acceptable materials made available for ladies, such as Francesco Algarotti's *Newtonianism for Ladies* (1737), Jean Jacques Rosseau's *Letters on the Elements of Botany Addressed to a Lady* (1771); but also

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Femme. A La Reine (the Declaration of the Rights of Woman and the Citizen)," The British Library, https://www.bl.uk/collection-items/the-declaration-of-the-rights-of-woman-and-the-citizen.

[28] Londa Schiebinger, *The Mind Has No Sex?: Women in the Origins of Modern Science* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989), 44-45.

[29] Ibid., 30-32; Schiebinger, "The Philosopher's Beard: Women and Gender in Science," 188-89.

[30] Anderson and Zinsser, *A History of Their Own: Women in Europe from Prehistory to the Present*, 2, 105-06.

[31] Outram, *The Enlightenment*, 112.

[32] Schiebinger, *The Mind Has No Sex?: Women in the Origins of Modern Science*, 12.

[33] *Nature's Body: Gender in the Making of Modern Science*, 202; "The Philosopher's Beard: Women and Gender in Science," 189.

Figure 10. An Enlightenment salon, as painted by Jean François de Troy. Reading from Molière, c.1728. Collection of the Late Marchioness of Cholmondeley, Houghton.

material produced by women themselves, such as the Marquise du Châtelet's scientific writings and translation of Newton's *Principia* (1759) and Catherine Macaulay's *History of England* (1763-83).[34] Books, encyclopaedias, lectures, popular magazines and journals for women began to include new sciences from the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries, albeit tailored to a lower standard of education to "capture the feminine imagination".[35] Yet scientific, philosophical and professional literary practice was almost exclusively male.[36] Almost. Some of the institutions that nurtured these early 'new sciences' encompassed women, such as universities, academies, royal courts and noble networks, and artisanal workshops.[37] While universities were generally closed to women until the late nineteenth century (with Germany a notable exception), and scientific academies refusing admission to women well into the middle of the twentieth century, there is evidence of women acquiring scientific training on the peripheries of these institutions, in provincial or less prestigious academies, salons and artisanal workshops, often alongside their husbands or male family members.[38]

[34] Gascoigne and Curthoys, *The Enlightenment and the Origins of European Australia*, 4.

[35] Patricia Phillips, *The Scientific Lady: A Social History of Women's Scientific Interests, 1520-1918* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1990), x; Schiebinger, *The Mind Has No Sex?: Women in the Origins of Modern Science*, 3-5.

[36] Benjamin, "Introduction," 4.

[37] Schiebinger, "The Philosopher's Beard: Women and Gender in Science," 184.

[38] Royal Society of London: founded in 1660, first admitted women in 1945; Académie Royale de Sciences, Paris (the most prestigious European academy of science): founded in 1666, first admitted women in 1979;


Figure 11. Portrait of Émilie du Châtelet by Maurice Quentin de La Tour, from the private collection of the Marquis de Breteuil; and *Institutions de Physique*, first edition, 1740. Abe Books.

Their exposure to, and education about, the new sciences was insufficient for philosophes to accept these women as peers. Their intellect was widely questioned due to their supposed biological inferiority. Their writings were deemed "intrinsically lacking in the social and political authority which they implicitly laid claim to by the very act of writing".[39] Prominent French noblewoman, mathematician, scientist, linguist and philosopher Gabrielle-Emilie Le Tonnelier de Breteuil, Marquise du Châtelet, (1706-1749) was widely accepted by her peers as a mathematical genius. After publishing her work *Institutions de physique* in 1740 (a commentary on metaphysics and science to explain the natural world), she earned the title of philosophe and yet she has been historically reduced to her series of sexual liaisons and fifteen-year relationship with fellow philosophe Voltaire.[40] As well as being a wife, mother and mistress, she received formal education with tutors from the Sorbonne, had several Académie mentors throughout her intellectual life, and was said to have stormed her way into Salons and institutions such as Café Gadot, an exclusively male Parisian coffeehouse for scientists and philosophers, who attempted to bar her for being a woman. At that

Akademie der Wissenschaften, Berlin: founded in 1700, first admitted women in 1949. *Nature's Body: Gender in the Making of Modern Science*, 191-93; *The Mind Has No Sex?: Women in the Origins of Modern Science*, 26-36.

[39] Outram, *The Enlightenment*, 93.

[40] Schiebinger, *The Mind Has No Sex?: Women in the Origins of Modern Science*, 65; Judith P. Zinsser, "A Prologue for La Dame D'esprit," *Rethinking History* 7, no. 1 (2003): 17; Anderson and Zinsser, *A History of Their Own: Women in Europe from Prehistory to the Present*, 2, 88-89; Judith P. Zinsser, "Mentors, the Marquise Du Châtelet and Historical Memory," *Notes and Records of the Royal Society* 61, no. 2 (2007): 92, 101.

point, "she simply had a suit of men's clothes made for herself and reappeared".[41] She met Voltaire upon her return to Paris in 1733, after the birth of her second child, and soon after entered his circle of intellectual peers by exchanging her patronage for "intellectual stature", allegedly quickly outsmarting Voltaire in her mathematical and scientific prowess.[42] Châtelet's biographer and science historian Judith Zinsser has stated that

> Du Châtelet's unorthodoxy fell prey to the inherited gender traditions of European culture. Despite her genius, her writings and the contemporary recognition, these ancient images of the female and attitudes about even a marquise presuming to function in a man's world proved too strong to protect the memory of this remarkable woman.[43]

Despite her genius, frequent correspondence with institutional officials, and even her connections to her mentors and prominent philosophe Voltaire, Châtelet was refused entrance to the Académie Royale de Sciences in Paris based on gender.[44] Equally, almost two centuries later, Mary Shelley faced similar injustice when the authorship of her work was questioned due to her connections with two older, more established men of great philosophical and literary repute. Shelley wrote *Frankenstein*, the thinly veiled warning of the scientific power of man playing God in the age of Enlightenment, during her time spent with her husband Percy Shelley and Lord Byron. Provoked by philosophical discussions with the men on "the nature of the principle of life", she wrote *Frankenstein* as a reaction to a dream about the horrifying "effect of any human endeavour to mock the stupendous mechanism of the Creator of the world".[45]

From the seventeenth century, scientific academies were established in major cities across Europe, stretching a "unified Republic of Letters" from Russia to Ireland and from Sweden to Italy.[46] Proceeding from the establishment of universities, academies provided the "first legitimation of the new science", but which "also coincided with the formal exclusion of women from science".[47] While some women were nominated for membership in the earliest years of the academies, they were

[41] "A Prologue for La Dame D'esprit," 15; "Betrayals: An Eighteenth-Century Philosophe and Her Biographers," *French Historical Studies* 39, no. 1 (2016): 5; Anderson and Zinsser, *A History of Their Own: Women in Europe from Prehistory to the Present*, 2, 88-89.

[42] Schiebinger, *The Mind Has No Sex?: Women in the Origins of Modern Science*, 59-61; "The Philosopher's Beard: Women and Gender in Science," 188.

[43] Zinsser, "Mentors, the Marquise Du Châtelet and Historical Memory," 102.

[44] "Betrayals: An Eighteenth-Century Philosophe and Her Biographers," 19.

[45] Mary Shelley, 'Author's Introduction to the Standard Novel's Edition', London, 15 October 1831, in Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein; or the Modern Prometheus*, Revised ed. (London: Penguin Books, 1818), 7-10.

[46] Schiebinger, *The Mind Has No Sex?: Women in the Origins of Modern Science*, 20.

[47] Outram, *The Enlightenment*, 111; Schiebinger, *The Mind Has No Sex?: Women in the Origins of Modern Science*, 20.

Figure 12. Jean Edme Nochez, "L'Astronome", 1750-1800. Metropolitan Museum of Art.

always refused on the basis of gender, regardless of their high literary merit, prominence in scientific circles or noble birth.[48] Men above the rank of Baron could apply for membership to the Royal Society of London without any scientific qualification—until 1945, "the only female member of the Royal

[48] Schiebinger, *The Mind Has No Sex?: Women in the Origins of Modern Science*, 21-24.

Society was a skeleton in its anatomical collection".[49] This hostility did not deter Margaret Cavendish, Duchess of Newcastle (c.1623—1673).[50] An audacious, strident supporter of women's scientific and philosophical education and engagement, Cavendish was a well-educated aristocratic Englishwoman who stubbornly fought for an invitation to the Royal Society of London.[51] Cavendish, notoriously, had a "fine disregard for a woman's domestic duties, her wholehearted enthusiasm for science and her successful career as a writer were all adduced as evidence to persuade others of the value of her lifestyle and interests".[52] Granted, she was of a higher class, having participated in royal courts, and acted as a patron to prominent scientists through her husband's rank of nobility; nonetheless, her publications were disseminated amongst institutions and intellectuals in England and abroad.[53] Cavendish widely distributed her own works, "she was so confident that she was about to change the course of English scientific thought that she made sure that no institute of higher learning, either at home or abroad, nor any individual of intellectual eminence, remained in ignorance of her ideas".[54] She broadly participated in all matters of scientific, philosophical and linguistic discourse, "her philosophical boldness remained long unmatched by any other woman".[55] Her personal collection of natural history specimens was one of the largest in Europe. During the first half of the eighteenth century, long after her death, Cavendish's home at Bulstrode easily surpassed the British Museum as a centre for natural history.[56]

Similarly, prominent German astronomer Maria Margaretha Winkelmann (later, Kirch) (1670—1720) was denied a position at the *Societas Regia Scientarium* (Academy of Sciences), Berlin, in 1710, despite her prominence in astronomy circles.[57] Winkelmann was one of a number of women who accessed science by working in family observatories, often alongside their husbands or male family members.[58] Women became involved in the new sciences through their social settings, including in guilds or craftsmen and artisan workshops.[59] Craft skills were significant to the

[49] Schiebinger, "The Philosopher's Beard: Women and Gender in Science," 187.

[50] Stephanie Jane Bowry, "Re-Thinking the Curiosity Cabinet: A Study of Visual Representation in Early and Post Modernity" (University of Leicester, 2015), 169.

[51] Phillips, *The Scientific Lady: A Social History of Women's Scientific Interests, 1520-1918*, 57.

[52] Ibid., 66-67.

[53] Ibid., 57-67.

[54] Ibid., 66.

[55] Schiebinger, *The Mind Has No Sex?: Women in the Origins of Modern Science*, 47.

[56] Schiebinger, *Nature's Body: Gender in the Making of Modern Science*, 202.

[57] Ibid., 205; "Kirch, [Née Winkelmann] Marie (Margaretha) (1670-1720)," ed. Jennifer S. Uglow, Frances Hinton, and Maggy Hendry, *The Palgrave Macmillan Dictionary of Women's Biography* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Publishers Ltd., 2005); Schiebinger, "The Philosopher's Beard: Women and Gender in Science," 190.

[58] Schiebinger, *The Mind Has No Sex?: Women in the Origins of Modern Science*, 79.

[59] Ibid., 17.

promulgation of modern science, developing innovative, practical training in illustration, calculations and observations skills over book-based education.[60] Astronomy, in particular, was an artisanal enterprise using a master and apprentice approach to science that uniquely attracted women to work in family observatories, starting as amateurs and often training their daughters to work alongside them, to take over the family business of science.[61] Winkelmann astutely recognised that, as an independent woman, her work would not be recognised. So, through a strategic marriage to her mentor Gottfried Kirch (30 years her senior), she worked as his assistant and gained access to the Berlin academy.[62] Winkelmann was not unusual in her engagement with astronomy; between 1650 to 1710, 14 percent of Germany's astronomers were women.[63] Although she was formally Kirch's assistant, it was widely accepted that the two worked in equal partnership in the observatory. In 1710, Kirch recognised his wife's contribution to their 1702 discovery of a comet and supported the publication of three tracts under her name, and yet she was still refused recognition as an Academy astronomer.[64] Increasingly, the norm for women of science, either in aristocratic circles or the guild tradition, was to become "invisible assistants to scientific husbands or brothers", mediating their knowledge and discoveries through these patriarchal connections.[65]

Divorcing themselves of restrictive societal (and male) connections was one way well-educated and adventurous women of science could define their own work on their own terms. Maria Sibylla Merian (1647-1717) was a talented artist trained in her stepfather's painting workshop. She showed an early aptitude and passion for entomology, which she independently pursued from Frankfurt to Amsterdam and across the world to the Dutch colony of Surinam.[66] It was not uncommon for women to have exposure to and advancement in the new sciences through illustrative work; drawing anatomy, astronomy, botany and zoology. Merian's entomological studies began in her step-father's painters' studio, developing her skills in the guild, capturing in fine detail insects and plants for scientific publications.[67] Despite prominence as a sought-after illustrator, her chief interest was the study of insects, which she chose to pursue in earnest after divorcing her husband of 20 years and

[60] Schiebinger, "The Philosopher's Beard: Women and Gender in Science," 189-90.

[61] Ibid., 190; Judith P. Zinsser, "Remarkable but Not So Unusual," *Nature* 448, no. 7154 (2007): 650; Londa Schiebinger, "Feminist History of Colonial Science," *Hypatia* 19, no. 1 (2004): 238.

[62] Schiebinger, *The Mind Has No Sex?: Women in the Origins of Modern Science*, 84.

[63] Schiebinger, "The Philosopher's Beard: Women and Gender in Science," 190.

[64] Schiebinger, *The Mind Has No Sex?: Women in the Origins of Modern Science*, 85-94.

[65] Schiebinger, "The Philosopher's Beard: Women and Gender in Science," 189-92.

[66] Schiebinger, *The Mind Has No Sex?: Women in the Origins of Modern Science*, 68-74; *Nature's Body: Gender in the Making of Modern Science*, 203.

[67] Schiebinger, *The Mind Has No Sex?: Women in the Origins of Modern Science*, 68-72; "The Philosopher's Beard: Women and Gender in Science," 190.

Figure 13. Maria Sibylla Merian, *Metamorphosis Insectorum Surinamensium*, plate 11. Smithsonian Libraries.

moving to Amsterdam from Frankfurt with her two daughters in 1685.[68] In 1699, at the age of 52, after years of raising funds and supporting her family through the sales of her coloured fabrics and paints, Merian deposited her will and set sail for Dutch Guiana. Accompanied by her daughter Dorothea as her assistant, she set out to collect and cultivate the exotic flora and fauna of Surinam.[69] Although not

[68] Schiebinger, "Feminist History of Colonial Science," 246; *The Mind Has No Sex?: Women in the Origins of Modern Science*, 72-74.

[69] Schiebinger, "Feminist History of Colonial Science," 238; *Nature's Body: Gender in the Making of Modern Science*, 203.

formally trained in fieldwork, Merian's self-generated interest in insects and supposed lifelong quest to discover a variety of caterpillar as commercially profitable as the silkworm drove her to collect, study and draw the insects and plant life of Surinam.[70] This was an unusual journey for anyone in the late seventeenth century, man or woman, as she was not travelling in the service of a botanist or official expedition, but especially as very few women travelled alone in pursuit of science—"she set her own scientific agenda".[71] Merian proved herself to be an exceptional scientist, as well as a thorn in the side of colonial authorities as she criticised both their agricultural and personal conduct in Surinam, taking particular umbrage at their treatment of the Indigenous population.[72] After a sooner than planned return to Amsterdam in 1701, suffering malaria, Merian published *Metamorphosis Insectorum Surinamensium* in 1705, a major entomological work detailing the life cycles of numerous insects with 60 detailed and coloured illustrations.[73] Merian's work also recorded various plant seeds as abortifacient agents by African slaves and Indigenous populations in the Dutch colonial outposts she visited.[74] She continued to publish from her fieldwork, with her books receiving multiple editions until her death when her daughters took over her work. She was highly regarded in scientific circles and had six plants, nine butterflies and two beetles named after her.[75] Londa Schiebinger writes that "Merian's life and career may have been exceptional, but it was not unusual; Merian did not forge a new path for women as much as take advantage of routes already open to women".[76] It was precisely this encyclopaedic spirit, scientific determination and thirst for adventure that came to define the Enlightenment's next phase: a "universality, openness to the world, beyond the frontiers of European civilisation" that drove European voyages of discovery.[77] Or, as Davis and Farge have said:

> The space in which women lived, appeared, and worked, whether they were princesses or peasants (and notwithstanding the considerable differences between the two), was one staked out by norms, prohibitions, and controls; but women devised ways of living within these constraints and even ways to escape from them.[78]

[70] Schiebinger, "Feminist History of Colonial Science," 238.

[71] Ibid., 237; Schiebinger, *Plants and Empire: Colonial Bioprospecting in the Atlantic World*, 33-34.

[72] Schiebinger, *The Mind Has No Sex?: Women in the Origins of Modern Science*, 74-75.

[73] Schiebinger, *Nature's Body: Gender in the Making of Modern Science*, 203; *The Mind Has No Sex?: Women in the Origins of Modern Science*, 76.

[74] Schiebinger, "Feminist History of Colonial Science," 236-39; "The Philosopher's Beard: Women and Gender in Science," 209.

[75] Schiebinger, *The Mind Has No Sex?: Women in the Origins of Modern Science*, 77.

[76] Ibid., 79.

[77] Melguen, "French Voyages of Exploration and Science in the Age of Enlightenment: An Ocean of Discovery Throughout the Pacific Ocean," 32.

[78] Davis and Farge, "Women as Historical Actors," 4.

Voyages of Enlightenment

From the eighteenth century, the Enlightenment was characterised by exploration, as the primary concern of European powers became gathering information about the natural world and their place in it.[79] They were also driven by pressing territorial and economic imperatives, with colonies providing strategic and natural resources to increasingly stable nation-states on the verge of industrialisation, who could afford to expand: "European powers—the Spanish, Portuguese, Dutch, English, and French—jealously guarded their natural resources, their 'green gold'".[80] Empire was often masked as scientific exploration and prompted almost all European engagement in the Pacific. Colonisation was controlled through the military, trade, and knowledge "valuable for its sake but also another potential source of wealth."[81] At the beginnings of the broader Enlightenment period (including the Scientific Revolution), large portions of the Indian and Pacific oceans—nearly a third of the globe—were still uncharted. *Terra Australis* was a somewhat mythical continent said to occupy this space in the southern hemisphere, the exploration of which became a key objective for voyages of Enlightenment.[82] These voyages began in earnest from the late eighteenth century, although numerous sea journeys had encountered the unknown lands before, spurred on by classical notions of *Terra Australis* as a stunning, plentiful and rich land (albeit inhabited by a variety of medieval antipodean monsters or brutal savages).[83] Arguably, the expeditions of Louis-Antoine Comte de Bougainville (1766-1769), Jean-François de Galaup, Comte de La Pérouse (1785) and James Cook (1768-1780, three voyages) were the first of the significant, state-sponsored voyages of Enlightenment, spurring a race between European nations to gather important scientific (and territorial) knowledge in the Pacific.[84] Royal and government expeditions, particularly French, but also English and Dutch, sought to increase their empire to decrease their country's reliance on imports—the expertise of natural scientists was used to centralise material and intellectual resources through

[79] Outram, *The Enlightenment*, 54.

[80] Estensen, Discovery: The Quest for the Great South Land, 219; Schiebinger, *Plants and Empire: Colonial Bioprospecting in the Atlantic World*, 35-38.

[81] Gascoigne, *Encountering the Pacific in the Age of the Enlightenment*, xvii-xx; Melguen, "French Voyages of Exploration and Science in the Age of Enlightenment: An Ocean of Discovery Throughout the Pacific Ocean," 33.

[82] Gascoigne, *Encountering the Pacific in the Age of the Enlightenment*, xiii; Melguen, "French Voyages of Exploration and Science in the Age of Enlightenment: An Ocean of Discovery Throughout the Pacific Ocean," 33; Western Australian Museum, "Journeys of Enlightenment".

[83] Eisler, *The Furthest Shore : Images of Terra Australis from the Middle Ages to Captain Cook*, 2-11.

[84] Nigel Rigby, Pieter van der Merwe, and Glyn Williams, *Pioneers of the Pacific: Voyages of Exploration, 1787-1810* (Crawley, WA: University of Western Australia Press, 2005), 42-57; Melguen, "French Voyages of Exploration and Science in the Age of Enlightenment: An Ocean of Discovery Throughout the Pacific Ocean," 33-41; John Dunmore, *Storms and Dreams: Louis De Bougainville: Soldier, Explorer, Statesman* (Sydney: ABC Books, 2005).

exploration and colonisation.[85] Their ships were, effectively, "floating laboratories", filled with an array of scientists, artists, and often military men, serving national interest at the frontiers of the unknown world.[86]

Voyages of Enlightenment were an intensely male experience, and we know much about who commanded them, where they explored and what they 'discovered'.[87] The King nominated male ministers to establish trade, undertaken by men, in far-flung colonies, settled and administered by men, and visited by travelling naturalists trained in exclusively male academies across western Europe.[88] As a rule, women did not travel in this nature. While progressive Enlightenment women, such as Eliza Haywood, encouraged one another to "travel to the utmost distant parts" through reading and embracing studies of mathematics or geography to "travel the world over" through books, most European women did not travel vast distances across the globe.[89] For one, "bodily and moral imperatives kept the vast majority of Europe's women close to home", but more importantly, Schiebinger has explained, "one important reason women did not travel is that they were never hired by trading companies, scientific academies, or governments as voyaging naturalists".[90] Scientific work was still regarded as manly work, and combining this with the purported physical dangers to women travelling beyond Europe's shores, kept women from participating in voyages of Enlightenment.[91] Yet, women did travel during the Enlightenment. While it was uncommon, it was not wholly unusual for women to accompany their husbands and families as merchants, missionaries or diplomats to European colonies—although no woman served on board the ships as part of the scientific or expeditionary team, at least not officially.[92]

While no women officially served on board voyages of Enlightenment, there are records of a few who disguised their identity as women in pursuit of science, adventure, and opportunity. Some women adopted male disguises to work or live in the masculine realm to step beyond the gendered restrictions and scientific inferiority of their Enlightenment lives. "Women often donned masculine

[85] Schiebinger, *Plants and Empire: Colonial Bioprospecting in the Atlantic World*, 35-36.

[86] Eisler, *The Furthest Shore : Images of Terra Australis from the Middle Ages to Captain Cook*, 53.

[87] The word 'discovered' appears here in inverted commas because while it was a genuine discovery for the Europeans, Indigenous peoples in these areas had lengthy knowledge of everything the Europeans explored. For this same reason, voyages of Enlightenment has been chosen above voyages of discovery as the preferred term to describe these expeditions.

[88] Benjamin, "Introduction," 4.

[89] Eliza Fowler Haywood, The Female Spectator, (London: T. Gardner, 1745), 40, 203.

[90] Schiebinger, *Plants and Empire: Colonial Bioprospecting in the Atlantic World*, 31-32.

[91] Benjamin, "Introduction," 4; Schiebinger, *Plants and Empire: Colonial Bioprospecting in the Atlantic World*, 31-32.

[92] Schiebinger, *Nature's Body: Gender in the Making of Modern Science*, 202.

garb when they entered domains where women dared not tread" and to avoid strict gender roles, including joining the military, studying or working in the new sciences, or even marrying another woman.[93] However liberating this cross-dressing could be for women, it was not without danger. They were "demonised for infiltrating male dominated spaces", by transgressing the gender boundary, they were vulnerable to criminal prosecution or the target of personal attacks for such immorality.[94] Jeanne Baret (1740-1807) was the first (recorded) woman to circumnavigate the world aboard Louis-Antoine de Bougainville's voyage in 1766-1769, disguised as Jean Baret, a valet and botanical assistant. [95] She was followed by Marie-Louise Victoire Girardin (1754-1794), who adopted a male identity to her death, traversing the world aboard Antoine Raymond Joseph de Bruni D'Entrecasteaux's voyage of Enlightenment (both women's stories are expanded on in Chapter Five).[96]

Although less daring than these stowaways, though not significantly less dangerous, the most common way for women to travel during the Enlightenment was to accompany their merchant, missionary or explorer husbands to European trading posts or colonies around the world.[97] These wives were rarely written about in detail for their own actions but rather as a footnote of their husband's work. However, women frequently took advantage of this opportunity for exploration, stepped beyond the gender stereotype and expectations of their time, and pursued various interests in natural history, science, exploration, or travel. Lady Ann Monson, the great-granddaughter of Charles II, accompanied her colonel husband to various British colonial postings during the 1770s, including the East Indies and Cape of Good Hope.[98] While at the Cape in 1774, she was recorded surveying plant life with scientists C.P. Thunberg and F. Masson and continued her studies in exotic botany in India during her husband's posting.[99] Thunberg's published account of his travels reported that Monson undertook the voyage to the Indies, not for her husband but to pursue her passion for

[93] Schiebinger, *Plants and Empire: Colonial Bioprospecting in the Atlantic World*, 50; Mary Ellen Snodgrass, "Cross-Dressing," World Clothing and Fashion: An Enclyclopedia of History, Culture, and Social Influence (Routledge, 2013), ProQuest Ebook Central, 172.

[94] R. G. Rivas, "Gulf "Alter-Latinas:" Cross-Dressing Women Travel Beyond the Gulfs of Transnationality and Transexuality," *SOUTHERN LITERARY JOURNAL* 46, no. 2 (2014): 130.

[95] McCarthy, "Rose and Louis De Freycinet in the Uranie: An Illustrated Research Essay for the W.A. Museum's Journeys of Enlightenment Exhibition 2008," 8-9.

[96] Antoine Raymond Joseph de Bruni d'Entrecasteaux, *Bruny D'entrecasteaux: Voyage to Australia & the Pacific, 1791-1793*, ed. Edward Duyker and Maryse Duyker, trans. Edward Duyker and Maryse Duyker (Carlton South, VIC: Melbourne University Press, 2001), xxv.

[97] Schiebinger, *Nature's Body: Gender in the Making of Modern Science*, 202.

[98] Schiebinger, *Plants and Empire: Colonial Bioprospecting in the Atlantic World*, 30.

[99] Phillips, *The Scientific Lady: A Social History of Women's Scientific Interests, 1520-1918*, 108.

natural history.[100] By the age of 60, she had established herself as an avid collector of natural history specimens, especially animals. She was said to have paid for her own draughtsman to assist with collecting and delineating rare specimens during her expeditions.[101] Monson's passion for natural history, despite being in a situation and geographical location not of her choosing, demonstrates an expression of her autonomy—to pursue her interests within and beyond the confines of social and gendered expectations.

Certainly, women of the Enlightenment were often at the mercy of their husband's economic status and position in society, as well as subject to their good nature (or otherwise) in encouraging their education. Women travellers were no exception. Almost always positioned as colonial wives, they travelled where their husbands took them and rarely pursued their passions.[102] An "ardent naturalist", Maria Riddell travelled to the Caribbean and West Indies with her father William Woodley, the British Governor of St Kitts and Leeward Islands throughout the 1790s.[103] Although better known for her poetry, Riddell recorded and published animals' identification and the use of various plants, primarily for their usefulness in foods, cosmetics, and medicines in her 1792 book *Voyages to the Madeira and Leeward Caribbean Isles with Sketches of the Natural History of these Islands*.[104] Although having a passion and talent for natural history, there are few records of her naturalist work as Riddell's duties as Governor's daughter, and later as a wife, took priority over her studies.[105] Working as a daughter, wife, and mother (and frequently in a colonial setting, as a society lady) reduced the time and energy women dedicated to pursuing their passions. Although, without their husband's postings to these exotic places, it is unlikely these women would have travelled, let alone produced works of literature or natural history.[106]

Women naturalists rarely feature in historical or scientific records. When mentioned, they are often alongside or as an assistant to their male superior (or husband), but rarely under their own names (Merian is one exception). It is even more rare for women to feature "in the rush to know exotic

[100] Schiebinger, *Plants and Empire: Colonial Bioprospecting in the Atlantic World*, 30; Charles Peter Thunberg, Travels in Europe, Africa and Asia, Made between the Years 1770 and 1779, (London: F. and C. Rivington, 1795), https://wellcomecollection.org/works/wgpxst43.

[101] Schiebinger, *Plants and Empire: Colonial Bioprospecting in the Atlantic World*, 30.

[102] Ibid., 1.

[103] Schiebinger, *Nature's Body: Gender in the Making of Modern Science*, 204-05; Schiebinger, *Plants and Empire: Colonial Bioprospecting in the Atlantic World*, 30-31.

[104] Schiebinger, *Nature's Body: Gender in the Making of Modern Science*, 204-05; Schiebinger, *Plants and Empire: Colonial Bioprospecting in the Atlantic World*, 30-31.

[105] Schiebinger, *Plants and Empire: Colonial Bioprospecting in the Atlantic World*, 31.

[106] Schiebinger, *Nature's Body: Gender in the Making of Modern Science*, 203.

lands" during Enlightenment.[107] During the later part of the Enlightenment, it became more common for wives to assist their husbands in small businesses and professional practice. In the early nineteenth century, work and domesticity were less divided.[108] Sarah Bowdich joined her scientist husband, Edward, on an expedition to Africa in 1823, working as his illustrator and his wife and mother to their three children.[109] When her husband died of Malaria in Gambia shortly after their arrival, Bowdich was effectively stranded in a foreign place, with no income and caring for three children. Rather than returning home in debt, she continued her husband's scientific work, collecting plants, making engravings, drying specimens and arranging papers for publication, based on their work together, and published under both of their names.[110] Bowdich is recognised as the "first woman to collect plants systematically in tropical Africa", donated specimens to Jardin du Roi in Paris, and published widely from her research there, Cape Verde islands, and the area around Banjul.[111]

Travel Writing

Europeans increasingly travelled for leisure towards the end of the Enlightenment, with a period of relative peace between European countries and colonies after the Napoleonic Wars from 1815.[112] While it had not been uncommon for aristocratic young men to undertake Grand Tours of Europe before this, from the eighteenth century women also indulged in travel for interest, although almost strictly within short distances from home and rarely across international borders: "with the reopening of the continent at the end of the Napoleonic Wars, women were among those who capitalised on new opportunities for accounts of the countries of the grand tour, the former bastion of male privilege".[113] Men could travel alone, but women were to be accompanied at all times (although never alone with another man to whom they were not related or married), which often made organising travel and transport cumbersome.[114] Physically travelling as a woman was incommodious, with long-

[107] Schiebinger, "Feminist History of Colonial Science," 237.

[108] Jan Marsh, "Gender Ideology & Separate Sphere in the 19th Century," Victoria and Albert Museum, http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/g/gender-ideology-and-separate-spheres-19th-century/.

[109] Schiebinger, *Plants and Empire: Colonial Bioprospecting in the Atlantic World*, 31.

[110] Bowdich and Bowdich, *Excursions in Madeira and Porto Santo, During the Autumn of 1823, While on His Third Voyage to Africa*; Schiebinger, *Plants and Empire: Colonial Bioprospecting in the Atlantic World*, 31.

[111] *Plants and Empire: Colonial Bioprospecting in the Atlantic World*, 31.

[112] Gare, "A Book of Empires: The Journal of Mary Ann Friend, 1829-31," 6; Colbert, "British Women's Travel Writing, 1780-1840: Bibliographical Reflections," 161.

[113] Caroline Palmer, "'I Will Tell Nothing That I Did Not See': British Women's Travel Writing, Art and the Science of Connoisseurship, 1776-1860," *Forum for Modern Language Studies* 51, no. 3 (2015): 248; Colbert, "British Women's Travel Writing, 1780-1840: Bibliographical Reflections," 161.

[114] Alexander, *The Ambitions of Jane Franklin: Victorian Lady Adventurer*, 35-42.

skirted and bulky-layered fashions not allowing for easy movement. Still, some adventurous women persevered. Historian Alexandra Phillips has commented: "in view of cumbersome clothes and the difficulties and discomforts of travel, the energy with which these ladies scaled cliffs, climbed down into caves or traversed the countryside in search of curious landscapes and geological or palaeontological [sic] specimens was admirable."[115] International travel, while rare, was undertaken by women but always for a purpose—"travelling for enjoyment was frowned upon as frivolous"—so women engaged in their wifely duty by joining their husbands, or increasingly for travel writing.

For readers in Europe, travel writing was entertainment and a source of knowledge and education about the world, even working to enhance imperial might and the adventure of European empires abroad.[116] Travel narratives worked to influence European visions of distant parts of the world and "shaped an important part of the European repertoire of ideas, images, hopes and feelings."[117] Publications from abroad had trickled back to Europe with the logs and artworks of the seventeenth and eighteenth-century Enlightenment explorers. Still, travel writing as a genre became more established from the 1770s to the 1830s. Travel writing increased in popularity well into the Victorian era when "travel was the ultimate liberation of the 'caged birds' of Victorian family homes".[118] Prior to the late eighteenth century, women were largely excluded from the genre of published travel writing, although a number produced unpublished private accounts in letters and journals.[119] Women travel writers increased in popularity towards the mid-nineteenth century, mainly British, French and German authors. From this period, Helga Watt has commented on the changing tone of women's writing, as the "emancipatory consciousness of the author" was translated through their travel memoirs.[120] Travel represented a sense of empowerment, with women laying claim to the processes of viewing and recording landscapes, art and cultures that was a traditionally masculine practice.[121] Authors such as Viennese adventurer Ida Pfeiffer, who published five books about her travels around the world from 1844, and Parisian Gabrielle-Anne Cisterne de Courtiras (Countess de Saint-Mars, or better known by her pseudonym Countess Dash), a member of Alexandre Dumas' literary circle, published an account of her 1843-1851 circumnavigation of the world in Paris magazines, attracted

[115] Phillips, *The Scientific Lady: A Social History of Women's Scientific Interests, 1520-1918*, 138.

[116] Gare, "A Book of Empires: The Journal of Mary Ann Friend, 1829-31," 4.

[117] Outram, *The Enlightenment*, 59.

[118] Gare, "A Book of Empires: The Journal of Mary Ann Friend, 1829-31," 5-7.

[119] Thompson, "Journeys to Authority: Travel Writing and the Rise of the Woman of the Letters a Special Issue of Women's Writing," 2.

[120] Watt, "Ida Pfeiffer: A Nineteenth-Century Woman Travel Writer," 339.

[121] Palmer, "'I Will Tell Nothing That I Did Not See': British Women's Travel Writing, Art and the Science of Connoisseurship, 1776-1860," 250.

new female audiences, as well as scientists and geographers who read their work.[122] Travel for leisure was restricted by class, with the upper classes able to afford both the time and money to experience foreign lands, with women as no exception.[123] As the Victorian era progressed, wealthier women embraced further opportunities to travel abroad, increasingly without a male companion, and began to write travel memoirs as guides for one another, much like household management guides and almanacs, which had been popular for centuries.[124] These travel guides involved discussions of local politics, economics, social issues, histories and sciences, arts and aesthetics, which had previously been exclusively masculine areas, but into which women could now trespass through travel writing.[125]

Nineteenth-century travel guides and memoirs written by women, as with novels and magazines, began to assert women's moral authority against expected conventions of behaviour.[126] Women of the privileged classes could afford their independence, moving beyond the limits of gendered expectations: "freedom was possible only if one acted as if one were a man: by doing, by writing, by relying on one's own moral authority, by breaking the conventions of femininity".[127] Conventional femininity was tied to assumptions of women's intellectual inferiority, which had previously excluded women from "the discerning elite of the mind" needed to construct travel narratives.[128] Despite pushing the boundaries of expectations, women travel writers were inherently treated differently by their readers, particularly editors and publishers: "women faced satire or outright censure if they appeared to overstep the norms of contemporary femininity".[129]

The late eighteenth and early nineteenth century transformed travel writing into an "acceptably feminine context".[130] However much the concept of travel for women strayed beyond traditional conventions of femininity, there remained a gendered self-consciousness to women's travel writing. Cultural constraints influenced the style, topics covered and language of women's travel

[122] McCarthy, "Rose and Louis De Freycinet in the Uranie: An Illustrated Research Essay for the W.A. Museum's Journeys of Enlightenment Exhibition 2008," 9; "Rose De Freycinet and the French Exploration Corvette L'uranie (1820): A Highlight of the 'French Connection' with the 'Great Southland'," *The International Journal of Nautical Archaeology* 34, no. 1 (2005): 65-66.

[123] Seed, "Nineteenth-Century Travel Writing: An Introduction," 1-2.

[124] Gare, "A Book of Empires: The Journal of Mary Ann Friend, 1829-31," 6; Beeton, *The Book of Household Management*, vols.1-3.

[125] Thompson, "Journeys to Authority: Reassessing Women's Early Travel Writing, 1763-1862," 136.

[126] Anderson and Zinsser, *A History of Their Own: Women in Europe from Prehistory to the Present*, 2, 172.

[127] Ibid., 169.

[128] Palmer, "'I Will Tell Nothing That I Did Not See': British Women's Travel Writing, Art and the Science of Connoisseurship, 1776-1860," 249-50.

[129] Thompson, "Journeys to Authority: Reassessing Women's Early Travel Writing, 1763-1862," 132.

[130] Palmer, "'I Will Tell Nothing That I Did Not See': British Women's Travel Writing, Art and the Science of Connoisseurship, 1776-1860," 248.

writing.[131] Writers frequently adopted self-effacing apologetic language or stated forthrightly in their preface their apology to the reader for not being professional writers, emphasising that "the author does not write for money or fame, but to provide pleasure and useful instructions for friends".[132] Although, such apologies for women's lack of expertise was often phrased immediately preceding a passage in which they disprove themselves by demonstrating their proficiency in engaging with the topic, such as intricately describing plants using the correct botanical terminology and scientific language.[133] Carl Thompson argues that this self-deprecation indicates the conversational style of most travel writing of the late Enlightenment period, regardless of gender, as travellers undertook a more generalist, multidisciplinary approach to their intellectuality, thus making them widely knowledgeable, but not experts in specific disciplines.[134] This language was also refreshingly honest, women's travel writing was seen as more sincere, full of on-the-spot reactions which displayed "an Enlightenment-inspired desire to record accurately what they saw and felt".[135] The earliest recorded travelogue published by a woman was Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's *Turkish Embassy Letters* (1763), followed by Mariana Starke's *Letters from Italy* (1800) who suggested itineraries, costs and accommodations to her readers, with many of her recommendations included in her publisher John Murray's *Handbooks for Travellers* from 1836 onwards.[136]

By the middle of the nineteenth century, women's travel writing was gaining more attention and currency. An 1845 *Quarterly Review* article on "Lady Travellers" praised the "peculiar powers inherent in ladies' eyes", their superior observation skills and attention to detail, which recommended them as high-quality travelogues.[137] Even the women themselves noted their observational prowess compared with their male counterparts, with Maria Graham (1785-1842) commenting on the inability of her male counterparts to take proper notice of their surroundings (despite their supposed authority at the task).[138] Maria Graham was the first woman to build a travel writing career, with six published travel narratives between 1812-1826 covering her expeditions in Brazil and Chile, to India, Germany,

[131] Thompson, "Journeys to Authority: Reassessing Women's Early Travel Writing, 1763-1862," 132.

[132] Colbert, "British Women's Travel Writing, 1780-1840: Bibliographical Reflections," 155-56; Seed, "Nineteenth-Century Travel Writing: An Introduction," 1.

[133] Thompson, "Journeys to Authority: Reassessing Women's Early Travel Writing, 1763-1862," 140.

[134] Ibid.

[135] Palmer, "'I Will Tell Nothing That I Did Not See': British Women's Travel Writing, Art and the Science of Connoisseurship, 1776-1860," 251-55.

[136] Ibid., 253; Thompson, "Journeys to Authority: Reassessing Women's Early Travel Writing, 1763-1862," 2; Colbert, "British Women's Travel Writing, 1780-1840: Bibliographical Reflections," 151-58.

[137] Quoted in Palmer, "'I Will Tell Nothing That I Did Not See': British Women's Travel Writing, Art and the Science of Connoisseurship, 1776-1860," 255.

[138] Carl Thompson, "Earthquakes and Petticoats: Maria Graham, Geology, and Early Nineteenth-Century 'Polite' Science," *Journal of Victorian Culture* 17, no. 3 (2012): 336.

Rome, the southern Mediterranean and Hawaiian Islands (Sandwich Islands).[139] Graham was well-educated, with an extensive knowledge of scholarship on various topics and disciplinary debates, which she continued to engage with by being widely well-read and from developing close personal contacts with leading figures in art, politics, history and the sciences.[140] She travelled with her Naval Captain husband through the South Pacific when he passed away, forcing her to disembark in Valparaiso, Chile. Instead of returning immediately to England, Graham pursued her plans to produce South American travelogues, living in Chile and travelling independently for nine months before returning to Britain.[141] Graham's work is discussed more extensively in Chapter 6 of this thesis, as her writing preceded two of the earliest female travel writers to encounter Western Australia: Rose de Freycinet and Mary Ann Friend.

The earliest female travel writers to visit Western Australia arrived as part of the push for European settlement of the western third of the continent. Rose de Freycinet arrived aboard a French scientific expedition whose colonial overtures spurred the British to found the Swan River Colony just over a decade later. Freycinet's voyage was followed in different circumstances by Mary Ann Friend, who was aboard a ship delivering migrants to the newly-founded settlement at Swan River. Their reflections on the country are both varied but similar. Their experiences echo similar themes from months and years spent aboard, in foreign lands with foreign peoples. Their stories are further expanded in Chapters Five and Six but are intrinsically connected with the Scientific Revolution and Enlightenment developments detailed above. The pursuit of scientific knowledge was a driving force for sending voyages of Enlightenment to the far reaches of the globe. Western Australia was foreign to Europe and encouraged the curiosities of sea-faring nations for centuries before science understanding had evolved to allow for technologies to reach the continent's shores. The women aboard these voyages were the product of collective scientific knowledge and colonial zeal while also contributing to the subsequent knowledge-sharing developments in travel writing. Their diaries and artwork captured the new frontiers they visited and charted their personal journeys of understanding and learning about the world. A close study of these journals forms the basis of the following chapters.

[139] Colbert, "British Women's Travel Writing, 1780-1840: Bibliographical Reflections," 160; Maria Graham, *Journal of a Voyage to Brazil, and Residence There, During Part of the Years 1821, 1822, 1823* (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, Brown, and Green, 1824); *Journal of a Residence in Chile, During the Year 1822 and a Voyage from Chile to Brazil in 1823* (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, Brown, and Green, 1824).

[140] Thompson, "Journeys to Authority: Reassessing Women's Early Travel Writing, 1763-1862," 139.

[141] "Earthquakes and Petticoats: Maria Graham, Geology, and Early Nineteenth-Century 'Polite' Science," 332.

Chapter Conclusions

This chapter critically analyses written records and other artefacts to investigate autonomous behaviours in the experiences of European women involved in the Scientific Revolution and Enlightenment, whose legacy was carried by the women who travelled to Western Australia in the early nineteenth century. Women were present and active in the Scientific Revolution and Enlightenment in Europe, including powerful *salonnières* to working scientists, active explorers and talented artists. Heightened scientific and philosophical understandings from this period did not necessarily improve the role and status of women in European society. The much-debated scientific nature of women became the justification for their continued subjugation and limited education. Aristocratic women wielded some power due to their class and had greater access to education but were rarely accepted into the circles of academic influence as equals.

Voyages of Enlightenment were usually experienced, administered and undertaken by men. However, some women experienced and contributed to these voyages. French stowaways, Jeanne Baret and Marie-Louise Girardin, were the first recorded women to travel the world in this manner, followed by scientific women and travel writers. Travel writing became a way for European women who were "caged birds" at home to explore the world. Increasingly, as the nineteenth century progressed, women travel writers became both legitimised and popularised. Their writing is a unique insight into the expanding world of women, from the restrictive social and cultural expectations placed upon them for centuries earlier. The diaries and letters written by travelling women to Western Australia are a vital historical record that clearly illustrates their autonomy within their experiences, which will be translated into an exhibition proposal in Part Three of this thesis.

CHAPTER FIVE
STOWAWAYS

The journal of Rose de Freycinet is a significant resource in understanding the experiences and expectations of early nineteenth-century European women as they willingly engaged in the exploration and travel of the Enlightenment. Freycinet features in my proposed museum exhibition as a woman seized by love and opportunity who defied authorities, as well as the gendered expectations of her time, to traverse the world aboard a voyage of discovery. Freycinet stowed away onboard *L'Uranie*, conspiring with her husband, the ship's captain, for months to ensure her comfortable and safe passage. In defiance of French naval authorities, Freycinet followed her heart and, dressed as a man to avoid discovery, stowed away to join her husband. When news broke in France of her daring escapade, the newspapers wrote that "this example of conjugal devotion deserves to be made public."[1] Her daring wasn't just for love, as evidenced by the keen curiosity and deep engagement she demonstrates in the journal she wrote while onboard. She was educated, socially and politically engaged, and provided a commentary on the scientific discoveries, international diplomacy and critical ethnography of colonial cultures encountered.[2] Yet official records published from the expedition did not include her account of the journey. Indeed, Freycinet's presence onboard was physically erased from formal publications from the voyage. She appeared in informal sketches by the expedition's artists, successfully engaged in diplomatic endeavours and even contributed to the scientific discoveries, yet she is invisible in its history.

[1] *Moniteur Officiel*, 4 October 1817, quoted in Rivière, *A Woman of Courage: The Journal of Rose De Freycinet on Her Voyage around the World 1817-1820*, xix.

[2] Ibid., vii; McCarthy, "Rose and Louis De Freycinet in the Uranie: An Illustrated Research Essay for the W.A. Museum's Journeys of Enlightenment Exhibition 2008," 8.

Figure 14. Above, J. Alphonse Pellion, “Watercolour of Shark Bay, as Observed from the Uranie”, Watercolour and ink drawing, 1818; Below, J. Alphonse Pellion, “Engraving of Shark Bay, as observed from the Uranie”, lithograph, 1818. State Library of Western Australia.

Written as a series of letters to her close friend, the Baronne Caroline de Nantueil (née Barillon), Freycinet's diary provides personal insight into life on board *L'Uranie*, a French government-sponsored expedition.[3] Although never intended by Freycinet for publication, an abridged version of the journal was transcribed by Charles Duplomb in 1927, in agreement with Baron Charles de Freycinet, a descendent of Freycinet's nephew.[4] Marnie Bassett published a narrative account of Freycinet's voyage and diary in 1962, from research into Freycinet's diary, letters and her husband's reports.[5] The National Library of Australia published an English translation of Duplomb's transcription by Marc Rivière, with additional letters from expeditionary artist Jacques Arago that covered missing dates in Duplomb's work in 1996.[6] A complete, unabridged transcription of the diary has not yet been published.[7] As a personal diary, Freycinet divulged personal details not included in the official records of the voyage. Hers is a more honest commentary on topics ranging from costume, social behaviour and etiquette, to the conduct of the colonial or naval hierarchy or commentary on otherness in the descriptions of exotic cultures. Written for her friend, she claimed to write only what she observed herself but also divulged local gossip and added "feminine malice" to details of people and practices otherwise ignored by official records.[8] Freycinet's journal is also significant given its descriptions of the voyage, one of a number of Enlightenment voyages that traversed the globe under the guise of scientific exploration, but particularly noted as "one of the most significant anthropological expeditions conducted by the French".[9] Freycinet seemed aware of the significance of their achievements. She noted:

[3] Rivière, *A Woman of Courage: The Journal of Rose De Freycinet on Her Voyage around the World 1817-1820*, vii; McCarthy, "Rose and Louis De Freycinet in the Uranie: An Illustrated Research Essay for the W.A. Museum's Journeys of Enlightenment Exhibition 2008," 8.

[4] de Freycinet, *Journal De Madame Rose De Saulces De Freycinet D'apres Le Manuscript Original / Accompagne De Notes Par Charles Duplomb*; Rose de Freycinet, Manuscript Transcription of the Complete Version of the Journal of Rose De Freycinet, Kept During Her Voyage Onboard L'uranie, 1817-1820, (1817-1820), http://trove.nla.gov.au/version/165916971.

[5] Bassett, *Realms and Islands: The World Voyage of Rose De Freycinet in the Corvette Uranie, 1817-1820*.

[6] Rivière, *A Woman of Courage: The Journal of Rose De Freycinet on Her Voyage around the World 1817-1820*, viii.

[7] de Freycinet, Journal De Madame Rose De Saulces De Freycinet D'apres Le Manuscript Original / Accompagne De Notes Par Charles Duplomb; de Freycinet, Manuscript Transcription of the Complete Version of the Journal of Rose De Freycinet, Kept During Her Voyage Onboard L'uranie, 1817-1820.

[8] Freycinet, letter to Madame Pinon, 1817 Bassett, *Realms and Islands: The World Voyage of Rose De Freycinet in the Corvette Uranie, 1817-1820*, 5-6; Rivière, *A Woman of Courage: The Journal of Rose De Freycinet on Her Voyage around the World 1817-1820*, 98-99,102.

[9] Leslie R. Marchant, *France Australe: The French Search for the Southland and Subsequent Explorations and Plans to Found a Penal Colony and Strategic Base in South Western Australia 1503-1826, with Colour Illustrations and Explanatory Maps* (Perth: Scott Four Colour Print, 1998), 213; Michael T. Bravo, "Mission Gardens: Natural History and Global Expansion, 1720-1820," 49.

Figure 15. Journal particulier de Rose pour Caroline, September 1817 - October 1820. State Library of New South Wales.

> I sometimes recall that my mother wrote to me, when I was still in Toulon, that a map of Paris and its surrounding districts was sufficient at first for her to find each of the places where we lived, that thereafter she needed a map of France and, finally, that she would only be able to follow our progress on a world map. Now a very detailed map of Oceania would be required—if one existed—to know where we were.[10]

L'Uranie's mission was to circumnavigate the world, conduct scientific examinations and experiments in earth sciences and natural history, and provide reports on 596 sub-classes of observations on geography, history, ethnography, government, economics, and more, at the behest of Louis XVIII.[11] Spurred on by the Enlightenment zeal for scientific discovery and territorial expansion in the wake of lost territories in international wars from the 1750s, the French sent a number of these "floating laboratories" across the world in a race for imperial dominance of unclaimed colonies, particularly in the South Pacific.[12] Louis de Bougainville's expedition to track the passage of Venus

[10] Rivière, *A Woman of Courage: The Journal of Rose De Freycinet on Her Voyage around the World 1817-1820*, 63.

[11] McCarthy, "Rose and Louis De Freycinet in the Uranie: An Illustrated Research Essay for the W.A. Museum's Journeys of Enlightenment Exhibition 2008," 6; Marchant, *France Australe*, 212-13.

[12] Eisler, *The Furthest Shore : Images of Terra Australis from the Middle Ages to Captain Cook*, 53; Michael McCarthy, "Rose De Freycinet and the French Exploration Corvette L'uranie (1820): A Highlight of the 'French Connection' with the 'Great Southland'," *The International Journal of Nautical Archaeology* 34, no. 1 (2005): 62; Western Australian Museum, "Treasures from the Deep: De Freycinet," Maritime Archaeology Department

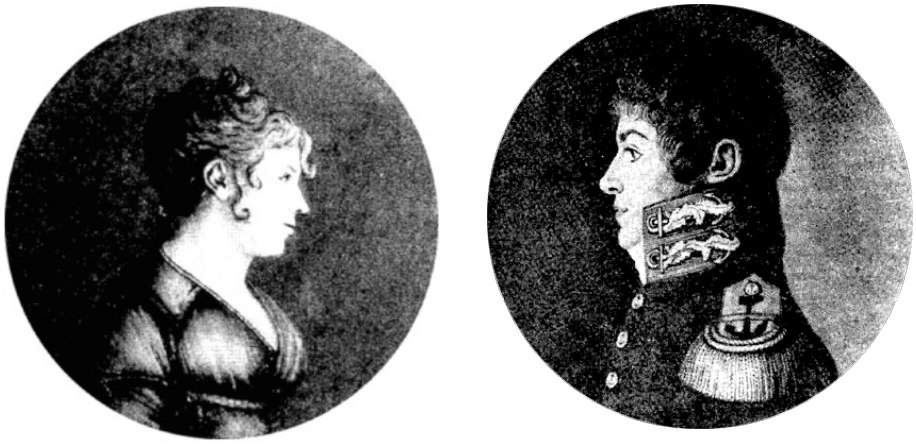

Figure 16. Portraits of Rose de Freycinet and Louis de Freycinet, published in Marnie Bassett, *Realms and Islands: The World Voyage of Rose De Freycinet in the Corvette Uranie, 1817-1820*, 1962.

from Tahiti to more accurately measure the distance of the earth from the sun to aid more accurate navigation, was the first of the French voyages of Enlightenment (1766—1769) and in direct competition with English expeditions led by Wallis and Carteret, and Cook.[13] Bougainville's method of calculating longitude using lunar distances readjusted maps of the Pacific Ocean, and it was his report on Tahiti, in particular, which reinforced romanticised literary understandings of the island as an alluring, luxuriant paradise, populated by noble savages who existed in a virtuous, harmonious natural state.[14] Further French voyages succeeded Bougainville, including La Pérouse (1785—1788), the largest of the French expeditions to the Pacific, who mysteriously disappeared amid rumours of surveillance activities on British, Dutch, Spanish and Russian territories; D'Entrecasteaux (1791—1793) unsuccessfully searched for La Pérouse while conducting his own exploration, including the circumnavigation of Australia; and Baudin (1800—1804), whose ships were so heavily laden with conflicting and combative scientists and scholars in his quest to scour the Western Australian coast for specimens (and suspicions of territory) that the expedition very nearly fell apart to mutiny.[15]

- Western Australian Museum, www.museum.wa.gov.au/research/research-areas/maritime-archaeology/treasures-from-the-deep/de-freyinet [sic].

[13] John Kenny, *Before the First Fleet: The European Discovery of Australia 1606-1777* (Kenthurst, NSW: Kangaroo Press, 1995), 41-42.

[14] Melguen, "French Voyages of Exploration and Science in the Age of Enlightenment: An Ocean of Discovery Throughout the Pacific Ocean," 33-34; Eisler, *The Furthest Shore : Images of Terra Australis from the Middle Ages to Captain Cook*, 154; Miriam Estensen, *Discovery: The Quest for the Great South Land*, 224.

[15] Melguen, "French Voyages of Exploration and Science in the Age of Enlightenment: An Ocean of Discovery Throughout the Pacific Ocean," 36-39; Rigby, et.al., *Pioneers of the Pacific: Voyages of Exploration, 1787-1810*, 43-55; State Library of South Australia, "Encounter 1802-2002: Celebrating Flinders' and Baudin's Expedition in Search of the 'Unknown' Southern Coasts of Australia," www.slsa.sa.gov.au/encounter.

A young aristocratic Louis Claude de Saulces de Freycinet was aboard the Baudin expedition. Born in August 1779 in Montélimar, Louis suffered poor health as a child and continued to suffer from a "fragile constitution" through to adulthood.[16] Despite this illness, in 1793, as revolutionary France was at war with Europe after the king's execution—he joined the navy with his older brother Henri, serving in wartime until 1800.[17] He was employed in hydrographic and chart work as a sub-lieutenant in Baudin's expedition before being promoted to command the schooner *Le Casuarina* and conduct shallow survey work during the expedition's return to France.[18] Upon his return to France in 1804, with the Freycinet peninsula along the east coast of Tasmania named in his honour, Louis de Freycinet continued his naval cartographic work and completed the official publication of Baudin's voyage upon the death of his superiors, before being promoted to Frigate Captain in 1811.[19] In 1817, two years after the downfall of Napoleon, at which time Bourbon France attempted to restore its prestige through maritime exploration, Louis de Freycinet lobbied the government and Louis XVII for a new mission to finish the work of Baudin and continue exploring the new world.[20] Although his instructions were primarily scientific, the French likely had significant political and territorial interests in assenting to *L'Uranie's* expedition. The published reports of Baudin's expedition (completed by Louis) were favourable enough to convince the Bourbons of the viability of establishing a French penal colony in the southwest of Australia.[21] However, upon the return of *L'Uranie*, the accounts of the landscape, life, and customs of the Timorese and East Indies islands captivated Europeans and developed a widespread interest in the expedition.[22]

Initially sent as a scientific voyage to study earth sciences, *L'Uranie* expedition gathered far more interest for its anthropological and ethnographic findings—as well as its dramatic end as a shipwreck on the Falkland Islands.[23] Louis de Freycinet proposed circumnavigating the world. His chief

[16] Leslie R. Marchant and J.H. Reynolds, "Freycinet, Louis-Claude Desaulses De (1779-1842)," Australian Dictionary of Biography, www.adb.anu.edu.au/biography/freycinet-louis-claude-desaulses-de-2226.

[17] Rivière, *A Woman of Courage: The Journal of Rose De Freycinet on Her Voyage around the World 1817-1820*, xiii-xv; Western Australian Museum, "Journeys of Enlightenment"; Gascoigne, *Encountering the Pacific in the Age of the Enlightenment*, xvi.

[18] Marchant and Reynolds, "Freycinet, Louis-Claude Desaulses De (1779-1842)"; McCarthy, "Rose De Freycinet and the French Exploration Corvette L'uranie (1820): A Highlight of the 'French Connection' with the 'Great Southland'," 63.

[19] Rivière, *A Woman of Courage: The Journal of Rose De Freycinet on Her Voyage around the World 1817-1820*, xiv-xv.

[20] Ibid., xvi; Marchant and Reynolds, "Freycinet, Louis-Claude Desaulses De (1779-1842)"; Western Australian Museum, "Journeys of Enlightenment".

[21] Marchant and Reynolds, "Freycinet, Louis-Claude Desaulses De (1779-1842)".

[22] Ibid.

[23] Danielle Clode, *Voyages to the South Seas: In Search of Terres Australis* (Carlton, VIC: The Miegunyah Press/ Melbourne University Publishing Limited, 2007), 160.

mission was to conduct scientific observations, including measuring the southern hemisphere, observing magnetic and meteorological phenomena, experiments on air pressure, ocean temperatures, gathering natural history specimens and reporting on the culture and customs of Pacific nations.[24] Leaving Toulon in September 1817, *L'Uranie* undertook a circumnavigation of the world, travelling to Brazil, South Africa, Australia and many Pacific islands before returning via South America, where she wrecked on the Falkland Islands in February 1820.[25] Over half of the expedition's scientific specimens were lost in the shipwreck, although the crew saved almost all the scientific records and notes.[26] Despite these losses, the expedition's accrued scientific knowledge included 25 new mammal specimens discovered by expeditionary scientists, as well as 313 specimens of birds, 45 reptiles, 164 species of fish, 1300 insects, 3000 plants and 900 rock samples were collected (before crates were lost during the wreck).[27] Also recovered from the Australian coast was the de Vlamingh plate, an artefact inscribed with details of the expedition left during the 1697 Dutchman's voyage, after he removed the earlier Hartog plate, inscribed and erected in 1616 during Dirck Hartog's exploration of the coastline.[28] Louis had seemingly disagreed with Baudin's decision not to remove the plate in 1803 and prioritised visiting Shark Bay when he commanded his own expedition.[29] *L'Uranie* expedition, with its vast scientific and anthropological discoveries, and the crew's survival of a shipwreck, was made all the more remarkable by the inclusion of a female stowaway on board—the captain's wife, Rose de Freycinet.

Rose de Freycinet's early education, love and devotion to her husband, and curious, self-driven nature motivated her to join *L'Uranie's* expedition. Born Rose Pinon in Paris in September 1794 to a solidly middle-class family, Freycinet received classical scholarly training from her mother, the headmistress of a boarding school for girls, who was renowned for being strongly principled, deeply religious, and an upstanding lady in the Paris community.[30] Freycinet was deeply devoted to her mother, having relied upon her as a sole parent when her father passed away in 1803. She writes in her journal aboard *L'Uranie* of her sorrow at leaving her mother for a prolonged period.[31] Yet hers was

[24] Rivière, *A Woman of Courage: The Journal of Rose De Freycinet on Her Voyage around the World 1817-1820*, xvi.

[25] Ibid., 4; Western Australian Museum, "Journeys of Enlightenment".

[26] Marchant and Reynolds, "Freycinet, Louis-Claude Desaulses De (1779-1842)".

[27] Rivière, *A Woman of Courage: The Journal of Rose De Freycinet on Her Voyage around the World 1817-1820*, xviii.

[28] McCarthy, "Rose and Louis De Freycinet in the Uranie: An Illustrated Research Essay for the W.A. Museum's Journeys of Enlightenment Exhibition 2008," 11.

[29] Ibid.

[30] Rivière, *A Woman of Courage: The Journal of Rose De Freycinet on Her Voyage around the World 1817-1820*, xi-xiii.

[31] Ibid., 2, 9.

an adventurous family, with her younger sister Stéphanie a governess in Mauritius from 1818 to 1825 (perhaps also a motivating factor in Freycinet's travels to the island aboard *L'Uranie*).[32] In June 1814, at 19, she married Louis (then 35 years) and seemingly bridged the class barrier between the families with ease, with the aristocratic de Freycinet family reportedly very fond of her.[33] It is clear from their letters and private accounts, and in Louis' choice of a bride from a lower-class family, that the couple married for love—a concept increasingly part of the marital decision at the beginning of the eighteenth century, but by no means the only consideration for couples of this time.[34]

Louis wrote to his brother in 1814, around the time of his marriage, of his admiration and devotion to his wife:

> [I am] the happiest man in my household [and] my current existence appears to me as an anticipated paradise. I measure well all what a good, sweet, and virtuous woman is worth, it is in such union that one learns to cherish life and that we could find a worthy compensation of the sorrows and worries of the world. If I have to do one more thing it is to improve the happiness of my amiable companion, I know that I will never acquit myself enough to her and that it is not sufficient to pay her back of the most tenderness to have for her dear person an eternal and sincere affection.[35]

Freycinet seems to have charmed almost everyone with whom she had contact. Historians have described her as a "typically vivacious and frivolous pretty girl of her class and time"; however, her outward appearance and social behaviour "belied a tenacious loyalty", bravery and strength of character that is abundantly clear in her writings.[36] In a letter to her mother, written just hours before leaving, Freycinet admits to being "agitated by a thousand fears" at embarking on the ocean voyage, leaving behind her known world, friends and beloved family. And yet, she determined:

> my mind is made up: I will follow my husband in his expedition round the world; I will share his fate and soften his anxieties if there should be any… Ah! However great the trials of such a voyage may prove for your daughter, believe that a hundred times worse would be the absence of the one she so loves.[37]

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[32] Ibid., xi-xiii.

[33] Western Australian Museum, "Journeys of Enlightenment"; Rivière, *A Woman of Courage: The Journal of Rose De Freycinet on Her Voyage around the World 1817-1820*, xi-xiii.

[34] Deborah Simonton, *A History of European Women's Work: 1700 to the Present*, 21, 88.

[35] Louis Claude de Saulces de Freycinet, "Louis De Freycinet, Letter to His Brother," (Kerry Stokes Collection 1814).

[36] Clode, *Voyages to the South Seas: In Search of Terres Australis*, 160.

[37] Freycinet, letter to Madame Pinon, 1817 quoted in Bassett, *Realms and Islands: The World Voyage of Rose De Freycinet in the Corvette Uranie, 1817-1820*, 5-6.

Having devoted many hours to Freycinet's words, Marc Serge Rivière, the editor and translator of the most recent edition of her journal, commented upon her "resilience, the inexhaustible good humour and devotion to others, above all the bravery in the adversity and the temerity" of Freycinet "who was prepared to flaunt conventions and challenge the French naval authorities by stowing away on an official maritime expedition".[38] It has been labelled "one of France's great love stories".[39]

The decision for Freycinet to stow away on *L'Uranie* appears to have been planned well in advance, seemingly agreed upon by Freycinet and her husband soon after the royal assent of *L'Uranie*'s expedition in October 1816.[40] Bassett's research concludes that Freycinet's presence on board was "the result of her own determination".[41] Rivière grants Freycinet autonomous ownership of this decision, due to her letter to her brother-in-law, Henri, on 17 September 1817 (the day after she had boarded *L'Uranie*) in which she referred to "the plan which we had formed not to be separated during a long voyage"—most likely referring to a decision made between herself and her husband, long before the expedition's departure.[42] Evidence of Freycinet's long-planned stowing away was apparent in the preparations for *L'Uranie*'s voyage. These plans included extending the living quarters onboard to accommodate Freycinet in a 'dunette' cabin over the entire breadth of the ship's quarterdeck. Louis justified these additions to authorities as accommodation for fellow officers and a storehouse for specimens.[43] Riviere's research into the letters of those on board and the Freycinet family indicate that the crew suspected early the couple's intentions. Louis' parents feared for Freycinet's health on the voyage and the impact on their own son's health due to the stresses of having her stow away. Freycinet's mother seems to have known of the plan, but her objection, if it existed, was not recorded. Caroline de Nanteuil, to whom Freycinet addressed her diary, also appeared to have known of the planned stowing away.[44]

[38] *Rivière, A Woman of Courage: The Journal of Rose De Freycinet on Her Voyage around the World 1817-1820*, ix.

[39] McCarthy, "Rose De Freycinet and the French Exploration Corvette L'uranie (1820): A Highlight of the 'French Connection' with the 'Great Southland'," 65.

[40] *Rivière, A Woman of Courage: The Journal of Rose De Freycinet on Her Voyage around the World 1817-1820*, xix.

[41] Bassett, *Realms and Islands: The World Voyage of Rose De Freycinet in the Corvette Uranie, 1817-1820*, 3.

[42] *Rivière, A Woman of Courage: The Journal of Rose De Freycinet on Her Voyage around the World 1817-1820*, xix.

[43] Western Australian Museum, "Treasures from the Deep: De Freycinet"; McCarthy, "Rose and Louis De Freycinet in the Uranie: An Illustrated Research Essay for the W.A. Museum's Journeys of Enlightenment Exhibition 2008," 7.

[44] Rivière, *A Woman of Courage: The Journal of Rose De Freycinet on Her Voyage around the World 1817-1820*, xx-xxii.

The decision for Freycinet to stow away emphasised the couple's love for one another and demonstrated her respected position within the marriage, as well as her desirous curiosity to see the world. More traditional accounts of Freycinet's stowing away attribute her voyage to love: she followed her husband out of adoration and duty as his wife.[45] In her diary, Freycinet records a verse presented to her by a Creole dinner party guest in Mauritius in June 1818,

> Of all wives the charming model,
> Forsaking games and laughter
> Because of too faithful a love.
> What! You desert Paris.
> Helen, Phaedra and other beauties
> Have defied the oceans like you,
> But history never said of them,
> That it was to follow a husband.

While unimpressed with the couplets' style and lack of sophistication, she doesn't refute the message of the gifted verses.[46] Freycinet behaves within expected feminine social conventions as Louis' devoted wife, which she reinforces throughout her writings but most pressingly in the early pages of her diary when recounting her stowing away. However, fearful of her safety and worried for the health of her mother, she writes, "I could not blame myself, as I was abiding by God's prescribed rule!".[47] To accompany her husband aboard this voyage, Freycinet saw as abiding by religious rule to honour and obey her husband. Bassett writes that the pious Freycinet was obeying a "higher ordinance: in cleaving to her husband she was obeying the precept of God himself. But the ordinance she obeyed was in reality her own heart's".[48] It wasn't just religious fervour keeping Freycinet beside her husband. The organisation of marriage in France in the early nineteenth century stressed 'family democracy', in which complex decisions affecting the family were made with the consent of all those concerned: "the French wife, with her clear head and judgement, was a wise counsellor".[49] The more superior status of French wives during this period goes to some length in explaining Freycinet's presence aboard *L'Uranie*. Still, she wasn't the only wife of a naval commander who didn't want to part from her husband. The friend she stayed with in Toulon before the expedition disembarked, who was the daughter and wife of "distinguished sailors", Freycinet wrote was "astonished and touched at my

[45] Rivière, "The Woman's Gaze: Rose De Freycinet's Perception of a Three-Year Scientific Voyage," in French Explorers: Floor Talk Series (Western Australian Maritime Museum, 2018).

[46] Rivière, *A Woman of Courage: The Journal of Rose De Freycinet on Her Voyage around the World 1817-1820*, 30-31.

[47] Ibid., 2.

[48] Bassett, *Realms and Islands: The World Voyage of Rose De Freycinet in the Corvette Uranie, 1817-1820*, 3.

[49] Priscilla Robertson, *An Experience of Women: Pattern and Change in Nineteenth-Century Europe*, 153-60.

resolution" to join her husband as a stowaway. So, her unusual behaviour in joining the expedition must be further explained by a personal longing to explore the world.[50]

Freycinet's journal is resplendent with descriptions of the people and places she encounters on the voyage of *L'Uranie*. She writes with a natural curiosity and the increasingly experienced eye of an ethnographer, commenting on differences in class, culture, social behaviour, dress, and traditions in the places she visits. This commentary, which she goes to great effort to both record and rescue from the shipwreck, demonstrates her desire to document what she understands to be an extraordinary adventure and record her worldly education. Bassett describes Freyincet as an explorer, commenting on her experiences of this new world, she embraces the role of adventurer:

> As with inexperienced travellers of all times, the familiar is her yardstick; the unfamiliar is commented on with interest of disapproval, new scenes are noted with delight; she is sometimes shocked, often terrified, now and then she is bored. Throughout she remains unswervingly French.[51]

In recognising the 'other' in her writing, positioning herself firmly within the known boundaries of her French society, and drawing comparisons with the new world around her, Freycinet acted with an inquisitive nature. She operated in the same manner as the scientists on board *L'Uranie* and others who travelled the world in pursuit of discovery. Her quest for adventure and devotion to her husband is evident in the records of expeditionary life as she reflects on her role aboard *L'Uranie*, engaging in the science, diplomacy, and survival of this voyage.

Freycinet's voyage as a female stowaway aboard a French naval vessel does not stand in isolation. Her adventure was preceded by at least two other recorded women, both French, in the period of Enlightenment exploration. Jeanne 'Jean' Baret and Marie Louise Victoire Girardin both stowed away on voyages of Enlightenment. Although they travelled under different circumstances and with varied motivations, their curiosity for the unexplored, adventure or science bound them together. Although Baret and Girardin left almost no written records of their journeys by their own hand, their presence aboard the expeditions of Bougainville and D'Entrecasteaux, respectively, appears in the reflections of their male shipmates. Like Freycinet, both are female explorers, stepping beyond the boundaries of gendered expectations of their time to pursue an adventure to enrich their lives.

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[50] Freycinet, letter to Madame Pinon, 1817 quoted in *Bassett, Realms and Islands: The World Voyage of Rose De Freycinet in the Corvette Uranie, 1817-1820*, 5-6.

[51] Ibid., x.

Jeanne Baret

Jeanne Baret was the first (recorded) woman to circumnavigate the world.[52] Her lover, the physician and royal naturalist Philibert Commerson, was assigned to Bougainville's 1766 voyage of Enlightenment aboard the ship *Étoile*.[53] Bougainville later declared that "She will be the only one of her sex [to circumnavigate the world] and I admire her determination. Her example will hardly be contagious".[54] Baret disguised herself as Commerson's male valet and worked aboard as his botanical assistant. She assisted with collecting specimens, drawing and recording the growing catalogue, and physically helping Commerson during fieldwork when ashore.[55] Although she has been labelled as an "unwitting explorer", it is clear from the research by Baret's biographer Glynis Ridley that Baret was a willing participant in Bougainville's voyage of Enlightenment and played a significant role in the expedition.[56] Like Freycinet, Baret was seemingly involved in plans for stowing away almost as soon as Commerson was given his posting aboard the *Étoile*, as there are no records of Commerson seeking an assistant to accompany him on the expedition.[57] Baret was well-qualified for the position, having worked as his co-researcher on specimens held in Jardin du Roi in Paris. Before that, she lent him her expertise as a herb woman when they lived (and had an affair together) in the Loire.[58] Baret had no formalised education but received practical training from a young age as a herb woman. A rich tradition of the agricultural labouring classes, herb women passed down the oral tradition of curative plants, assisting and supplying apothecaries and male medical practitioners with raw materials for medicines.[59] Ridley has deduced that Baret's herb woman training led to the meeting between Baret and Commerson at some point between 1760 and 1764 when both were living and botanising in the Loire. The two became lovers before Commerson's wife's death in April 1762, and Baret was recorded as Commerson's housekeeper in 1764 (with a son born to the two in December of that year).[60] This

[52] Schiebinger, "Feminist History of Colonial Science," 237.

[53] Melguen, "French Voyages of Exploration and Science in the Age of Enlightenment: An Ocean of Discovery Throughout the Pacific Ocean," 33-34; Glynis Ridley, *The Discovery of Jeanne Baret: A Story of Science, the High Seas, and the First Woman to Circumnavigate the Globe* (New York: Broadway Paperbacks (Random House), 2010), 1.

[54] Ridley, *The Discovery of Jeanne Baret: A Story of Science, the High Seas, and the First Woman to Circumnavigate the Globe*, 11.

[55] Schiebinger, *Plants and Empire: Colonial Bioprospecting in the Atlantic World*. 46.

[56] E. J. Tepe, G. Ridley, and L. Bohs, "A New Species of Solanum Named for Jeanne Baret, an Overlooked Contributor to the History of Botany," PHYTOKEYS 8, no. 8 (2012): 44.

[57] Ridley, *The Discovery of Jeanne Baret: A Story of Science, the High Seas, and the First Woman to Circumnavigate the Globe*, 60-61.

[58] Ibid., 16-17, 38-51.

[59] Ibid., 16-17.

[60] Schiebinger, *Plants and Empire: Colonial Bioprospecting in the Atlantic World*, 47-48; Ridley, *The Discovery of Jeanne Baret: A Story of Science, the High Seas, and the First Woman to Circumnavigate the Globe*, 38-51.

personal and professional relationship is evidence enough of the likelihood of Baret's complicity in planning her stowing away aboard *Étoile*. Still, Baret's personality, curiosity and ambition must also be taken into account.

While Baret was undoubtedly committed, romantically, to Commerson, she also had a life-long pursuit for botanical knowledge and pride in her work as a herb woman and botanist. Ridley argues that

> while Baret might well have loved Commerson and loved being with him, if we see this as the sole factor motivating her to join the expedition then we continue to make Baret an unthinking drone, moving only at Commerson's will. To construct and sustain the fiction of Jeanne Baret required keen powers of observation, a quick wit, a good sense of humour, an abundance of drive, and endless reserves of stamina: These qualities were not in Commerson's power to bestow, but were Baret's alone. And though her resolve to join the expedition pleased Commerson and accommodated his needs, we should not lose sight of the fact that Baret was surely also pleasing herself.[61]

She was born into a poor agricultural labouring family, arguably the "last serfs in France", who were unlikely to have travelled farther than a day's walk from their home village in Burgundy.[62] The prospect of life as a botanist in Paris and then aboard the first French expedition around the world must have been a tantalising prospect for such a woman of ambition.[63] The stamina displayed by Baret while working on the expedition is undoubtedly a result of her early life as an agricultural labourer. Disguised with a tightly bound chest and loose clothing, she proved her "masculinity" by carrying huge loads while traipsing long distances in all climates during field trips and working aboard the *Étoile*.[64] The threats on board the ship were innumerable to all involved in the expedition but were heightened for Baret. The danger of discovery would not only result in her losing her job and the opportunity to see the world but also an almost inevitable fate of sexual violence (reported to have happened upon her discovery at Tahiti and the reason she carried two loaded pistols with her at all times afterwards).[65] Despite these physical challenges and dangers, Baret's curiosity for adventure drove her to subterfuge. In Baret's own words, recorded by Bougainville upon her "discovery" as a woman, she knew the voyage would take her around the world, which piqued her curiosity and encouraged her

[61] Ridley, *The Discovery of Jeanne Baret: A Story of Science, the High Seas, and the First Woman to Circumnavigate the Globe*, 65.

[62] Ibid., 14.

[63] Ibid., 66.

[64] Ibid., 64; Schiebinger, *Plants and Empire: Colonial Bioprospecting in the Atlantic World*, 48-49.

[65] Andy Martin, "The Enlightenment in Paradise: Bougainville, Tahiti, and the Duty of Desire," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 41, no. 2 (2008): 209,14; Geoffrey Badger, *The Explorers of the Pacific*, vol. 2nd. rev. and enl. (Kenthurst, NSW: Kangaroo Press, 1996), 51.

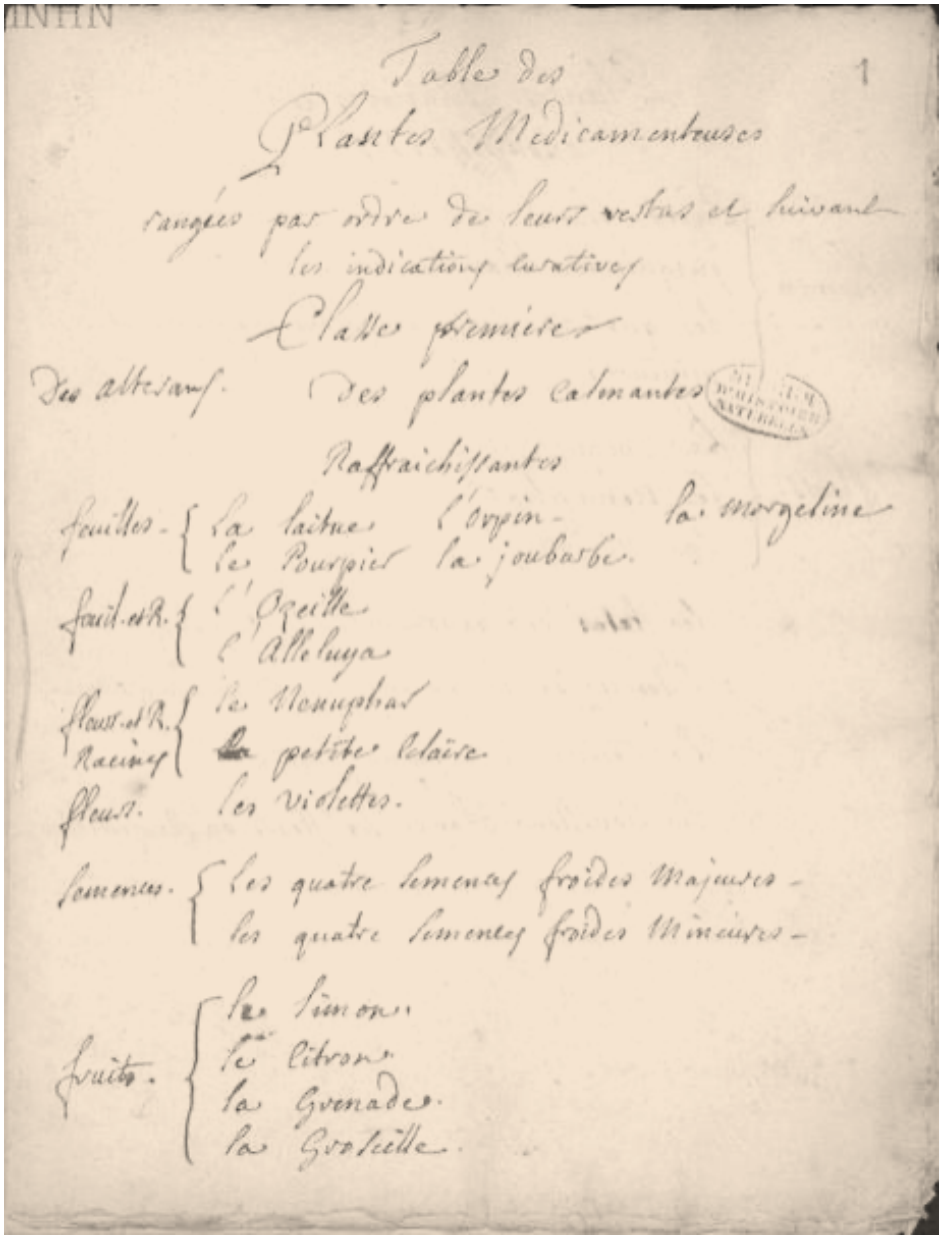

Figure 17. Philibert Commerson, "Table Des Plantes Médicamenteuses," ed. Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle (Paris, 1727-1773).

deception.[66] It was not only her chance meeting and affair with Commerson that landed Baret on the docks. Nor was it solely Commerson's will to have her stow away with him aboard the *Étoile*, but a conscious, persistent drive from Baret herself, to explore the world's plant's specimens, with incredible stamina, bravery and tenacity that was wholly her own.

[66] Schiebinger, *Plants and Empire: Colonial Bioprospecting in the Atlantic World*, 46-51.

Marie-Louise Girardin

Marie-Louise Victoire Girardin is the only other recorded stowaway woman aboard a voyage of Enlightenment at this time, having disguised herself as a male steward aboard Antoine Raymond Joseph de Bruni d'Entrecasteaux's 1791 expedition.[67] Born in 1754, Girardin was 37 years of age when she journeyed to the French port of Brest to seek a post aboard d'Entrecasteaux's expedition, with a letter of introduction to the sister of the expedition's second in command, Jean-Michel Huon de Kermadec.[68] Girardin became a widow ten years previous and during the French Revolution is recorded to have given birth to an illegitimate child (some accounts acknowledge the death of her son, although it is unclear if this was the same illegitimate child).[69] There are significant gaps in the records between her being widowed, the birth of her child, and her commission aboard Kermadec's ship *Recherche*. It is unclear how she obtained a letter of introduction to Madame Le Fournier d'Yauville, Kermadec's sister, nor why she chose to join the expedition rather than seek work elsewhere. From her domestic situation, it can be assumed she was socially disgraced. Some accounts suggest her father (a Versailles wine merchant) had disowned her, so, despite being a grown woman, she was in the precarious position of lacking male guardianship and financial support with limited (legitimate) employment opportunities.[70]

Such desperation for a better life must have been Girardin's reason for disguising herself as a male steward aboard the *Recherche*. This posting must also have been with the complicit knowledge of her real identity by both Kermadec and expeditionary Commander d'Entrecasteaux. They ensured her employment required no medical examination and afforded her a small separate cabin purportedly for her safety from fellow sailors on the voyage.[71] Similar to Baret, Girardin was afforded a modicum of protection by her rank on board, but she was subjected to the continued dangers of shipboard life as a woman. Suspicions of her gender were widespread and heightened as the journey progressed. Girardin refused to reveal her identity and suffered a slash to her arm in a duel with a fellow sailor who challenged her.[72] Sailing under the French flag during the Revolutionary Wars brought other dangers. D'Entrecasteaux's expedition was to explore the coasts of Western Australia, Tasmania, the Gulf of Carpentaria, New Caledonia, Solomon Islands, northern New Guinea, and

[67] d'Entrecasteaux, *Bruny D'entrecasteaux: Voyage to Australia & the Pacific, 1791-1793*, xxv.

[68] Ibid.

[69] McCarthy, "Rose and Louis De Freycinet in the Uranie: An Illustrated Research Essay for the W.A. Museum's Journeys of Enlightenment Exhibition 2008," 9; Western Australian Museum, "Journeys of Enlightenment".

[70] d'Entrecasteaux, *Bruny D'entrecasteaux: Voyage to Australia & the Pacific, 1791-1793*, xxv; Western Australian Museum, "Journeys of Enlightenment".

[71] Ibid.

[72] Ibid.

recover the lost Lapérouse expedition of 1785-88. However, the expedition fell short of their orders upon the death of d'Entrecasteaux to scurvy in July 1793, with many crew also succumbing to illness before the expedition collapsed upon arrival in Batavia, Dutch East Indies in October 1793, having only explored the southern coast of Australia, and the Pacific.[73] Here, the remaining crew, including Girardin, learned King Louis XVI had been executed, the French Republic proclaimed, and war declared on most of Europe—including the Dutch, who captured their ships and imprisoned the crew.[74]

Girardin died of dysentery just over a year later, in December 1794, still imprisoned by the Dutch in a transport ship at Batavia—having maintained her assumed masculinity until her death, when the ship's surgeon discovered her true identity.[75] Girardin's choice to seek employment onboard a voyage into the unknown world, facing violence, illness and imprisonment while on the expedition, and still maintaining her assumed identity (likely for protection amidst these threats) demonstrates her tenacious character, but also the commitment to her choices to survive. The circumstances of her life in France placed her in a position of desperation. Still, she made a clear and conscious—autonomous - choice to work onboard *Recherche* as a man and did so exceedingly well, remaining undiscovered until after her death, when officials posthumously noted her presence on board the expedition. [76] Girardin was a brilliant and cunning character to stay hidden in plain sight. To avoid detection must have entailed dressing the part and maintaining a solid work ethic—there are no mentions of the steward's incompetence in the logs. Girardin was not young but seemingly kept up with her demanding employment despite surely having suffered uncomfortably from binding her figure and rebuffing the threat of sexual violence (which Baret also experienced). [77] Girardin left no personal writings from her time aboard the voyage, nor is she mentioned in official correspondence

[73] Western Australian Museum, "Journeys of Enlightenment"; Peter Reynders, "From Janszoon to De Freycinet: Concise Database of Selected Landings on the Australian Coast and Related Events from 1606 to 1814," Project Gutenberg Australia, http://gutenberg.net.au/landing-list-detailed.html; McCarthy, "Rose and Louis De Freycinet in the Uranie: An Illustrated Research Essay for the W.A. Museum's Journeys of Enlightenment Exhibition 2008," 9; d'Entrecasteaux, *Bruny D'entrecasteaux: Voyage to Australia & the Pacific, 1791-1793*, xxv.

[74] Western Australian Museum, "Journeys of Enlightenment".

[75] McCarthy, "Rose and Louis De Freycinet in the Uranie: An Illustrated Research Essay for the W.A. Museum's Journeys of Enlightenment Exhibition 2008," 9; Western Australian Museum, "Journeys of Enlightenment"; Gascoigne, Encountering the Pacific in the Age of the Enlightenment, xvi.

[76] McCarthy, "Rose and Louis De Freycinet in the Uranie: An Illustrated Research Essay for the W.A. Museum's Journeys of Enlightenment Exhibition 2008," 9; Western Australian Museum, "Journeys of Enlightenment"; Gascoigne, Encountering the Pacific in the Age of the Enlightenment, xvi.

[77] Ridley, *The Discovery of Jeanne Baret: A Story of Science, the High Seas, and the First Woman to Circumnavigate the Globe*, 186-94; Martin, "The Enlightenment in Paradise: Bougainville, Tahiti, and the Duty of Desire," 209, 14; Carol E. Harrison, "Replotting the Ethnographic Romance: Revolutionary Frenchmen in the Pacific, 1768-1804," *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 21, no. 1 (2012): 44; R. G. Rivas, "Gulf "Alter-Latinas:" Cross-Dressing Women Travel Beyond the Gulfs of Transnationality and Transexuality," *SOUTHERN LITERARY JOURNAL* 46, no. 2 (2014): 130.

from the expedition. However, there is evidence in *L'Espérance* officer Jacques-Malo La Motte du Portail's journal that Girardin developed a relationship with a young enseigne on board, Mérite, to whom she may have revealed her true identity. [78] Girardin's strength, tenacity and bravery is evident from what is missing in the records; her commitment to her choice to work aboard *Recherche*, to maintain her identity in the face of extreme hardship, violence and imprisonment is not a sign of her desperation, but her character:

> After much laughing and joking with Girardin… the love which had already spoken to the heart of this steward now made it weaken: they were alone, the night was dark… the secret escaped. Girardin was indeed a woman, as some had suspected.[79]

Freycinet's role onboard *L'Uranie*

Freycinet's role onboard *L'Uranie* was different from Baret and Girardin's. She was the expeditionary Commander's wife, a guest on board who also played a role in diplomacy, rather than a crew member or scientist. Bassett writes of Freycinet that she was "an explorer, though continuing her role as housekeeper, managing her husband's table and domestic purse while at sea."[80] Freycinet navigates her role as wife on board *L'Uranie* by juggling the competing responsibilities of caregiving for both her husband and appears to adopt the passengers and crew members as a pseudo-family—with far more familiar interaction between Freycinet and the crew than was expected. The proximity of life on board the corvette and the significance of the world circumnavigation of the voyage seem to have affected Freycinet's behaviour with the crew. Freycinet transcended her assumed aristocratic identity through her marriage and her position as the Commander's wife to care for unwell passengers and crew members as if they were close acquaintances. Her initial wariness of the crew kept her hidden in her cabin at the beginning of the journey. However, by July 1818, she wrote of sending "broth, cups of coffee, and so on" to seasick passengers staying in her apartment (which, she notes "resembled a hospital") in the crossing between Mauritius and Bourbon Island (Réunion Island).[81]

In January 1819, after spending some months in the tropical South Pacific, a number of those on board *L'Uranie* suffered from tropical fevers (and likely malnutrition given the prolonged distances

[78] Frank Horner, *Looking for Lapérouse* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1996), 210.

[79] La Motte du Portail quoted in ibid.

[80] Bassett, *Realms and Islands: The World Voyage of Rose De Freycinet in the Corvette Uranie, 1817-1820*, x.

[81] Rivière, *A Woman of Courage: The Journal of Rose De Freycinet on Her Voyage around the World 1817-1820*, 39.

from familiar ports), with several of the crew succumbing to illness and buried at sea. Freycinet was suitably distressed by this confronting turn of events, writing, "our stay in the humid islands of Rawak and Waigeo has increased the number of our invalids, and the health of those who were already sick has worsened; alarming fevers have broken out… I dread to hear that more have fallen victim to this lethal climate." She emphasised her responsibility as the only woman on board, to nurture and give aid where she can: "What grieves me most is that I have no more refreshments to offer our unfortunate patients. A few chickens are left which I have set aside for them, and which I will gladly offer them as Louis and I are in good health."[82] Freycinet demonstrated her choice to adopt the role of primary caregiver while onboard by taking the initiative to provide care for those in need. She is not a mother (and laments this circumstance throughout her journal) but engages in this maternalistic role while in the extraordinary events of shipboard life, attending to the passengers and crew aboard *L'Uranie* as she would in her own home back in France.[83]

Freycinet's nurturing role on the voyage is most clearly reflected in her conduct towards her husband. Bassett writes of Freycinet as a wife, "… though constantly shaken by fear, weeping copiously for joy and grief alike, she yet was no clinging ivy, with useless tendrils hampering her particular sturdy oak. Accomplished and intelligent, she was quite capable of lightening her husband's load in small matters and in large."[84] Although Bassett's analogy is freighted with gendered stereotypes, Freycinet strongly supported her husband throughout the voyage, wrote proudly of his accomplishments and reflected on his duty to his crew and country alike. In stowing away onboard *L'Uranie*, Freycinet later wrote, in deference to her husband's commanding role and responsibility on the expedition: "With terror in my heart, I resigned myself, wanting to be faithful to the resolution I made on the very first day I set foot aboard, never out of fear or a whim to prevent Louis from doing his duty."[85]

Freycinet's bravery and stoic behaviour was certainly a strong character trait, but also a choice she made to best support her husband while on the voyage. Her actions reflect her choice not to burden him, even when her better nature compels her to do so. After her husband scalded his hand quite severely before they arrived at Shark Bay, Western Australia, in September 1818, Freycinet reflected that she "spent many anxious moments in a quandary, not being able to go to Louis' aid. He did not want me to leave the battery before everything was secure, and it was impossible for me to

[82] Ibid., 72-73.

[83] Ibid., 26.

[84] Bassett, *Realms and Islands: The World Voyage of Rose De Freycinet in the Corvette Uranie*, 1817-1820, 8.

[85] Rivière, *A Woman of Courage: The Journal of Rose De Freycinet on Her Voyage around the World 1817-1820*, 45.

enter that melee."[86] She obeyed her husband's direction, and recognised her powerlessness in the dangerous situation on deck, and yet expressed her desire to perform her duty to care for her husband. Freycinet's love of her husband, reflected in her written adoration and deferential actions while with *L'Uranie* expedition, was a driving factor for her stowing away aboard *L'Uranie*. Her commitment was challenged by the conditions on board, the often-frightening experiences in unknown places, and most threateningly by the French authorities. Yet Freycinet persevered with the expedition beyond the duty of her marriage. Her journal demonstrates a desire for adventure and an ardent appreciation of new experiences, people, cultures and natural history.

Adventure

While it may have been her duty as a wife that first encouraged Freycinet to stow away aboard *L'Uranie*'s voyage of Enlightenment, it becomes apparent very early in her writings that a love of adventure, as well, drew Freycinet to the expedition. During an extended stay in Rio de Janeiro in December 1817, Freycinet first reflects on this adventurousness: "I experienced such intense pleasure at finding myself in the midst of so many new and extraordinary things…"[87] These new experiences continued at Bourbon Island, where she rode horses, in the Moluccan archipelago (December 1818) where the corvette encountered piracy, her encounters with exotic wildlife in Waigeo Island (January 1819) and earthquakes in the Mariana Islands (April 1819).[88] Even two years into the journey, while travelling through the Sandwich Islands in June 1819, she continued to be fascinated by "places which I never suspected existed and with customs which bear no resemblance whatsoever to ours."[89] At Shark Bay, of which Freycinet did not write fondly, she reflects on these new experiences compared to life at home—drawing conclusions based on her known experience. Her highest compliment of a new adventure was its comparability, at times superiority, to France. After an uncomfortable landing onshore at Shark Bay, Freycinet reflected on the unwelcoming environment and hostile 'natives' but found some solace in lunch:

> after putting up a canvas to provide us with some shade, we ate a healthy meal, not just on what had been brought from the ship, but also on excellent oysters

[86] Ibid., 49.

[87] Ibid., 15.

[88] Ibid., 47,63-68,81.

[89] Ibid., 99.

> which we found on the rocks, oysters far tastier than all those I had eaten, sitting at a table in comfort, in Paris.[90]

Despite her discomfort, Freycinet relished the experiences of tasting local foods, her adventurousness having overcome the challenges of her circumstance.

While her adventurous spirit encouraged her to join the expedition, it was not the only factor keeping her aboard *L'Uranie*. After the success of her disguise in stowing aboard *L'Uranie*, Freycinet was not out of danger at being discovered or sent home. Several months into the voyage, French officials challenged her autonomy with orders to detain her at Bourbon Island in July 1818, ending her time with the expedition. General Lafitte, the island's governor, had received orders to prevent Freycinet from continuing with her husband on board *L'Uranie*, to which she reacted upon hearing the news, "I was determined to avoid meeting him, not wanting to put up with such an unpleasant assault…. I had to put a brave face on things."[91] Freycinet prepared herself to deceive the governor, bowing deeply and acting graciously to "make him less ruthless".[92] Her cunning social skills were unnecessary, though, as the governor praised Freycinet's courage, "declaring he was happy to be able to receive a heroine such as me in his home!".[93] Confused by this turn of events, Freycinet queried her husband, who had seemingly advocated on her behalf. Yet, Freycinet herself expressed that "the Governor understood full well that if he did not allow me to leave of my own free will, I would still do so in spite of him".[94] This passage is the most explicit expression of her autonomy—her stubborn willingness to flout authority not only proves her tenacious spirit but the determination to see out the expedition.

Determined as she was to remain with the expedition, Freycinet's reflections in her journal elucidate the genuine threats and dangers she perceived and experienced on the voyage. Her words reflect the reality of her emotion while on board. She was not always a brave adventurer but wrote of her fears and foibles. However, her reflections on these weaker—arguably more stereotypically female—emotions further prove her tenacious desire to continue with the expedition. She expressed her autonomy in her reflexive behaviour by addressing her fears, recognising the dangers brought on by her decision to join *L'Uranie*, and persevering nonetheless. Upon leaving Sydney in December 1819, Freycinet acknowledged her sadness at leaving behind the familiarity of a European colony—having been away from France, at this point, for over two years—and trepidation at the anticipated rough

[90] Ibid., 51.

[91] Ibid., 41.

[92] Ibid.

[93] Ibid.

[94] Ibid.

onward voyage: "The thought of rounding Cape Horn frightened me and I had to remind myself of the fact that we were sailing towards France, in order to rekindle my courage, weakened somewhat by such a long absence from my homeland".[95] Freycinet understood the challenges she would face in the voyage ahead based on her self-education and the trials she had endured over the previous two years at sea. Still, she remained steadfast in her commitment to the expedition, even in the circumstances often beyond her control.

Although her writing frequently reflected upon the hardships, Freycinet quite often consciously adopted a positive attitude to her tribulations. She reflected upon them as part of her exotic adventure and reassured her reader (and likely, herself) of her decision to remain with the expedition. At Waigeo Island in January 1819, Freycinet's diary depicted her daily routine, including long walks which were:

> somewhat spoilt by ugly snakes…which I always dread. Our naturalists are more interested in them than I am; I would not relish adventures of this kind, but I would some others, such as their encounter yesterday with a living bird of paradise, or so they tell me! How I wish I could have admired for myself the graceful appearance and flight of this charming bird.[96]

Freycinet's dread of encountering snakes is downplayed in this passage and belies the utmost terror and fright she detailed earlier in this diary entry when she discovered a snake in her tent.[97] However, in this later passage, her writing demonstrated that she had come to terms with her predicament, accepting that these "ugly snakes" are part of her experience. She acknowledged their scientific worth to the expedition and reflected upon her educated desire to experience exotic wildlife for herself, albeit less scaly and more colourful. Framing her fear in a more positive diary entry, Freycinet demonstrated a purposeful reflection on her experiences. She demonstrated her autonomy in this situation by focusing on the positive aspects of her situation, such as her desire to explore the world and not on her phobia of snakes. Her desire for adventure outweighed her fears.

Science

Rose de Freycinet's prolonged and constant exposure to scientific research, experimentation, and discovery while onboard *L'Uranie's* expedition encouraged her involvement in this mission. She stated in her journal that she had caught the "scientific bug", and her increasingly scientific style of describing

[95] Ibid., 121.

[96] Ibid., 68.

[97] Ibid.

her surroundings indicate a growing appreciation and comprehension of scientific practice beyond what she had learned as a schoolgirl in Paris.[98] As the expedition spent more time at sea and away from established European colonies, Freycinet devoted a significant portion of her daily routine to reading and studying, which is reflected in her writings of the islands she encountered. Increasingly, she described their geological formations, climate, native species of flora and fauna, including scientific and aesthetically descriptive details.[99] However, this decision to extend her scientific knowledge by reading, or interacting with the expeditionary naturalists, does not indicate a full-blown enthusiasm for the sciences. In September 1819, two years into the voyage, Freycinet lamented the extension of *L'Uranie*'s time in the South Pacific for the naturalists to record data at the magnetic equator, near the Sandwich Islands: "However much I respect science, I am not fond of it, nor am I likely to be reconciled to it by Louis' prolonging of the voyage, which holds nothing terribly exciting for me."[100] This passage may be an expression of her frustration at the length of time away from a civilised colony. The expedition's detour to the Sandwich Islands kept them from Port Jackson, and the comforts Freycinet may have been craving at this point—as well as news from home. Comparatively, Freycinet may have been true to her words and not fond of science. However, this contradicts the numerous details in her diary where she does embrace scientific practice.

The earliest reference Freycinet made of her engagement in scientific practice occurred at Shark Bay in September 1818. She did not write fondly of her time on the beaches in northwest Australia, but her words expressed a degree of scientific appreciation for the place. She indulged scientific discoveries that increasingly captured her attention as the expedition voyaged further from the familiar European colonies recently left behind in Mauritius and Reunion Island. Of Shark Bay, she wrote

> That stay on land was not a pleasant one for me, the country being entirely devoid of trees and vegetation. One could only go for a walk on burning sand. When the heat died down a little, I would collect shells, of which I have an impressive collection. I spent the rest of the day in the tent reading or working.[101]

Freycinet had been collecting shell specimens during the voyage, possibly for aesthetic reasons more than scientific. Still, as the expedition continued into the South Pacific islands, she expressed a

[98] Ibid., xviii-xix.

[99] Ibid., 15, 56, 66-67, 121-22.

[100] Ibid., 109.

[101] Ibid., 52.

Figure 18. *Voyage Autour du Monde, enterpris par ordre du Roi, sur les corvettes de S.M. l'Uranie la Physicienne, pendant les annees 1817, 1818, 1819 et 1820*, Paris (1824). Museums Victoria.

burgeoning scientific interest in collecting and observing nature. *L'Uranie* spent a prolonged period at Waigeo Island in December 1818, during which Freycinet detailed her daily routine:

> I would rather sit under a tree to read or work, while our officers make their observations with the magnet or otherwise. Moreover, I do so only when I need a rest, for here more than during any other stopover, I devote a good deal of my time to my modest research into natural history: birds, insects, shells and even a few minerals.[102]

The transformation from mere interest to dedicated research demonstrates Freycinet's nascent decision to engage more meaningfully with the expedition's mission. This heightened interest is perhaps best explained by her proximity to the expeditionary scientists for over a year at this point, or even as a point of mutual interest with her husband, who oversaw the observations she described.

From an increasing exposure to the sciences through her discussions with her husband and scientists on board *L'Uranie*, Freycinet began to claim ownership over her scientific engagement. Her diary demonstrates unfolding confidence in her scientific observation skills, particularly during the final year of the expedition. From December 1818, where she noted her "modest research into natural history" at Waigeo Island, she engaged in continual learning and contributed meaningfully, however small, to the purposes of *L'Uranie*'s mission. Enroute to the Caroline Islands in March 1819, Freycinet wrote of her contribution to the expedition's scientific record:

> The one event which temporarily aroused my interest was meeting a school of fish shaped like rays but of an enormous size, with big horns on their heads. By chance, I was the one who had a sufficiently good look at them to be able to make a sketch. I did so because it appeared that this species was unknown.[103]

However deferential this statement appears, Freycinet took ownership of her action and included herself in the scientific processes of the voyage. Her choice of language demonstrates how decisions on board *L'Uranie* shifted during the final year of the voyage, including herself in reflections of these decisions through her use of language. At the Falkland Islands wreck site in March 1820, she included herself in scientific observations: "At 8 a.m. we saw an eclipse of the sun which held our attention for several hours. We recorded many observations which will no doubt be useful."[104] Freycinet's use of "we" in describing this action is significant, as earlier accounts deferred to her husband and his naturalists as carrying out all scientific work—excluding herself. While on the expedition, Freycinet's ownership of her continuing education and scientific practice demonstrates her evolving identity and

[102] Ibid., 68.

[103] Ibid., 75. Freycinet's contribution to the scientific records of the expedition are done so without recognition, except for this record in her diary.

[104] Ibid., 130.

role on board, highlighting her autonomous decision to engage with the extraordinary circumstances of scientific discovery around her.

Ethnography

Freycinet's scientific observation extended to her writings on ethnography, developing an anthropological manner of writing about Indigenous peoples as she explored the regions of the South Pacific, in particular. The sense of cultural difference in Freycinet's writing early in the voyage is striking—she assessed 'the other' in terms of her awareness and experience in France, all but declaring that which was French was superior. Historian Maria Frawley acknowledges this was a common thread in the travel writing of nineteenth-century European women: "Travel both eliminated and exacerbated the traveller's sense of cultural difference…the heightened awareness of a wider world complicated the context from which they assessed their own society and their position as women within that society; cultural differences demanded new modes of self-awareness."[105] This transformation in Freycinet's self-awareness is apparent in her depictions of Indigenous people. As she spent more time away from the 'civilisation' of France, she encountered more varied groups of people, cultures and customs—broadening her understanding of cultural difference and questioning the assumed inferiority of local populations. In her earlier diary entries from Mauritius (May 1818), Freycinet wrote a scathing reflection of Creole women; their fashion and musical talent, in particular, were deemed "very misguided" and lacking skill.[106] She decried about their behaviour at a ball, "even in our most debauched towns, one does not witness such behaviour!".[107] Her judgement of Creole values and tastes is placed firmly as inferior to her French society—even the "debauched towns" of France are deemed superior to Mauritian culture. Although this is a society that is recognisable to Freycinet—she understood the social structures, comprehended their cultural habits and recognised traces of European colonial civility. As she travelled further afield, leaving such civility behind, Freycinet is challenged by people and cultures she does not comprehend.

In Shark Bay in September 1818, Freycinet was confronted with her first experience of perceived savagery. It appears she knew to expect an encounter with such savages, commenting on her friend's prediction of Freycinet cowering "behind Louis' shirt-tail at the first sight of natives",

[105] Maria H. Frawley, *A Wider Range: Travel Writing by Women in Victorian England* (Cranbury, NJ: Associated University Presses, 1994), 31.

[106] Rivière, *A Woman of Courage: The Journal of Rose De Freycinet on Her Voyage around the World 1817-1820*, 25.

[107] Ibid., 36.

Figure 20. J. Alphonse Pellion, "Preparatory Drawings and Etchings at Various States for the Plate 'Nlle Hollande. Port-Jackson. Sauvages Des Environs De La Riviere Nepean. 1. Jedat; 2. Tara; 3. Nemare", Pen and pencil, stipple and line hand-coloured etching, Paris, 1819. State Library of New South Wales.

confessing that she was afraid when seeing Aboriginal people at Shark Bay.[108] The French curiosity of the savage was well-engrained in philosophy and natural history studies, most popularly known by Rousseau's romanticised theory of the noble savage, which must have influenced Freycinet's understanding of these Aboriginal people.[109] Freycinet was already dreading her time at Shark Bay, labelling it a "wretched land" even before sighting a local Aboriginal population, whom she characterised as "a band of natives, all naked, armed with asseghais (pole-like weapon) and spears. They threatened us, signalling that we were to return to the ship."[110] Though seemingly expected by *L'Uranie*'s party, this perceived hostility did not deter the expedition, with several crew members actively searching out 'the natives' during the expedition's stay (suffering a long trek with no food or water for their troubles).[111] She conceded some civility to the local Aboriginal people in their trade of

[108] Ibid., 51.

[109] Estensen, *Discovery: The Quest for the Great South Land*, 224.

[110] Rivière, *A Woman of Courage: The Journal of Rose De Freycinet on Her Voyage around the World 1817-1820*, 50-51.

[111] Ibid., 52-53.

weapons for ancillary objects with the crew but continued to characterise them more as wild animals than fellow humans:

> The natives, no doubt frightened off by the number of people coming ashore, had retreated in the day we first saw them. The previous day, after much hesitation, they had come up to men in the first camp and had exchanged their weapons for tin, glass necklaces and so on.[112]

Freycinet's words do not indicate warmth towards the Aboriginal people. Instead, she characterises them as a definite 'other', with almost no similarity to the French (except for the ability to trade), and clearly considers them lesser people. Shark Bay was the first interaction she had with an uncolonised 'native' population. As her exposure to various tribes across the Pacific grew, so too did the depth of her cultural understanding and lessening of difference between her known world and that of 'the other'.

At Waigeo Island, Freycinet's broadening appreciation of cultural difference is evident in her reflections of the islanders. While remaining scientific in her style of observation, she drew comparisons between groups instead of solely judging them against her French civility. However, this remained her point of reference for enlightened superiority. She meticulously recorded the islander's clothing, hairstyles, complexion and aesthetic cultural practices, comparing them to what she had read in other travel narratives: "they are of small stature, their complexions are dark and their hair smooth, although the opposite has been reported. What has possibly misled travellers, who have thought their hair frizzy, is the fact that they crimp it or rather ruffle it in a manner unknown to me".[113] Her interactions with an islander named Moro, whom she describes as "a native of the island of Aju, not far from Rawak"—later noted as the more 'savage' islands *L'Uranie* encounters—surprised Freycinet, as he demonstrated an amiability that belies his expected scientific nature. This drew Freycinet to the following conclusion: "when I compare him to the inhabitants of our mountainous regions or even to our rough peasants, I wonder who is the real savage… His intelligence is comparable to that of the shrewdest dealer in Europe."[114] Moro behaved in a comprehensibly European manner, gaining the respect of Freycinet (though not as her equal—she still very much views him as 'other'). Whereas previously her interactions with Indigenous peoples had been baffling, frightening or looked down upon, she understood this person to be capable of a cultural practice with which she is familiar, shifting, ever so slightly, her perception of them as a 'noble savage'.

[112] Ibid., 52.

[113] Ibid., 66.

[114] Ibid., 68-69, 87.

This subtle shift in Freycinet's perception of Indigenous peoples is most profoundly communicated through her diary entries in Guam between April and May 1819, after spending time in Australia. After exposure to Indigenous cultures previously unknown to her, Freycinet demonstrated an understanding of her absurdity to these people—and briefly conceded the preconceived Euro-centric notion of her cultural superiority by acknowledging the impact of European exploration on Indigenous populations. She wrote that "we must, indeed, appear as strange to the natives as they are to us; this thought often occurred to me."[115] However, in the same diary entry, she remained faithful to her European education, reinforcing philosophical ideas of the noble savage in describing the 'natives' of Guam: "their pleasant faces displayed a sweetness which is far from typical of these natives, especially when compared to the natives of Rawak and Shark Bay."[116] Later personifying them even further as 'noble savages', though her negative judgement is clear, Freycinet stated that

> they are the amiable offspring of Mother Nature, and if all Indigenous people were like them, I would be tempted to forgive the inclination some people have to celebrate what they call the state of Nature. Nevertheless I have learned, with deep regret, that on some of the Caroline Islands the natives are savage.[117]

Although she briefly indicated an appreciation for cultural difference and even an understanding that the Europeans themselves may be the 'other' when exploring the islands of the South Pacific, Freycinet is never far removed from her dominant European ideology. Her self-driven education and exposure to new peoples and cultures did alter her world view, softening—in a way—her approach to diverse populations of the Indigenous people she observed. Still, she always maintained her position as a scientific observer, treating these people as subjects of ethnography rather than members of society she would engage as an equal. Her perception of cultural difference shifted throughout the voyage, from the earliest scornful entries in Mauritius to the softened consideration in Guam, Freycinet demonstrated through her broadening cultural understanding, though still firmly rooted in dominant European traditions and philosophical knowledge.

Religion

The most dominant way Freycinet gained cultural understanding was through her religion. Her mother raised a profoundly religious family, which informed Freycinet's attitudes and actions while aboard

[115] Ibid., 87.

[116] Ibid.

[117] Ibid., 88.

the expedition. Her diary entries are resplendent with religious allegory, with references to Indigenous clothing at Waigeo Island being identical to "the clothing worn by our ancestor after his original sin"; or when receiving fresh supplies at the Mariana Islands in March 1819 proclaimed that "Manna in the desert was not received by the Israelites with more relish and gratitude!".[118] Freycinet's religion became a touchstone for cultural difference, identifying 'otherness' and savagery compared to her beliefs. In Guam, where previously she expressed an acknowledgement, however briefly, of the impact of European exploration on Indigenous peoples, she further mused on the effects of Christian missionaries operating in the region before *L'Uranie*'s arrival in April 1819

> The character of the islanders will provide food for thought for philosophers; cruel and fierce before the arrival of missionaries, they have been transformed by the teachings of Christian dogmas. Although they have had similar impact in other regions of the world, the missionaries appear to have had an extraordinary strong influence here, which deserves to be analysed by far greater intellects than mine.[119]

Her comments reflected a belief that savagery is incompatible with the Christian religion, with the power of her European faith civilising even the most vicious 'natives'. Although earlier, in December 1817, she derided the shallow nature of faith in 'natives' converted to Christianity in Rio de Janeiro, where she perceived that women treated religious festivals as an opportunity for "spectacle": "they turn up in all their finery and in low-cut dresses as though they were at a ball. Their main concern is to be attractive rather than to pray to God."[120]

Diplomacy

Freycinet's engagement with local people occupied a significant amount of her time when *L'Uranie* was in port—her participation in this diplomacy was well admired and contributed significantly to the expedition's success. Diplomacy was vital, not only as a form of international relations on behalf of France but also for the survival of those on the voyage. Good diplomacy provided the very basics to sustain the expedition, including fresh food and water and local knowledge for navigation and survival while journeying through unknown parts of the world. Although Freycinet characterised such diplomacy as "polite behaviour, as is customary among well-bred people", she highlighted the

[118] Ibid., 67, 76.

[119] Ibid., 90.

[120] Ibid., 17-18.

generosity of local dignitaries as essential to the expedition.[121] After a two-month-long stay with the Governor of Guam, Freycinet noted

> his extraordinary attention toward us and generous offers to assist in our work, not only did he refuse to let us thank him as it was our duty to do, but when it came to working out the cost of daily supplies for the crew…together with the even more considerable provisions to replenish the ship, he refused to even discuss the subject.[122]

Where previously Freycinet had been appalled by the Governor's behaviour engaging in cockfights on Sundays that "appal rather than entertain me", or entertainment that she regarded as "either monotonous or ridiculous to me", she understood that without this generosity, those aboard the expedition would struggle to live in a degree of comfort until the next unknown port.[123]

As expected, Freycinet's status as the commander's wife elicited both curiosity and hospitality in local dignitaries, with her presence aboard the expedition seemingly not having a scandalous impact. Freycinet played an active role in diplomacy as the Commander's wife, with numerous local dignitaries having invited her to their gathering at the various ports *L'Uranie* visited. At Dili, in November 1819, upon hearing of her presence on board, Freycinet wrote that the Portuguese Governor "sent me fruit and fresh bread together with an invitation to dine with him the next day. To this end, he announced to my husband that all the notable women of the colony would be gathered at his home to receive me."[124] Freycinet spent a significant amount of her time in the established colonies visiting the wives and female family members of her husband's dignitaries in business. She wrote of the numerous characters she encountered (often in a rather unflattering way, as befits the nature of her journal to her closest friend).[125] However, Freycinet's role also placed her in the unique position of being the only woman in a room of men. During *L'Uranie*'s stay in the Mariana Islands in March 1819, the Spanish Governor requested Freycinet's presence, she wrote: "There were about 50 of us at dinner, for in addition to *L'Uranie*'s officers and the country's senior civil servants, the passengers and officers of the Spanish vessel La Paz, which sails the day after tomorrow, were also present. I was the only woman present."[126] She performed in this role despite the intimidating

[121] Ibid., 62.

[122] Ibid., 94-95.

[123] Ibid., 83.

[124] Ibid., 59.

[125] Ibid., 26-27, 55-57, 120.

[126] Ibid., 78.

Figure 21. Jacques Arago, "Réception à Diely, Timor, 1818", 1818. Watercolour and ink on paper, 28.5 x 34.8cm. National Library of Australia.

presence of only men, navigating the social niceties of differing cultural expectations and supporting her husband's work as a statesman with aplomb.

Freycinet's diplomacy is especially striking in the circumstances of *L'Uranie*'s wrecking, and subsequent rescue, at the Falkland Islands from February to April 1820. After the ship's hull was embedded on, and torn by, a rock near French Bay on 14 February, the crew and many of the supplies, records and equipment from the expedition were taken ashore in rough conditions, and *L'Uranie* broke up in the strong seas of the Cape over February and March.[127] Freycinet clearly understood the desperate scale of the disaster that had befallen the ship and immediately took action to be of use, not a hindrance, to her husband and the crew. She gathered and prepared food such as "wild celery" for salads, salvaged the ship's biscuits and salt, prepared chicken broth for her husband (who soon became unwell), and baked gago buns from flour collected in Guam and brewed beer from hops

[127] Ibid., 123-28.

purchased in Port Jackson.[128] Her role as a supportive wife prompted these actions and played into the expected gender role of providing nourishment and care for others, but was also enabled by Freycinet's autonomy. She demonstrated initiative in gathering food together, caring for her sick husband. She continued to engage with the survivalism of the campsite by recording the crew's actions in her diary, reflecting on their progress (and, frequently, despair). Freycinet's autonomy during the timeframe of their wreck is most prominent in her interactions with the expedition's rescuers, American whalers aboard the *Mercury*. Her husband was unwell but strong enough to negotiate passage to a safe port for *L'Uranie*'s crew and salvaged materials. However, Freycinet was suspicious of the Americans' intentions and poor treatment of her husband in taking advantage of their desperate situation.[129] By April 1820, her husband was in continual pain, so Freycinet took on the responsibility of "providing food for the table".[130] She was a tough negotiator with her American counterparts, taking control of the situation, diplomatically, to ensure no further losses to her husband's purse or dignity: "I intend taking charge of distributing the food, for I do not want the four of us to contribute more than the six of them."[131] While she maintained diplomatic relations with the Americans, her diary reveals her frustrations and outrage at their occasional disrespect:

> here we are now in a miserable foreign vessel, in a room where we cannot both sit down without touching either the walls or the bed, eating indescribable food with strangers whom one has to be pleasant and whom I would often like to send packing, one because of his bad manners, another because of his pride, and still others because of their pretentiousness and silly self-centredness. To list all their foibles for you would be an endless task!... It is one of the greatest vexations of our passage that we have to be in the company of insignificant strangers, the majority of whom are ill-mannered, while the rest have such strange habits that they sometimes disgust me.[132]

Freycinet maintained diplomatic control of the "vexing" situation of dealing with the disrespectful price-gouging Americans, acting in place of her husband to negotiate the use of supplies on the rescue voyage. Still, her diary elicits her true feelings towards the situation—her actions here, as well as reflective practice, highlight the whole arc of her autonomous transformation since stowing away.

[128] Ibid., 125-31.

[129] Ibid., 136-42.

[130] Ibid., 149.

[131] Ibid.

[132] Ibid., 149,54.

Chapter Conclusions

This chapter appraises the written records of Rose de Freycinet, namely her diary written while aboard *L'Uranie* after she stowed away to join her husband on a three-year voyage around the world, and investigates her autonomous behaviour in travelling to Western Australia. For comparison and context, the experiences of Jeanne Baret and Marie-Louise Girardin, who similarly stowed away aboard French voyages of Enlightenment, are also discussed.

Freycinet's diary, written for her close friend, is a significant archive that demonstrates her autonomy through self-reflection and expressions of her actions while traversing the globe. As an educated and socially, and politically engaged young woman, she provides an insightful and informal perspective of the official voyage. Freycinet's presence was physically erased from formal reports and subsequent publications of the voyage, despite appearing in informal sketches made during the journey and successfully engaging in diplomatic exchanges while accompanying her husband. She expressed her autonomy in various situations, including fulfilling her role as a devoted wife who refused to be parted from her husband despite threats of being removed from the ship and facing genuine threats to her safety. Freycinet's decision to stow away was an autonomous one.

Within the pages of this diary of letters to her closest friend, Freycinet reflected on her thoughts, actions and experiences with *L'Uranie*'s expedition. Her reflection highlights her autonomy through this self-reflexive practice. It is also expressed in her choices to behave as a devoted wife and to move beyond typical gender roles as she became influenced by the extraordinary circumstances in which she found placed herself while exploring the world. Freycinet actively engaged with scientific studies and explorations, reflected on ethnographic and religious differences she experienced, and navigated varying social and diplomatic exchanges with aplomb. To seek adventure, participate in scientific and ethnographic studies, contribute to discoveries alongside expeditionary scientists, and engage in international diplomacy as both the commander's wife and the expedition's representative when duty called. Marnie Bassett concludes that "Rose de Freycinet never regretted her decision to share her husband's voyage", but it is clear that, by her own hand, she made an extraordinary voyage of her own.[133]

In my proposed exhibition, Freycinet will be framed using her autonomous voice through her writing and artefacts related to her experiences while onboard *L'Uranie*'s voyage. Objects which may be included in the exhibition include her diary, plus a portrait and artwork from artists attached to the expedition. Her narrative will be presented alongside Mary Ann Friend's to compare themes

[133] Bassett, *Realms and Islands: The World Voyage of Rose De Freycinet in the Corvette Uranie, 1817-1820*, 250.

within their writing. The audience will be invited to explore Freycinet's journey from her perspective to understand her experiences as an intelligent, humorous and autonomous nineteenth-century woman.

CHAPTER SIX
TRAVEL WRITERS

Mary Ann Friend's diary is an extraordinary artefact of early nineteenth-century travel writing, from a well-educated woman of relatively humble means whose strength of curiosity in the world around her spurred her writing. Friend's inclusion in the proposed museum exhibition provides a perspective from an English lady who, at once, abided by the socio-cultural rules of her time by being a doting wife but, in doing so, completed a journey around the world far beyond the expectations of her place in life. Friend's narrative is independent and self-reflective. Certainly, she was a woman of her time and reinforced gendered expectations of herself and others during her time aboard her captain husband's Royal Navy ship *Wanstead*. Still, she also possessed a keen intellect and empathetic interest in others, an investigative streak which she turned to science, art, ethnography and study of what it was to be human during a period of significant change across the British Empire.

Friend's diary was kept in her husband's family. His descendants provided a transcript to the State Library of Western Australia, but many thought that Friend's watercolours and charts were lost to history.[1] In October 2012, the diary became available through Christie's Auction House in London before the State Library of Western Australia purchased it, with assistance from the federal government.[2] The artefact required significant conservation work to repair the binding, covers and torn pages; similarly, the watercolours had suffered extensive damage, needing to be pieced together before the Library digitised the entire journal.[3]

Mary Ann Friend wrote her diary during her voyage aboard the *Wanstead*, captained by her husband, Lieutenant Matthew Curling Friend RN. She travelled across the world visiting colonial outposts of the British Empire from 1829 to 1831.[4] Friend's diary is an early example of travel writing stemming from scientific exploration and colonial expansion, which rose to popularity in England in

[1] Gare, "A Book of Empires: The Journal of Mary Ann Friend, 1829-31," 3.

[2] "Mary Ann Friend's Journal," State Library of Western Australia, https://slwa.wa.gov.au/SLWA-on-ABC-Radio/mary-ann-friends-journal.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Gare, "A Book of Empires: The Journal of Mary Ann Friend, 1829-31," 10.

Figure 22. Mary Ann Friend, "Mary Ann Friend's Journal of a Voyage to Hobart with Account of the Settlement on the Swan River, 1829-1831". State Library of Western Australia.

the Victorian era. Still, Friend did not seemingly intend to publish her diary as a travel narrative.[5] Indeed, her experiences would have amazed the comfortable women of her class back home in England, but she did not intend for them to read it. Friend addressed the work to her sister, Maria Cosgreaves, in open language, at times informal and even colloquial, and more revealing of true feeling than sanitised for public consumption or the eyes of officials who received formal reports from similar voyages made by imperial ships.[6] Friend focussed on recounting her journey, emphasising domestic life while also highlighting the civic life in British colonies worldwide. This reflection is inherently political and reveals much about Friend's values, cultural normalcy, and experiences of otherness on the frontiers of her colonised world. Friend expressed her autonomy in subtle ways, with self-expression and reflection evident in her selection of subjects that demonstrate her interests in science, art, ethnography, religion, and the colonisation processes she is experiencing and actively contributing to during her journey. In framing her narrative, she reinforced her nineteenth-century

[5] Ibid., 7.

[6] Friend, "Typescript of Mary Ann Friend's Journal of a Voyage to Hobart with Account of the Settlement on the Swan River, 1829-1831," 4.

Figure 23. Portrait of Mary Ann Friend, c. 1832. Watercolour on ivory, 11.5 x 9 cm. National Library of Australia.

gender expectations—particularly those of a captain's wife—though simultaneously, by virtue of her active participation in such a voyage, she is anathema to these expectations.

Friend was born in London in 1800.[7] That she was well educated is proven by her writing skills: her use of language, reference to poetry and contemporary literature, penmanship, drawings, and watercolours demonstrate a well-practised educated hand and eye. She referred to fellow travel writers, such as Maria Graham, presenting knowledge of her contemporaries and perhaps concerted

[7] Gare, "A Book of Empires: The Journal of Mary Ann Friend, 1829-31," 10.

research before her embarkation to prepare for the journey ahead.[8] Friend's husband further influenced her education. Shortly before embarking on the Wanstead, she married Matthew Curling Friend, a retired Royal Navy officer and a trained scientist.[9] Her intellectual relationship with her husband may explain Friend's interest and recording of science, ethnography and colonial politics. She recorded their expeditions together in her diary, providing comments on scientific studies conducted by her husband or specimens collected. She included charts of Swan River that were likely completed by Matthew Friend or those under this command aboard the *Wanstead*.[10] After returning to England in 1832, the Friends migrated to Launceston, Tasmania, where she died of apoplexy in nearby George Town, on 27 September 1838.[11]

The prescribed mission of the *Wanstead* was to deliver 66 migrants, along with general cargo, to the Swan River Colony, visiting Hobart (Hobarton) before returning home to England.[12] The migrants included some of the earliest genteel settlers in Swan River: the Wittenoom, Ellis, Walcott and Milligan families, whose names now pepper street names and towns in Western Australia.[13] Those in the steerage were the servant class whose work in the houses of the colonial gentility laid the foundation for the burgeoning settlement. The Captain's register of passengers identifies the core family groups on board, as all servants were indentured except for five listed as "free".[14] Servants frequently migrated as family units, with parents and children migrating to serve a single family, such as the Morley family who were destined for Lt Colonel Peter Lautour's settlement scheme near Bunbury and appeared in the Captain's List under his responsibility.[15] Interestingly, Captain Friend does not list his wife upon the passenger list—although others' wives appear listed, as in the case of Reverend Wittenoom and Dr Milligan, and Friend's own brother.[16] After delivering most passengers

[8] Friend, "Typescript of Mary Ann Friend's Journal of a Voyage to Hobart with Account of the Settlement on the Swan River, 1829-1831," 9, 99-100.

[9] "Mary Ann Friend's Journal".

[10] Friend, "Mary Ann Friend's Journal of a Voyage to Hobart with Account of the Settlement on the Swan River, 1829-1831; "Typescript of Mary Ann Friend's Journal of a Voyage to Hobart with Account of the Settlement on the Swan River, 1829-1831," 2, 15-22, 46, 115; Gare, "A Book of Empires: The Journal of Mary Ann Friend, 1829-31," 12.

[11] "Family Notices," *The Cornwall Chronicle*, 29 September 1838; "To the Editor," *The Cornwall Chronicle*, 13 October 1838.

[12] Gare, "A Book of Empires: The Journal of Mary Ann Friend, 1829-31," 10; "Harbour Master Shipping Report, Wanstead," ed. Colonial Secretary's Office (State Records Office of Western Australia: Acc. 36, vol. 4, 1829).

[13] Note: Milligan is misspelt as "Millegan" in the Harbour Master's Passenger List. "Harbour Master Passenger List, Wanstead," ed. Colonial Secretary's Office (State Records Office of Western Australia: Acc. 36, vol. 4, 1829).

[14] "Captain's List, Wanstead," ed. Colonial Secretary's Office (State Records Office of Western Australia: Acc. 36, vol. 6, 1829).

[15] Ibid.; Alexandra Hasluck, *Thomas Peel of Swan River* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1965), 112, 218.

[16] "Captain's List, Wanstead."

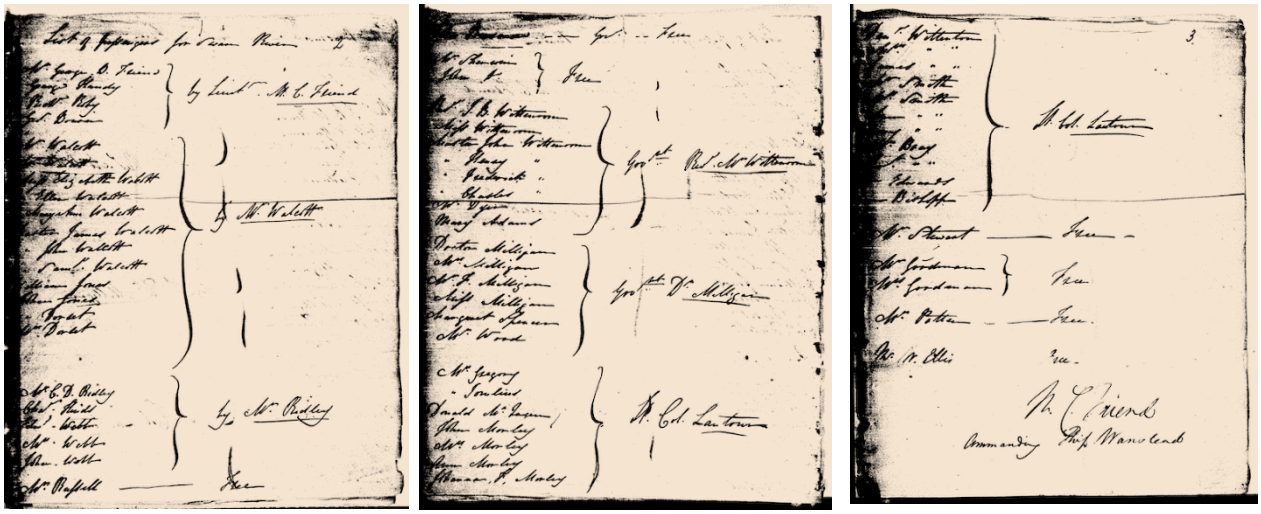

Figure 24. M.C. Friend, "Captain's List, Wanstead," 1830. State Records Office Western Australia.

to Fremantle, some continued to Hobart, Tasmania. There, Friend wrote that her husband heard from several ships that "freights were up in India", making him "determined" to go there.[17] This determination extended their journey by several months, taking them through the South Pacific to ports in southeast Asia before traversing the Indian Ocean once again to reach British outposts in India.

Friend's role onboard the *Wanstead*

Friend's role onboard the *Wanstead* was firmly that of the captain's wife. She provided comfort and companionship to him, care and protection for unaccompanied young women on board the ship, and all the onshore duties expected of a captain's wife, such as attending events and performing diplomatic duties. Friend deferred to her husband in defining her actions and life on board the ship, although she did not always rely on him to determine her opinions of this life. At Swan River, she wrote that a young woman requested to join her care for the return voyage to England. Friend objected to the application for reasons that were not elaborated in her journal but noted that she "was overpersuaded by Matthew", and so the young woman travelled with them—under Friend's care and guidance—for the remainder of the long journey home.[18] She carried the duty of care of being the captain's wife as an extension of her own family. At Car Nicobar in mid-October 1830, she wrote that her nephew Charles Friend was severely ill with hepatitis "and gave us great uneasiness, for

[17] Friend, "Typescript of Mary Ann Friend's Journal of a Voyage to Hobart with Account of the Settlement on the Swan River, 1829-1831," 34.

[18] Ibid., 27.

several days we despaired of him".[19] With no doctor on board the ship, his uncle, the captain, provided medical attention, which seemed to worry Friend.[20] The loss of her husband during the voyage would have been disastrous. As a widow, she would have limited protection and means to continue a voyage home to England. Other such women surrounded Friend: Jane Roberts (1792-1871), who was in her care after losing her brother to brain fever at Cape Town, and Jane Daly, whose surgeon husband drowned at the Cape on their way to the settlement at Swan River, and whom Friend encountered at Swan River.[21] While her husband's status defined Friend onboard the *Wanstead* and, indeed, her behaviour aligns with this identity and fulfilment of nineteenth-century gender expectations, her diary expresses her strong sense of self within these circumstances. She characterised their relationship as one of equity and mutual respect and described her independence and relative freedom from the constraints of society at home.

Friend's reliance on her husband has a softer, less domineering interpretation as well; that they were sharing this adventure as a team, phrased as collective language by Friend in her journal. Considering these journal entries were usually not rushed but rather a contemplative practice to fill the seemingly endless hours on board, it can be assumed that choices in language were well-considered. Friend phrased some experiences, particularly earlier in the voyage, in collective pronouns to reflect the shared nature of these reflections as she and her husband embarked on this adventure together. Arriving in Madeira on 1 September 1829, Friend wrote that "the appearance of the Island of Madeira is truly beautiful, and *we* were all anxiety to land the moment *we* beheld it; some delay, however, occurred in consequence of *our* not having a Bill of Health".[22] These shared experiences are contrasted with parts of her diary that are clearly Friend's reflections, as she experiences them without her husband's attendance or guidance. In Bahia, written on 25 October 1829, Friend noted that she very much enjoyed dining with a fellow English lady and that this was the only time her husband accompanied her out while in Bahia.[23] Her other recollections of Bahia bear no mention of her husband's presence while touring the area, so her reflections of this time were wholly her own experiences and opinions.

[19] Ibid., 58.

[20] Ibid.

[21] Ibid., 12-15.

[22] Ibid., 1. Emphasis added.

[23] Ibid., 8.

Adventure

While her independence was tolerated (perhaps even encouraged) during the voyage, there were some circumstances when Friend's unchaperoned adventures appeared to terrify her husband. At Swan River, writing on 21 February 1830, she reflected on an evening picnic adventure taken with Jane Roberts:

> Went on the water to Preston Point, beautiful weather. Dined on the grass; after dinner took a walk with Miss Roberts in the wood; we much frightened my good husband who thought the Natives had carried us off; he came after us in full pursuit, occasionally firing his gun, never saw him so agitated. He appears to have such a horror of the Natives.[24]

His "horror" at the prospect she may have been attacked by "Natives" reflects a continuing theme in Friend's journal: that, for her protection, her adventures were sometimes curtailed in places that were deemed to be savage and uncivilised. Friend frequently referred to her experiences of otherness, being the focus of heightened (trending to unwanted) attention while visiting places in which she was foreign.[25] The perceived danger of this attention in areas that lacked established settlements meant that Friend was often kept on board the *Wanstead*, relying on her husband's reports to filter the experience of new places. At Car Nicobar, Friend wrote on 22 October 1830, "I quite regret I have not been on shore having had such interesting accounts of the Natives from my husband".[26] Her curiosity of these new places, beyond the expected civilised domestic realm she inhabited, appears to have frustrated Friend.

Further into the voyage, she acted more stridently on her want for adventure, convincing her husband to consent to her leaving the ship to explore. While at Ascension Island in June 1831, Friend wrote, "I was very anxious to go on shore and after some solicitation my husband consented to take me".[27] Although she refers to her husband with great affection and respect, this is proof that she is toeing the line of his expectations of her. While her husband's constraints on her movements are understood as his protection, Friend herself appeared eager to explore and resistant to having her autonomy curtailed in certain situations. The balance Friend struck between being a dutiful wife and an intrepid, curious adventurer in her own right is a difficult one. The experience of being a captain's wife on board his ship was rare, with Friend and Rose de Freycinet being some of only a very few examples in this time. It was more common for women to be barred from expeditions, as evidenced

[24] Ibid., 24.

[25] Ibid., 5, 49, 64.

[26] Ibid., 58.

[27] Ibid., 111.

by the French stowaways discussed elsewhere in this thesis and through the experience of Ann Flinders, who expected to accompany her husband to Australia just a few years before Friend's journey.

Ann Flinders

Annette 'Ann' Flinders, wife of the English naval captain Matthew Flinders, was barred as a woman from joining her husband's 1801 expedition to Australia. The daughter of a sailor, she married Flinders shortly after he had been promoted to captain of the *Investigator*,[28] the role for which he is most well-known while charting large tracts of the coastline of Australia, furthering British imperial and trade interests, and gathering scientific data.[29] The *Investigator* was bound for Port Jackson (modern-day Sydney), where Matthew Flinders had planned that Ann would accompany him.[30] He wrote to her from the North Sea in April 1801, shortly before they were married:

> Thou hast asked me if there is a POSSIBILITY of our living together. I think I see a PROBABILITY of living with a moderate share of comfort. Till now I was not certain of being able to fit myself out clear of the world. I have now done it, and have accommodation on board the Investigator, in which as my wife a woman may, with love to assist her, make herself happy… If thou hast sufficient love and courage, say to Mr. and Mrs. Tyler that I require nothing more with thee than a sufficient stock of clothes and a small sum to answer the increased expenses that will necessarily and immediately come upon me; as well for living on board as providing for it at Port Jackson; for whilst I am employed in the most dangerous part of my duty, thou shalt be placed under some friendly roof there.[31]

So it appears that Ann Flinders was to accompany her husband on board the *Investigator* during the voyage to Port Jackson, where would then be housed while he further explored the Australian coastline. Flinders wrote of her excitement and trepidation of the journey ahead, all the while reinforcing her position as a devoted wife, who did not wish to stray from her husband's plan for them both.[32]

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[28] Ernest Scott, *The Life of Captain Matthew Flinders R.N.*, (Sydney: Angus & Robertson LTD, 1914), https://www.gutenberg.org/files/7304/7304-h/7304-h.htm.

[29] Ibid.

[30] Kenneth Morgan, "Sir Joseph Banks as Patron of the Investigator Expedition: Natural History, Geographical Knowledge and Australian Exploration," *The International Journal of Maritime History* 26, no. 2 (2014): 246.

[31] Scott, *The Life of Captain Matthew Flinders R.N*.

[32] Ibid.; Miriam Estensen, "Matthew Flinders: The Man and His Life," in *Matthew Flinders and His Scientific Gentleman: The Expedition of Hms Investigator to Australia*, 1801-05, ed. Juliet Wege, et al. (Welshpool, WA: Western Australian Museum, 2005), 1-6.

Figure 25. "Matthew Flinders", watercolour on ivory, with lock of hair, ca. 1800. State Library of New South Wales.

Flinders' plan to join her husband was curtailed, however. As the voyage of the *Investigator* was likely to take several years, Captain Flinders assumed that his wife would accompany him—as had been the case for other Commander's wives in similar voyages undertaken by the British navy.[33] However, when Commissioners for the Admiralty made their final inspection of the ship in May 1801, they were appalled to find Ann Flinders in the Captain's cabin "without her bonnet". In later correspondence, Joseph Banks clarified that this display of comfort in her surroundings seemed, to the Admiralty, "too open a declaration of that being her home". They barred her from joining her husband on board the *Investigator*. Captain Flinders clarified his intention for Ann to accompany him *only* to Sydney in a letter responding to Banks in May 1801. His letter finished with an expression of disappointment should the Admiralty maintain their ban, but that he "shall give up the wife for the voyage of discovery".[34] In a later letter to Banks in June 1801, Flinders reinforced his commitment to the expedition and confirmed that Ann was to stay behind in England:

> although I should in the case of Mrs Flinders going to Port Jackson have been more particularly cautious of my stay there, yet their Lordships will conclude naturally enough that her presence would tend to increase the number of and to

[33] Scott, *The Life of Captain Matthew Flinders R.N.*

[34] Ibid.; Morgan, "Sir Joseph Banks as Patron of the Investigator Expedition: Natural History, Geographical Knowledge and Australian Exploration," 247.

> lengthen my visits. I am therefore afraid to risk their Lordships' ill opinion, and Mrs Flinders will return to her friends immediately that our sailing orders arrive.[35]

Ann Flinders was left behind in England once her husband sailed to Australia in July 1801 and was not reunited with him until his return until 1810. His time away included six years as a French prisoner in Mauritius.[36]

Mary Ann Parker

Mary Ann Parker successfully joined her husband, Captain John Parker, aboard the *Gorgon,* which he commanded to the colony of Port Jackson in 1791.[37] Leaving two young children in England with her mother for over a year, Parker travelled to Teneriffe, Cape of Good Hope and Port Jackson before returning to England via the Society Islands, New Zealand, Cape Horn, the Falkland Islands and Cape Town. [38] Parker appears to have kept a diary of her travels but also included details from her husband's logs, letters, official reports and the shared perspectives of her fellow travellers to produce a travel book written for subscribers in 1795 titled *A Voyage Round the World, in the Gorgon Man of War: Captain John Parker*. *Performed and Written by His Widow; for the Advantage of a Numerous Family*.[39] The manner of her publication's compilation is significant for several reasons. First, travel narratives, including accounts of Botany Bay, generated a lot of interest at the time, but Parker's was the first account of Port Jackson written by a woman and a private individual. Secondly, Parker's independent voice is diluted through the adoption and inclusion of so many other voices and opinions, including those of her then-deceased husband (who died suddenly of yellow fever in August 1794), and for whom she still mourned. Thirdly, despite this dilution, Parker reveals much about her personal

[35] Scott, *The Life of Captain Matthew Flinders R.N.*

[36] Morgan, "Sir Joseph Banks as Patron of the Investigator Expedition: Natural History, Geographical Knowledge and Australian Exploration," 251.

[37] Anna Maria Falconbridge and Mary Ann Parker, *Maiden Voyages and Infant Colonies: Two Women's Travel Narratives of the 1790s* (London: Leicester University Press, 1999), 2; Mary Ann Parker, *A Voyage Round the World, in the Gorgon Man of War: Captain John Parker. Performed and Written by His Widow; for the Advantage of a Numerous Family.*, (London: John Nichols, Red-Lion-Passage, Fleet-Street, 1795), https://books.google.ca/books?id=qBPsutBBhMUC, 147-48.

[38] Katrina O'Loughlin, "'My Own Slender Remarks': Global Networks of Slavery and Sociability in Mary Ann Parker's Voyage to New South Wales (1795)," ed. Alfred Hiatt, Christopher Wortham, and Anne M. Scott, *European Perceptions of Terra Australis* (London: Routledge, 2011), 213.

[39] Ibid.; Parker, *A Voyage Round the World, in the Gorgon Man of War: Captain John Parker. Performed and Written by His Widow; for the Advantage of a Numerous Family.*

experiences of being a naval wife at sea, on route to Australia, echoing the sentiments of later travelling women in similar positions, such as Mary Ann Friend.[40]

Parker published her travel narrative as both a means to honour her husband's work, drawing public recognition to his command of the *Gorgon*'s mission, and to support her family. [41] This support came from the book's subscribers, including Sir Joseph Banks and naval and colonial connections forged by her husband on the voyage. Parker explicitly stated in her preface that she wrote her publication to benefit her children now that she was widowed: "nothing but the greatest distress could ever have induced her to solicit beneficence in the manner she has done, for the advantage of her family".[42] By then, Parker was supporting at least three children. Upon returning home from their voyage in 1792, they received the devastating news that their son had died, and within weeks Parker had given birth to another child. In writing her travel narrative 15 months before publication in 1795, Parker referred to having an infant aged seven months that she juggled with her writing commitments. [43] Despite the light conversational tone of her writing, Parker's responsibilities to her family, while herself being in a vulnerable financial and emotional state, clearly weighed on her mind. She concluded her publication with a foreboding sentence, alluding to the uncertainty of her future now that she was widowed: "a retrospect of the past tends only to augment my present calamities; whilst the future presents nothing to my view but the gloomy prospect of additional misfortunes and additional sorrows".[44]

While Parker's travel narrative conformed to the gendered expectations of her society, being conventionally apologetic and seemingly reluctant to share her opinions so publicly, a closer reading of her account illustrates a well-educated and well-travelled woman who "did not therefore

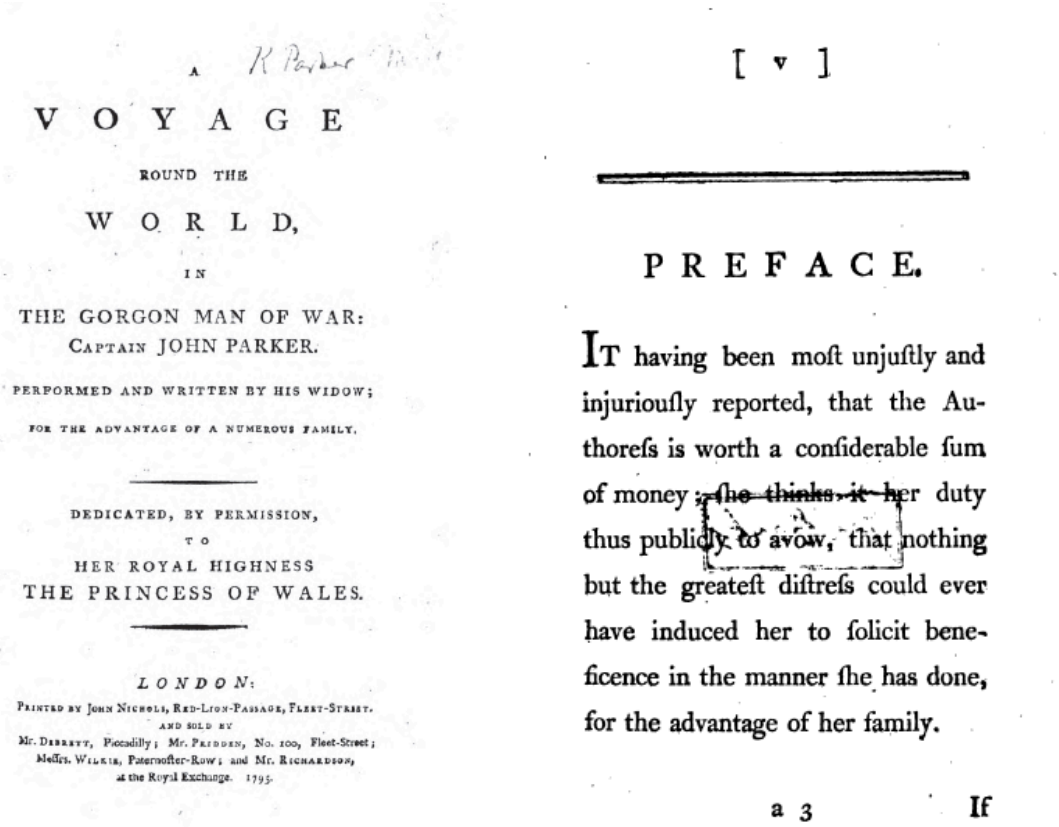
[40] O'Loughlin, "'My Own Slender Remarks': Global Networks of Slavery and Sociability in Mary Ann Parker's Voyage to New South Wales (1795)," 213; Carolyn A Barros and Johanna M Smith, *Life-Writings by British Women, 1660-1815: An Anthology*, (Boston: Northeastern University, 2000); Parker, *A Voyage Round the World, in the Gorgon Man of War: Captain John Parker. Performed and Written by His Widow; for the Advantage of a Numerous Family.*, 147-48.

[41] O'Loughlin, "'My Own Slender Remarks': Global Networks of Slavery and Sociability in Mary Ann Parker's Voyage to New South Wales (1795)," 229.

[42] Parker, *A Voyage Round the World, in the Gorgon Man of War: Captain John Parker. Performed and Written by His Widow; for the Advantage of a Numerous Family.*, v.

[43] Barros and Smith, *Life-Writings by British Women, 1660-1815: An Anthology*, 335; Parker, *A Voyage Round the World, in the Gorgon Man of War: Captain John Parker. Performed and Written by His Widow; for the Advantage of a Numerous Family.*, 147-48.

[44] Parker, *A Voyage Round the World, in the Gorgon Man of War: Captain John Parker. Performed and Written by His Widow; for the Advantage of a Numerous Family*., 149.



A

VOYAGE

ROUND THE

WORLD,

IN

THE GORGON MAN OF WAR:
CAPTAIN JOHN PARKER.

PERFORMED AND WRITTEN BY HIS WIDOW;

FOR THE ADVANTAGE OF A NUMEROUS FAMILY.

DEDICATED, BY PERMISSION,

TO

HER ROYAL HIGHNESS
THE PRINCESS OF WALES.

LONDON:

PRINTED BY JOHN NICHOLS, RED-LION-PASSAGE, FLEET-STREET.
AND SOLD BY
Mr. DEBRETT, Piccadilly; Mr. FREDDEN, No. 100, Fleet-Street;
Messrs. WILKIE, Paternoster-Row; and Mr. RICHARDSON,
at the Royal Exchange. 1795.

[v]

PREFACE.

IT having been moſt unjuſtly and injurioufly reported, that the Authoreſs is worth a conſiderable ſum of money; ſhe thinks it her duty thus publicly to avow, that nothing but the greateſt diſtreſs could ever have induced her to ſolicit beneficence in the manner ſhe has done, for the advantage of her family.

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Figure 26. Mary Ann Parker, *A Voyage Round the World, in the Gorgon Man of War: Captain John Parker. Performed and Written by His Widow; for the Advantage of a Numerous Family.*, John Nichols, Red-Lion Passage, London, 1795.

take a minute's consideration" in joining her husband to "the remotest parts of the globe".[45] Parker was well travelled, having lived and travelled in France, Spain and Italy, and spoke fluent Spanish, which she used to her advantage when she travelled through Spanish-speaking ports such as Teneriffe.[46] While she is well educated and worldly for a woman of her time, some historians have dismissively characterised Parker's account as too light. They have argued that she skimmed over the difficulties of such a journey to produce "almost a lark" of a "strangely sociable" narrative.[47] Granted, Parker's writing has a conversational tone but is more polished than a collection of raw diary entries. Given the date of her publication, it seems more likely that—either through self-censorship or the pen of an editor—Parker's struggles throughout the voyage were downplayed or sanitised of more feminine

[45] Falconbridge and Parker, *Maiden Voyages and Infant Colonies: Two Women's Travel Narratives of the 1790s*, 4; Parker, *A Voyage Round the World, in the Gorgon Man of War: Captain John Parker. Performed and Written by His Widow; for the Advantage of a Numerous Family.*, 3.

[46] O'Loughlin, "'My Own Slender Remarks': Global Networks of Slavery and Sociability in Mary Ann Parker's Voyage to New South Wales (1795)," 213; Parker, *A Voyage Round the World, in the Gorgon Man of War: Captain John Parker. Performed and Written by His Widow; for the Advantage of a Numerous Family.*, 19-20.

[47] Barros and Smith, *Life-Writings by British Women, 1660-1815: An Anthology*, 334; O'Loughlin, "'My Own Slender Remarks': Global Networks of Slavery and Sociability in Mary Ann Parker's Voyage to New South Wales (1795)," 213.

expression or complaint.[48] Her choice of narrative subjects mirrors those of similar expeditions such as Friend and de Freycinet; focussed on hospitality, food, picturesque landscapes, various excursions with fellow upper-class women on board the Gorgon, cultural differences and ethnography, flora and fauna, fashion, and time spent with colonial dignitaries in ports such as Teneriffe and Cape Town.[49] Towards the end of her narrative, Parker does appear to have drawn more from her husband's records: directly quoting from minutes of meetings he held at Port Jackson, moving onto short and sharp paragraphs citing weather conditions, distances and directions travelled on their return voyage in lieu of her discursive reflections.[50] Despite diluting her autonomous account with the direct voices and influence of other documents, Parker demonstrated her sharp intelligence and cultural understandings through the publication of her travel narrative: she intersperses stories of shipboard life with entertaining colonial tableaus and topics of interest to her audience; she recognised the potential financial gain from popular sales of an account of Port Jackson at a time when she had to be inventive to support her children; Parker also made this narrative culturally palatable by playing to the gender conventions of her society, through her use of deferential language and conversational tone to appease both patriarchal influences and appeal to a female audience to whom travel narratives were most popular.

Art and Literature

Although not a published travel writer, Mary Ann Friend well-read, educated and a gentlewoman. Befitting her status and education, she participated in activities common to other gentlewomen at sea, such as music, reading, church services, and writing.[51] She demonstrated her linguistic prowess in her adoption of poetic, florid language and a broad vocabulary when describing particularly romantic scenes onboard the *Wanstead*. While in Kupang, Timor, from 4 August 1830, she wrote, "Nothing can be more beautiful than the passage through these Islands at this season of the year. The Sky is serene, the water smooth and the verdure of the brightest hue".[52] Perhaps taking poetic inspiration from the literature she once studied, Friend indulged another lyrical passage in her journal from Torres Strait, 22 July 1830: "The first sight of land was enchanting; the bright green of the trees,

[48] Parker, *A Voyage Round the World, in the Gorgon Man of War: Captain John Parker. Performed and Written by His Widow; for the Advantage of a Numerous Family*., 5-6, 29.

[49] Ibid., 8-23, 36-59, 127-43.

[50] Ibid., 73-84, 108-23.

[51] Emma Curtin, "Gentility Afloat: Gentlewoman's Diaries and the Voyage to Australia, 1830-80," *Australian Historical Studies* 26, no. 105 (1995): 642-43.

[52] Friend, "Typescript of Mary Ann Friend's Journal of a Voyage to Hobart with Account of the Settlement on the Swan River, 1829-1831," 41.

Figure 28. Mary Ann Friend, "Fremantle, South Bay", watercolour on paper, 1830. State Library of Western Australia.

the vivid yellow of the Sand and the lovely blue of the sea formed one of the sweetest scenes I ever beheld. I could fancy all that Poets have sung of enchanted Islands, etc. etc."[53] Heavily influenced by her education in the writing of her travel narrative, Friend also acknowledged the value of such an education compared to the cultures she visits. While staying at Prince of Wales Island (or Pulo Penang) in early September 1830, Friend wrote that "the Chinese in the first place estimating women on so low a scale as not to think it worth while [sic] educating them at all, and so idle that no inducement would make them send them".[54] This value judgment from Friend about the restrictions placed on women's education by the Chinese advocates for education, such as the kind she received and quite a modern pronouncement of feminism and equality of the sexes.

As a gentlewoman, Friend spent much of her time making artistic studies, sketching and experimenting with watercolours during her travels. She included some of these pieces in her journal, either as part of the pages of her diary, inserted on mounted card or taped into place towards the end of the book.[55] She also included two charts, early in her journal, depicting rivers in and around the

[53] Ibid., 37.

[54] Ibid., 45.

[55] Friend, "Mary Ann Friend's Journal of a Voyage to Hobart with Account of the Settlement on the Swan River, 1829-1831," 30-323.

Figure 29. Mary Ann Friend, "Butterfly caught at Rangoon", watercolour on paper, 1830. State Library of Western Australia.

Swan River Colony.[56] Swan River is where Friend began to capture her experiences of the voyage in watercolours, focussing on the landscape and foreign terrain of the settlement more so than the people she encountered there.[57] This landscape focus is probably connected to her gentlewoman's education in the picturesque style of drawing popular in Georgian England.[58]

Similarly, Parker adopted picturesque imagery—though she did not include sketches or paintings—to describe the landscape in New South Wales. Parker and Friend's use of terminology and artistic styles more readily applied to an English rural aesthetic than to the Australian landscape "emphasises both the alien nature of Terra Australis and the overpowering conventions of a European aesthetic".[59] It also signals the similarity in education that both these English gentlewomen received. Friend's focus on capturing the picturesque landscape at Swan River lies in contrast with her later and

[56] Ibid., 30, 49.

[57] Ibid., 33, 37, 41.

[58] David S. Miall, "Representing the Picturesque: William Gilpin and the Laws of Nature," *ISLE: Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment* 12, no. 2 (2005), 75; Zoë Kinsley, "Dorothy Richardson's Manuscript Travel Journals (1761-1801) and the Possibilities of Picturesque Aesthetics," *The Review of English Studies* 56, no. 226 (2005), 614-618; Stephen Bending, "Vile Things: William Gilpin and the Properties of the Picturesque," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 80, no.4 (2017), 594.

[59] O'Loughlin, "'My Own Slender Remarks': Global Networks of Slavery and Sociability in Mary Ann Parker's Voyage to New South Wales (1795)," 221.

more numerous sketches of more foreign cultures she experiences in the Pacific and Indian Ocean regions. In places such as Rangoon, she appears to have been much more focussed on people, their religious deities and traditions, and traditional architecture that was so foreign to the English.

Friend's enthusiasm for sketching and painting her surroundings heightened once she reached islands in the Torres Straits. Leaving the relative sameness and cultural normalcy of British settlements in Swan River and Port Jackson behind, Friend appears to have embraced the otherness of her surroundings. At first, she drew islands and watercraft from onboard the *Wanstead*—at a distance but became intrigued by the differences she noticed in the landscape and behaviour of local populations.[60] At Rangoon in Burma (Yangon, in modern-day Myanmar), Friend made numerous sketches and watercolours in the pages of her diary of temples, religious deities called Gaudmas, Pagodas and their fittings, as well as local houses and a soldier.[61] Alongside her sketches, Friend comments on the attention she garnered from locals while drawing, as well as the gendered nature of her artistic work as her husband never sketched or painted. Writing in Rangoon from 14 November 1830:

> Every time I go on shore to sketch, numbers of persons follow us. They crowd round me so much, I can scarcely draw. I observe the persons are chiefly priests, they appear quite astonished at what I am doing, and I find myself occasionally obliged to show them what progress I have made. They always point to the Pagoda and want me to sketch it and sometimes they ask why Capt. Friend does not draw.[62]

And then, on 22 November, she wrote:

> Went on shore this evening to sketch. The instant I appeared at the Pagoda, the priests came flocking about me and wanted to see my drawings. I shewed [sic] them a Butterfly I happened to have with me, when they really uttered screams of delight. [63]

Whether Friend was appeasing the priests she described or had a genuine fascination with Burmese traditional and religious architecture is unknown. Still, her journal contains numerous watercolours and a single unfinished sketch of the Pagoda. Friend's preoccupation with the traditional architecture

[60] Friend, "Mary Ann Friend's Journal of a Voyage to Hobart with Account of the Settlement on the Swan River, 1829-1831," 81-89, 101-117.

[61] Ibid., 143-75, 227.

[62] Friend, "Typescript of Mary Ann Friend's Journal of a Voyage to Hobart with Account of the Settlement on the Swan River, 1829-1831," 69.

[63] Ibid., 70.

that seemed so "other" to her experiences in England or English settlements is indicative of a broader theme in her diary in which she acts as an amateur ethnographer.

Ethnography

Mary Ann Friend's descriptions of Indigenous and settler communities in the ports visited during the *Wanstead's* voyage reveal an amateur fascination with ethnography and racial differences heavily influenced by her cultural assumptions as a more civilised British gentlewoman. Her reflections frequently characterise Indigenous populations as more savage than herself, using comparative language to demonise or portray her genuine fears and sense of being threatened. At Swan River in January and February 1830, Friend commented on the Nyoongar population numerous times. Each passage is laced with fearful language and describe instances of her husband acting to protect her and other women and children under his care from interacting closely with Aboriginal groups:

> Were terribly frightened this morning: a party of Natives, 7 in number, came down to our tents. Fortunately Matthew was at home. He shut all the females and children up in my Horse House. I understand the Natives are quite naked with straight hair; they are black—but paint their bodies red. They pulled our breakfast about, tasted everything but particularly liked the sugar. Afterwards, Webb, one of Mr. Ridley's men, asked them to come to his tent, when there he would not let them come in. They endeavoured to force an entrance. Matthew caught up his gun and ran across, seized the violent by the throat, who drew a kind of knife and attempted to strike him. The other savages levelled their Spears and I thought all was over with my dear husband. I was paralysed with fear. Fortunately at this moment other Gentlemen came up, armed, and no mischief ensued.[64]

It seems that Friend did not personally interact with Aboriginal people at Fremantle at all, instead relying on the testimony of others in her group or her husband's retelling of often violent interactions with groups. Reflecting upon her time at Swan River, while on route to Hobart in early March 1830, Friend told a story passed on to her by a family living at Preston Point near Fremantle. She wrote that they "used occasionally to see the Natives on the opposite side of the water; they used at night to kindle huge fires and dance round it in the most fantastic manner, more like Demons than anything else".[65] Despite having no personal interactions with Noongyar groups at Swan River, Friend perpetuates their savage, demonic and violent stereotype in her diary. This cultural aversion appears

[64] Ibid., 23.

[65] Ibid., 29.

to be well entrenched in Friend's way of thinking and that of her husband, who takes evasive action to protect Friend from interacting with Indigenous populations while in Australia.

Friend's ethnographic curiosity continued as a central theme of her writing throughout her travels despite her clear and ever-present fear of Indigenous populations in the ports she visits. At Timor, Friend wrote of her fear and trepidation encountering the local people in an entry dated 5 August 1830:

> Went on shore…was rather nervous at first, the Natives, wild looking Malays, followed us in crowds that were nearly naked, and extremely dirty, they were all much frightened at the appearance of a large Newfoundland dog we had with us.[66]

As the *Wanstead's* voyage continued, Friend's further exposure to Indigenous populations helped ease her fears more towards genuine curiosity. She expressed an interest in their cultural differences during interactions when accompanied by an interpreter, such as at Chowra Nicobar Island, on 5 October 1830:

> I was much vexed we could obtain but little insight into their manners and customs—not speaking their language, and the Interpreter we had, alas, had no soul beyond Cocoa Nuts; it was quite in vain we asked him to put questions to them.[67]

Similarly, Friend is more at ease when a foreign culture mirrored British social conventions, such as hierarchy. While visiting the chief's wife in Rangoon, Friend recounted a moment of kinship between the two women. Despite their cultural and language differences, they shared a humorous exchange: "The Chief's Wife gave me a Mat to sit upon, which I made signs was not my fashion of sitting; upon which a small box was brought me as a seat. We then sat and looked at each other and laughed".[68] As Friend became more experienced and worldly in her interactions with various cultures during her voyage, her perceptions of Indigenous populations and cultural assumptions of these people changed. Despite not having personal interactions with Aboriginal Australians, her characterisation of them as demonic savages continued as cautious wariness at Torres Strait before being transformed to a more informed and wary curiosity upon returning to England through islands in the Pacific.

The more perplexing social interactions Friend seems to have encountered while immersed in different cultures was the phenomena of finding herself as the curiosity, being perceived by locals

[66] Ibid., 40.

[67] Ibid., 53.

[68] Ibid., 71.

Figure 30. Mary Ann Friend, “Chowra Islands of Nicobar”, “Untitled depiction of three Indigenous people in native dress, between passages about St Helens and Ascension”; and “Burmese soldier drawn from a sketch by an English Officer”, watercolour on paper, 1830-31. State Library of Western Australia.

as unusual and receiving heightened attention for being 'other'. Early in her travels, while staying at Bahia between 15 and 17 October 1829, Friend wrote that her group found themselves surrounded by locals "cheering and apparently admiring us" while shopping at *L'Angleterre*:

> Even at the Hotel at which we were staying we used to be much annoyed by the numbers of strangers constantly coming in to look at us. We were quite subjects of curiosity, so many English ladies having never been seen in Bahia before.[69]

Although more constrained in his reaction, even the Rajah of Pedir could not contain his curiosity towards Friend during their meeting on the coast of Sumatra on 28 September 1830. Friend described the Rajah as being

> pleasing in his face and manners, had an enormous dignity about him and the air of a man evidently born to command…[although, despite this dignity] he appeared quite astonished and could not keep his eyes off Miss R. and myself, I suppose being the first English ladies he had seen.[70]

Friend's demonstrated understanding towards Indigenous populations seems to grow as she recognised that her experiences of their cultural oddities were being reflected back to her in their astonishment at her presence on board the *Wanstead*. As her cultural experiences grew, so too did her empathetic understandings of other people and the places they inhabited that were so foreign to her own homeland.

Amateur ethnographic reflections were commonplace in the travel writing of nineteenth-century British women, characterised by a similar lack of worldliness and cultural assumptions carried by Friend. Writing in 1794, Mary Ann Parker reflected on her "personal revulsion" at the local Aboriginal population.[71] Still, she emphasised their gentleness despite their confronting physicality, perpetuating and reinforcing ideas of the 'noble savage' that dominated popular understandings of Indigenous Australia at the time.[72] It wasn't only the Indigenous populations studied by travelling women writing as ethnographers, but the settler communities as well. Friend herself included judgemental commentary about the perceived laziness of settlers at Swan River, whose lack of industriousness could be equally to blame for dwindling food supplies as the harsh environment in which they had settled:

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[69] Ibid., 5.

[70] Ibid., 49.

[71] O'Loughlin, "'My Own Slender Remarks': Global Networks of Slavery and Sociability in Mary Ann Parker's Voyage to New South Wales (1795)," 223.

[72] Ibid.

> "I must say there appears a great want of energy on the part of the settlers; it is true they are waiting for the season to sow their seeds, but I do not see why the intermediate time should be spent in doing nothing, which is the case with many—they might at all events be erecting their houses and preparing for the winter."[73]

Word of Friend's criticisms do not seem to have filtered through to the locals she encountered, but those of her fellow—published—travel writer, Maria Graham, whom Friend refers to in her work, were not so fortunate. According to Mary Ann Friend, Graham, a prolific travel writer who published six volumes recounting her travels from Brazil and Chile to India, Rome and the Sandwich Islands, caught the ire of locals featured in her publications.[74] In both Bahia in October 1829 and Calcutta in January 1831, Friend wrote of Graham's work being canvassed by the upper echelons of colonial societies there, having "strongly excited the ire of the good folks" due to Graham's offensive description of their manners and customs.[75]

Maria Graham

Maria Graham was well-educated and well-travelled, raised as a gentlewoman from a Naval family before marrying a captain of the Royal Navy.[76] While accompanying her husband aboard HMS *Doris* to protect English merchants in South America in 1822, she became widowed after her husband died on board near Cape Horn.[77] Graham should have returned to England as soon as possible without her husband's protection and financial support, but strived for independence and chose instead to live in Chile. She documented her experiences there in a published travelogue titled *A Journal of a Residence in Chile* (1824) and, later, *A Journal of a Voyage to Brazil* (1825).[78] To produce her travel books, Graham displayed talent as an amateur ethnographer. She made a concerted effort to learn the language of

[73] Friend, "Typescript of Mary Ann Friend's Journal of a Voyage to Hobart with Account of the Settlement on the Swan River, 1829-1831," 16.

[74] Colbert, "British Women's Travel Writing, 1780-1840: Bibliographical Reflections," 160.

[75] Friend, "Typescript of Mary Ann Friend's Journal of a Voyage to Hobart with Account of the Settlement on the Swan River, 1829-1831," 9, 99-100.

[76] Carl Thompson, "Earthquakes and Petticoats: Maria Graham, Geology, and Early Nineteenth-Century 'Polite' Science," *Journal of Victorian Culture* 17, no. 3 (2012): 339-40; Anyda Marchant, "The Captain's Widow: Maria Graham and the Independence of South America," *The Americas* 20, no. 2 (1963): 127.

[77] Thompson, "The Captain's Widow: Maria Graham and the Independence of South America," 129.

[78] Jennifer Hayward, ""The Uncertainty of the End Keeps up the Interest": Maria Graham's Journal of a Residence in Chile as Life Writing," *Auto/Biography Studies* 17, no. 1 (2001): 43; Thompson, "Earthquakes and Petticoats: Maria Graham, Geology, and Early Nineteenth-Century 'Polite' Science," 332; Maria Graham, *Journal of a Voyage to Brazil, and Residence There, During Part of the Years 1821, 1822, 1823* (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, Brown, and Green, 1824); *Journal of a Residence in Chile, During the Year 1822 and a Voyage from Chile to Brazil in 1823* (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, Brown, and Green, 1824).

Figure 31. David Wilkie, "Maria, Lady Callcott". oil on panel, late 1830s. Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.

the people she was surrounded by and immerse herself in their lives to learn from her new neighbours—though emphasised, throughout her writing, her aristocratic standing as a British woman amongst lesser British mercantile classes.[79] She wrote scientific accounts of earthquakes witnessed in Chile in 1822 and was published in the Geological Society journal long before women were permitted as members, and made strong assertions that her reflective writings for publication were more valuable than the jottings of diarists.[80] Her sense of higher class self-importance and confidence in the superiority of her own 'observational prowess' may have contributed to Graham's lack of popularity.

[79] Hayward, ""The Uncertainty of the End Keeps up the Interest": Maria Graham's Journal of a Residence in Chile as Life Writing," 45, 57-58; Marchant, "The Captain's Widow: Maria Graham and the Independence of South America," 134.

[80] Thompson, "Earthquakes and Petticoats: Maria Graham, Geology, and Early Nineteenth-Century 'Polite' Science," 331-32; Maria Graham, "An Account of Some Effects of the Late Earthquakes in Chili," Transactions of the Geological Society 24 (1824); Hayward, ""The Uncertainty of the End Keeps up the Interest": Maria Graham's Journal of a Residence in Chile as Life Writing," 44.

Graham has been characterised as having an "appetite for critiquing male authority figures", which was certainly reflected in her writings of Bahia, Brazil, in particular.[81]

Maria Graham's recount of her time spent in Bahia, north-eastern Brazil, was not especially favourable. It is evident why her works were canvassed by locals who discussed them with Mary Ann Friend in 1829.[82] She had a feeble introduction to Bahia, arriving in the lower part of town, which she espoused was "the filthiest place I ever was in" before reporting more amenably on the landscape of the upper town.[83] Characteristic of her aristocratic overtones, Graham struggled to find evidence of fellow gentlewomen when visiting local Portuguese ladies. She was scathing of their "disgustingly dirty" housing before surmising that she could scarcely believe that one half were gentlewomen, describing their appearances as "indecently slovenly".[84] Her further interactions with Portuguese society at Bahia did little to encourage warmth towards these people whom she declared were uneducated compared with Europeans, with no desire for self-improvement.[85] Her opinion of the British who resided at Bahia was no better, calling them "incurious money makers", no doubt connected to their mercantile status, and writing that "society is at a low, very low scale here among the English".[86] Despite her often-negative reflections, Graham's immersion in a different place and culture speaks to her intellectual hunger as an amateur ethnographer. Her focus on housing and architecture, fashion, class, society, culture, art, landscape and science, among many other topics, illustrates Graham's multifaceted life as a female traveller publishing in the early nineteenth century. Historian Jennifer Hayward has commented that Graham's "similarities with other women travel writers of the century help us to understand the multiple identities speaking through women travellers abroad, throughout the imperial era: they were simultaneously white and female, privileged and subordinate, intrepid explorers and domestic angels, capitalist agents and moral exemplars."[87] Her ruminations on housing, fashion, culture and class dynamics at Bahia were similar to the focus of Friend's work and reflective of a shared experience as British gentlewomen in colonial landscapes. Further similarities can be found in these women's portrayals of science, religion, art and diplomacy

[81] Thompson, "Earthquakes and Petticoats: Maria Graham, Geology, and Early Nineteenth-Century 'Polite' Science," 336.

[82] Friend, "Typescript of Mary Ann Friend's Journal of a Voyage to Hobart with Account of the Settlement on the Swan River, 1829-1831," 9, 99-100.

[83] Graham, *Journal of a Voyage to Brazil, and Residence There, During Part of the Years 1821, 1822, 1823*, 134-35.

[84] Ibid., 135.

[85] Ibid., 147-48.

[86] Ibid.

[87] Hayward, ""The Uncertainty of the End Keeps up the Interest": Maria Graham's Journal of a Residence in Chile as Life Writing," 59.

that were both within their educations as gentlewomen but often beyond the expectations set upon their post in life. Had they both stayed in England, they almost surely would not have delved as deeply into such topics; the intellectual freedom afforded by travel is evident in both women's writing.

Science

The intellectual freedom embraced by Mary Ann Friend in her journal is most evident in her increasing interest in scientific study the further she continued on her voyage. Beginning with a passing interest in manicured gardens to genuine intrigue about the foreign landscapes she encountered, Friend soon divulged a keen appetite for more structured scientific study within the pages of her diary. From her initial arrival in Madeira from 1 September 1829, Friend wrote as a traveller experiencing foreign landscapes and comparing them with her genteel life at home: "The shrubs and plants of this gifted Island are most exquisite and grow in luxuriant profusion, filling the air with the most delightful perfume. Geraniums, and our choicest Hot House plants growing wild".[88] By 7 December, upon reaching Cape Horn, Friend's scientific interests had grown more sophisticated. She indicated an express desire to view scientific collections and record the correct scientific names for fauna, furthering her self-driven education while at sea: "Went with Capt. Barnes to see Dr. Smith's collection, was much pleased. Heard from him that about a month before a ship had touched at the Cape which had four Ornithoryneti on board for the French Naturalists".[89] In particular, at Swan River, where Friend stayed onshore for an extended time, she dedicated more of her journal to scientific observations. She made qualified statements about the foreign natural environment around her.

This commentary differs from her earlier aesthetic remarks made in places like Madeira, as she appears focussed on geological differences in the landscape, how the land is affected by weather and the impact of colonists in the short time since settlement. [90] For example, on 5 February 1830, Friend recounted an excursion outside of the town parameters in which she identifies species of native flora and recognises the disappearance of birdlife as having resulted directly from the interference of colonists on the local ecology:

> Walked into the country, find nothing but sand. The scenery very pretty and a profusion of shrubs, likewise a great many Grass Trees. We are here at a bad season for Botany, all the flowers being past and winter commencing to put on his sober hue… As to birds, scarcely one remains, every body carries a gun and

[88] Friend, "Typescript of Mary Ann Friend's Journal of a Voyage to Hobart with Account of the Settlement on the Swan River, 1829-1831," 2.

[89] Ornithoryneti was the name given to Platypus; ibid., 11-12.

[90] Ibid., 15.

> they have completely succeeded either in shooting or driving away all the feathered race.[91]

Although she details her solo adventures and education in scientific pursuits, of particular interest is Friend's use of inclusionary language to describe the collection of scientific specimens and data. This scientific practice would have been a regular occurrence onboard the *Wanstead* but seemingly not something Friend felt included in before her stay at Swan River. Reflecting on her time at Swan River while sailing to Hobarton on 19 March 1830, Friend wrote of her participation in geological studies conducted by the Royal Navy:

> On the way to Perth at Preston Point there is a natural shelf of rocks on the beach of the river which my husband states to be Limestone. It abounds with Caves made by the Water, one of which we entered in our boat and found it full of Fish which had taken shelter from the Sun… We collected several Stalactites near this place.[92]

Her use of inclusionary language to involve herself in the work of her husband and other scientists onboard demonstrates a growing comfort to engage with experts on board the *Wanstead*. Equally, they might previously have sequestered her from scientific work due to her status as the captain's wife. Life onboard the *Wanstead* somewhat eased the boundaries of Friend's propriety, which she embraced to the point which scientific exploration seemed almost pedestrian by the time she reached the end of her voyage.[93] While she addresses her diary to her sister, Maria Cosgreaves, it's distinctly possible that this divestment of scientific knowledge is for Friend's benefit and enthusiasm as she relished the intellectual freedom of life removed from the social constraints of home.

Georgiana Molloy

Friend's pursuit of intellectual freedom while away from Britain, particularly scientific exploration, is reflected in the similar experience of gentlewoman settler Georgiana Molloy in Augusta, in south western Australia. Molloy's husband was also a captain of the Royal Navy. The pair migrated to Swan River with the encouragement of Molloy herself before moving to the fledgling settlement of Augusta in April 1830, whereupon he was appointed Resident Magistrate.[94] Due to her husband's civic

[91] Ibid., 20.

[92] Ibid., 30.

[93] Ibid., 115.

[94] Bernice Barry, *Georgiana Molloy: The Mind That Shines* (Witchcliffe, WA: Redgate Consultants, 2015), 159-60; D. Markey, *More a Symbol Than a Success: Foundation Years of the Swan River Colony* (Mount Lawley, Western Australia: Mount Lawley College of Advanced Education (Edith Cowan University), 1976), 99.

appointment, Molloy had a high standing in the community. As such, she was expected to spend an increasing amount of time tending to her home and family, receiving guests, and managing her household as its mistress.[95] However, despite writing letters to friends in Scotland complaining of lazy servants who left Molloy to complete much of her housework, she pursued a burgeoning interest in botany in her new native Australian landscape whenever she had the chance.[96] Highly educated and curious, Molloy embraced the new Indigenous landscape around her and established herself as an amateur botanist of repute. She referred to her garden as her "chief pleasure", being "daily employed" in collecting seeds and specimens.[97] In a letter from Augusta on 25 January 1838 to Captain Mangles, a cousin of Lady Stirling, the governor's wife, Molloy wrote of being torn from her duties as a mother and household manager when she would rather be in her garden:

> I shall be happy to send them as well as any other seeds my time will permit me to collect, but I much fear I shall be so much employed in the odious drudgery of cheese and butter making that I shall not be able to attend to the formations and culture of my flower garden, for I am my children's sole instructress, seamstress, and that in conjunction with innumerable other peremptory duties.[98]

Molloy, like Friend, adhered to the strict social conventions of her education and upbringing as a gentlewoman while simultaneously embracing the intellectual freedom of being removed from her homeland. For women who cultural norms had previously prevented from joining the circles of scientific exploration, their existence in a foreign landscape proved irresistible to their educated minds. It allowed them the freedom to pursue a self-driven education beyond what was previously possible for them.

Religion

Just as Friend embraced the intellectual freedom of scientific exploration while onboard the *Wanstead*, she delved into a study of religion, encountering various colonial missionaries and a broad range of religious beliefs amongst Indigenous populations. Although not proselytising her own beliefs in her journal, Friend clearly defines right and wrong in her critical reflections on the missionaries she

[95] Anderson and Zinsser, *A History of Their Own: Women in Europe from Prehistory to the Present*, 2, 130-35; "Augusta in 1833; Reflections (January to December, 1833) from the Diary of Nancy (Ann Elizabeth Turner) Widow of Captain James Mcdermott and Daughter of James Woodward Turner," *Early Days: Journal and Proceedings of the Royal Western Australian Historical Society* 1 (1929): 25.

[96] W.G. Pickering, "The Letters of Georgina Molloy: Wife of Colonel Molloy, Founder of Augusta," ibid., no. 4: 48-53; Barry, Georgiana Molloy: The Mind That Shines, 147.

[97] Pickering, "The Letters of Georgina Molloy: Wife of Colonel Molloy, Founder of Augusta," 54-56.

[98] Ibid., 59.

encountered. Early in the voyage at Madeira, Friend wrote on 1 September 1829 about the self-serving nature of the religious class who she perceives are manipulating the population for their benefit:

> The Peasantry are a fine and noble race but sadly depressed by the withering influence of Priest Craft. Ecclesiastics are seen in every part of the town lounging about, maintain the most despotic power over them… They are indeed the only enemies liberty has to fear.[99]

Friend toured many churches during her travels, and her engagement with other missionaries seems to have been far more positive than in Madeira. She was impressed with those who demonstrated exerted devotion to their mission, such as Mr and Mrs Dyer (who were old friends of her husband) who had been at Prince of Wales Island, or Pulo Penang, for three years before Friend visited in September 1830. Friend wrote exaltingly of Mrs Dyer, who studied Chinese for five years before her mission began and had adopted four children from the island, but noted that "although she had been three years indefatigably employed, she considered as yet that little good had been done."[100] Friend also spent time with an American Baptist missionary in Rangoon and an Independent Minister in Calcutta. She wrote admiring reports of their efforts and how they composed themselves in the community.[101]

Although Friend spent most of her time with Christian missionaries, she also encountered and sought to discuss the religions of other cultures. At Calcutta, she actively engaged with a "Baboo", who she explains was a member of the higher classes on religious subjects. However, writing on 31 January 1831, Friend inferred how "our Baboo" was different to his peers in his religious opinions due to his exposure to European influences. She described how (perhaps because of this influence) they had a great many arguments on the subject:

> He was a very clever intelligent Man. His prejudices appeared to have been very much weakened by his intercourse with Europeans, but it had rendered his mind sad chaos on the subject, and I used to listen to him with a painful interest.[102]

Despite his European influence, which should have, seemingly in Friend's mind, have made him more amenable and understandable in his religious attitudes, Baboo succeeded in further shocking Friend during a visit to a temple in the outskirts of Calcutta. While he was seemingly proud of the temple,

[99] Friend, "Typescript of Mary Ann Friend's Journal of a Voyage to Hobart with Account of the Settlement on the Swan River, 1829-1831," 3.

[100] Ibid., 44-45.

[101] Ibid., 68, 92-96.

[102] Ibid., 94.

Friend was unimpressed and genuinely bewildered at the spectacle of the local religious to which she was initially curious. Further, in the diary entry dated 31 January 1831, she wrote

> From motives of curiosity he [Baboo] took us one evening to a temple at the outskirts of the town, to see the God he worshipped, and which he said was the most splendid in Bengal, and I confess I was never more disappointed… In what words can I speak or describe this god so horrid to the sight; I looked at it with amazement, and felt bewildered with astonishment that any person would worship such a production.[103]

Despite her resistance to understanding the theological and worshipping practices of foreign religions, Friend demonstrated a keen curiosity towards foreign religious beliefs as different to her own throughout the voyage.

Friend's demonstrated study of religious practice, including the architecture of churches, in places she visits during her journey, represents a strong interest in learning more about the foreign spiritual practices she encountered. She wrote at length about the abundantly colourful fashions worn by ladies attending "Italian Church" services in Bahia in October 1829 and the heavy gilding of their religious buildings.[104] Equally, she seemed enthralled by the immense scale of a pagoda at Rangoon in November 1830 and the "gigantic figure of Gaudma" to which locals provided offerings and Friend sketched on numerous occasions.[105] Of particular interest is Friend's preoccupation with determining goodness in those Indigenous populations that expressed religious devotion. This was proven in two short paradoxical passages describing attitudes towards death in Car Nicobar and Calcutta, which also reflect Friend's overarching assumptions of the notion of noble savages and her apparent racial prejudices. At Car Nicobar between 11 to 22 October 1830, Friend attempted to engage the local population in their religious beliefs. She recorded her frustration at the poor quality of translation available to communicate their true feelings on the subject: "Of their religious sentiments we could gain but little information from not sufficiently understanding their language." [106] However, despite the language barrier, Friend felt it pertinent to record her understanding of their attitudes towards good and evil, relating to notions of heaven and hell: "When questioned as to where the dead went they pointed to Heaven and said to God; to our question as to bad men, they answered, as at Chowra, all were good—that there were no bad men."[107] It's difficult to discern the accuracy of these beliefs, given Friend's acknowledgement of the language barrier between the two groups. Yet, it's telling that

[103] Ibid., 95.

[104] Ibid., 6-7.

[105] Ibid., 145-167.

[106] Ibid., 57.

[107] Ibid.

she chose to personify these people as inherently good. Friend reinforced notions of the noble savage by writing about their religious beliefs that reflected her understanding of heaven. By including their perceived belief that all men on the island were good, Friend reinforced notions of the noble savage that spoke to her classical education and reflected other passages of her diary where she acted as an amateur ethnographer.

In stark contrast, her reflections of the funereal customs of the Indigenous population in Calcutta illustrated a more harsh, unforgiving and altogether more savage people. Made evident by her retelling of religious debate and excursions to the temple with Baboo, Friend does not approach the Indigenous population of Calcutta with the same gentle openness of heart that she appears to have with those on Car Nicobar. In fact, she personified the locals of Calcutta as far more savage in their humanity, as evidenced by her reflections on a funeral scene at a beach in January 1831:

> Close to us, I perceived apparently some dead Animal upon which two hungry savage dogs were feeding, but upon nearer inspection it proved to be a human body, thrown on the beach to decay or be washed away by the tide. I was inexpressibly shocked and my husband went and asked the Natives to burn the remains with those of the other person, but they would not hear of it and quite laughed at him, saying he was not one of their caste.[108]

Friend's shock at the brutal treatment of a deceased body is clear, and the men's explanation of caste differences is not convincing to her, balanced with the savage scene of dogs tearing at a human body. Friend's moral judgement in this scene demonstrates an inherent racial prejudice that makes her unwilling to understand the cultural differences of these people she has delineated as savage, particularly in comparison with the more noble savages, those who believe in the inherent goodness of all men, in Car Nicobar.

Jane Roberts

Friend's religiosity and critical theological curiosity while voyaging on the *Wanstead* is an interesting contrast to the writings of her shipmate and close companion, Jane Roberts. Roberts was a missionary, who was placed under Friend's protection when her brother suffered a "relapse of brain fever" at the Cape of Good Hope in December 1829 and, according to Friend's diary, was "left at this place under strong delusion" and is assumed to have died shortly thereafter.[109] As a missionary, Roberts likely intended to travel to the "savage" ports Friend describes, armed with her religious teachings, to

[108] Ibid., 105.

[109] Ibid., 12.

Figure 32. "Settler's Tent, At Freemantle", engraving, 1837, in Jane Roberts, *Two Years at Sea: Being the narrative of a voyage to Swan River, Van Dieman's Land, thence, through the Torres' Straits, to the Burman Empire; with an account of the services and sufferings of the missionaries in that country, from the date of the first Protestant mission*. Second edition. London. 1837.

perform a version of colonisation herself. However, with the absence of her brother's protection, Roberts was required to return home to England without completing her mission. Instead, she filled the time on the voyage with constructing a travel narrative addressed expressly to readers longing to travel or settle in the places she visited, published in two editions in 1834 and a shorter version in 1837.[110] Roberts didn't explicitly divulge her original mission in her book. Still, her preoccupation with observing and efforts to "narrate faithfully" the religious customs of others in stark comparison with her own Christian beliefs is evident throughout the narrative.[111] Her purpose for constructing a travel narrative for publication is more apparent further into the book. Roberts' prose addressed her reader

[110] Jane Roberts, *Two Years at Sea: Being the Narrative of a Voyage to the Swan River and Van Dieman's Land, During the Years 1829, 30, 31* (London: Richard Bentley, 1834), 55; *Two Years at Sea: Being the Narrative of a Voyage to Swan River, Van Dieman's Land, Thence to the Burman Empire; with an Account of the Services and Sufferings of the Missionaries in That Country, from the Date of the First Protestant Mission*. , 2nd ed. (London: John W. Parker, 1837).

[111] Note: the 1834 edition has been chosen as the main citation due to its extended and more complete narrative. Roberts, *Two Years at Sea: Being the Narrative of a Voyage to the Swan River and Van Dieman's Land, During the Years 1829, 30, 31*, v.

directly—in contrast to Friend's more natural address to a close friend—which gives her reflections an air of performance and self-consciousness that impacts the feeling of authenticity in her writing.

Roberts is a pious character who valued what she saw as Christian self-sacrifice rather than ostentatious behaviour in the places she visited. At Swan River, she wrote of the many disagreeable elements encountered, from filthy settlers to "the feeling of very close and disagreeable contact" with insects and animal life, and the sand that "covered the person with a disagreeable, black, dirty dust".[112] Roberts most admired the "self-privation of one kind or the other" demonstrated by British settlers on a "daily occurrence, and its value was enhanced by the ready cheerfulness with which it was borne".[113] Compared with Friend's account of Swan River, which studied social dynamics, ethnography and scientific curiosity at Swan River, Roberts devoted much detail in her narrative to those connected with the clergy that she met on the voyage and the Church services she attended. She adopted sermon-like statements, including quotes from the Bible, to reinforce her opinions of the settlement and advise readers considering emigration to Swan River.[114] The total 396 pages of Roberts' narrative covers not only religious subjects and observations, but also architecture, scientific and environmental observations, descriptions of Indigenous populations, commentary on class and social customs—both onboard and in ports visited, and colonial politics, among others subjects mirrored in other travel accounts of the time.[115] She demonstrated an evident curiosity of the places she visited and people she met, which must have filled her days (and notebooks) in gathering research for publication. Roberts' efforts as a travel writer demonstrate an entrepreneurial streak in her formation of a travel book intended for sale to the general public at a time when female travellers were not commercially popular.[116]

Class and Gentility

Friend's care of Jane Roberts was due to her standing as the Captain's wife, making her the highest-ranking gentlewoman on board the *Wanstead*—status that brought with it the responsibility to uphold standards of conduct and service amongst those women below her. Women played a significant role in transferring gentility to the colonies.[117] Shipboard life echoed the class structure of home, with

[112] Ibid., 44, 51-54.

[113] Ibid.

[114] Ibid., 75-77, 80-83, 95-96.

[115] Ibid.

[116] Caroline Palmer, "'I Will Tell Nothing That I Did Not See': British Women's Travel Writing, Art and the Science of Connoisseurship, 1776-1860," *Forum for Modern Language Studies* 51, no. 3 (2015): 248-55.

[117] Curtin, "Gentility Afloat: Gentlewoman's Diaries and the Voyage to Australia, 1830-80," 634-42.

those such as Friend rarely mingling with the lower classes in separate quarters, effectively transporting their stratified society to new settlements. Friend took seriously her responsibility of upholding standards of morality while onboard, going so far as to dismiss a maid from her service due to her immoral behaviour on board:

> I regret to say that at this Port [Bahia, 25-26 October 1829] my Maid Servant behaved so ill I was obliged to dismiss her from my service and put her in the Steerage. I had done all in my power to save her but in vain. The temptations to which Servants are exposed on board are incredible, I only wonder how any escape.[118]

Friend was particularly concerned that the women under her care were perceived to be conducting themselves properly and morally. To this end, she assisted at least two young women in her care, Miss Leard and Miss Elmsie, in their marriages in Hobarton and ensured they were adequately provided for in terms of money which would do much to maintain their standing in the colonial town. [119]

Friend especially scrutinised the behaviour of servants and the serving class in the British colonial towns and ports she visited. Her commentary about working-class attitudes in British settlements such as Swan River, Singapore and Calcutta demonstrated her high expectations of service and beliefs about reinforcing class distinctions to British standards in British colonies. It also confirmed that the domestic sphere was one area that Friend had control over as a gentlewoman. In Singapore from August 1830, Friend admired "the appearance of Oriental Servants very much", believing "they give an elegant appearance to an establishment far before our Servants at home".[120] Friend's acknowledgement of the standard of service in her own home gives the reader an understanding of the quality of life she lived before her voyage and the degree to which she expected this standard of service to continue in recognisably British colonial port towns. Certainly, Swan River was only a fledgling settlement during Friend's visit in January to February 1830, but her criticism of working-class attitudes in Fremantle was not forgiving. She was scathing of the women (and children) who served her acquaintances Mr and Mrs Wells, who acted as the head of the first establishment, commenting that

> They have but one attendant and that is a dirty little boy about ten years of age. They can even scarcely get their clothes washing, while at the same time the

[118] Friend, "Typescript of Mary Ann Friend's Journal of a Voyage to Hobart with Account of the Settlement on the Swan River, 1829-1831," 8.

[119] Ibid., 32-33.

[120] Ibid., 43.

Figure 33. Mary Ann Friend, "View at Swan-River. Sketch of the Encampment of Matw. Curling Friend, Esqr., R.N., 1830", coloured lithograph, 1831. State Library of New South Wales.

> women are washing for strangers, who are obliged to pay 6 shillings the doz. The servants are in fact receiving wages and food and doing nothing for it.[121]

The laziness of the servants was a common complaint in Friend's diary. In Calcutta, her prejudice about scandalous conduct and the feeling of being "cheated on all sides" by those in her service became even more apparent. Of the "Native Servants", she complained of being abandoned when she most needed them: "these servants… leave you in the middle of the day for their dinners" while simultaneously being irritated by their presence which she described as "so extravagant and troublesome as to annoy me considerably". [122] Her own British servants did not fare much better in Friend's reproach of working-class behaviour, describing an incident where her servant Mary went to deliver letters but returned with news that she had accepted a position in another lady's household and promptly left, leaving Friend with "very uncomfortable feelings" that made her "quite unwell with the worry I had experienced".[123] This unsatisfactory service by the working class appears to have been

[121] Ibid., 17.

[122] Ibid., 90.

[123] Ibid., 89-91.

taken as a personal insult to Friend, as it reflected poorly on her ability to maintain a household and control her servants. In this early nineteenth-century British society, and in her situation of being the highest-ranking gentlewoman on board the *Wanstead*, such poor service would have been quite a disgrace on Friend's reputation.

Maintaining social standing through the reinforcement of British class values and behaviour was important work for Friend during the voyage of the *Wanstead*, both in her role as the captain's wife and in cementing her standing as a gentlewoman in the eyes of the colonial elite abroad. Although the colonies were often a world away from England, maintaining gentility into colonial conditions was paramount to the needs of those in the upper classes. [124] At Swan River, the ladies of the colony invited Friend to join the newly established Literary Society at Perth. Within the first six months of settlement, despite the hardships of food supply, pending frontier warfare with the local Indigenous population and numerous other difficulties facing the settler's survival, the ladies of the colony had endeavoured to begin fundraising for the construction of meeting rooms for their Society.[125] Friend was the third lady to be admitted as a member behind Ellen Stirling, the wife of the governor, and Matilda Roe, the wife of the surveyor general.[126] Friend's ready acceptance into the colonial elite at Swan River is a striking reflection on how highly she conducted herself as a gentlewoman and performed a critical diplomatic role while accompanying her Captain husband aboard the *Wanstead*. As with Mary Ann Parker's experience as the wife of a naval captain, the experience of travelling seemed to foster within these gentlewomen a kind of "international and peripatetic salon".[127] Their ease amongst the colonial elite was reflective of a kind of 'global sociability' expected of people who had transplanted their British society abroad. [128]

Friend's ready acceptance into the colonial elite at Swan River echoed similar overtures towards her husband, as the couple were seemingly considering settling in Perth or Fremantle during their visit. They had been exposed to 'Swan River Mania' during the voyage to the port, with Friend frequently commenting on the reports and eagerness for news about the fledgling colony's successes (and failures). People pressed her for details about the settlement from the Cape of Good Hope to

[124] Curtin, "Gentility Afloat: Gentlewoman's Diaries and the Voyage to Australia, 1830-80," 652.

[125] Toni Church, "Sand and Skirts: A Study of British Women in Early Colonial Fremantle, 1829-39" (University of Notre Dame Australia, 2011).

[126] Friend, "Typescript of Mary Ann Friend's Journal of a Voyage to Hobart with Account of the Settlement on the Swan River, 1829-1831," 29.

[127] O'Loughlin, "'My Own Slender Remarks': Global Networks of Slavery and Sociability in Mary Ann Parker's Voyage to New South Wales (1795)," 228.

[128] Ibid.

Timor, from ships inbound from South America to Singapore and Rangoon.[129] In her own words, Friend was not impressed with the appearance of the settlement at Swan River, her commentary suggesting it as an unsuitable home for her and her husband. From her first impressions arriving at Fremantle, she perceived it with disappointment: "the country low and sandy."[130] The weather conditions in early February 1830 did little to convince her of the benefits of settlement, despite her agreeing that "the country is 'beautifully undulating and thinly wooded', she wrote:

> Heat excessive. Thermometer 98 in the shade; suffered much from the warmth and the flies are so troublesome. We are always thirsty—always drinking and never satisfied, I imagine the water must be brackish, as our well is on the beach. I have scarcely moved all the day.[131]

Friend's perception of the settlement upriver at Perth was no better, spending the night in a tent with her husband near the soldier's quarters that she declared she had

> Never slept in such a miserable place; everything so dirty, sheets etc. Such quantities of Mosquitoes and fleas, the last gentry the largest I ever saw. Matthew sat up all the night driving the insects off me. The noise from the neighbouring tents so annoying and the Soldiers sitting up late singing and drinking.[132]

It was during this stay at Perth that her husband was offered a significant land grant of 5000 acres by the Governor, as well as the position of Surveyor General in the south-west, which would have secured Friend a prominent role in the colonial elite with all of the benefits of such a significant social standing.[133] However, the couple were seemingly unconvinced of the colony's benefits and continued on their voyage—travel into the unknown was more appealing than settlement in such a disagreeable struggling township.

Chapter Conclusions

This chapter critiques the written records and other artefacts related to Mary Ann Friend's travel to Western Australia. In particular, this appraisal focussed on her autonomous behaviours while actively engaged in science and exploration, and studying foreign religions and ethnicities— reinforcing her

[129] Friend, "Typescript of Mary Ann Friend's Journal of a Voyage to Hobart with Account of the Settlement on the Swan River, 1829-1831," 11, 41, 43, 65.

[130] Ibid., 13.

[131] Ibid., 14, 20.

[132] Ibid., 21.

[133] Ibid., 22.

own perceived cultural superiority. Friend highly educated and an accomplished artist whose very existence aboard the *Wanstead* was a challenge to nineteenth-century gender norms. Yet, at the same time, she abided by these norms by performing well the role of wife and acting out the social diplomacy required of her as the wife of a Royal Navy captain. Friend framed her experiences aboard the *Wanstead* in her self-reflective prose. Given her intent to gift the diary to her sister, these reflections are very much a valid account of her feelings and actions in the places she visits, embellished for emotional effect, more so than if she had intended to publish the work for general readers. The published travel writing of others such as Jane Roberts, Mary Ann Parker, and Maria Graham are included for comparison and contrast.

Significantly, Friend expresses her experiences of the voyage in her own words. This is striking compared to silenced wives, such as Ann Turner and others, whose value to history has traditionally been diminished due to their halted correspondence and lack of first-hand accounts of their lives. Friend's strong voice, her demonstrable independence in the pursuit of knowledge, adventure and support of her husband and his work reinforces the notion that she held autonomy in her situation, using her diary and sketches as the most basic evidence.

Friend's diary and accompanying artwork, plus watercolours not included with her original diary, will form the basis on curatorial interpretation in the proposed museum exhibition to represent her autonomous voice. Her narrative will be presented alongside Rose de Freycinet's as comparative examples of the shared themes in their writing. Curatorial topics will include Friend's role as the wife and intellectual partner, her pursuit of art and scientific interest, and her studies in amateur anthropology conducted while aboard the *Wanstead*. She will appear in physical form through her representations of self, described using her own words and be creatively represented through audio recordings of her work. The audience will be invited to explore her journey from Friend's perspective to understand her experiences as an educated, curious and autonomous nineteenth-century woman.

PART THREE

THE EXHIBITION

Left: B. Sly, "British Museum, Egyptian Room", engraving by William Radclyffe, 1841-44. British Museum.

CHAPTER SEVEN
CURATORIAL CONCEPT

The *Maiden Voyagers: Early travelling women to Western Australia, 1818—1830* exhibition will offer an empathetically designed space that embodies the experience of early nineteenth-century European travelling women, highlighting the autonomy within both their decision to embark on their voyages and their actions while travelling. The exhibition will feature these women's stories above those of their male counterparts, who have previously dominated the history of these voyages and explorations, intending to produce an accessible, interactive and empathetic visitor experience.

Curating autonomous women

This curatorial concept explains a proposed museum exhibition about travelling European women to Western Australia between 1818 and 1830. This museological contribution is valuable and significant as it reframes the historically marginalised experiences of these women as autonomous, and displays them in an empathetic and authentic design. Museums have been traditionally exclusionary institutions, whose narratives have favoured the wealthy, powerful and, overwhelmingly, masculine.[1] With a renewed understanding of power structures, particularly in colonial contexts, there has been a concerted effort through movements such as empathetic museum practice to address truth-telling and display revised interpretations of colonial histories.[2] Redressing silenced voices is critical to empathetic museum practice and the planning of this exhibition, *Maiden Voyagers*.

Western Australia's impending bicentenary of British colonisation, including Albany in 2026 and the Swan River Colony in 2029, presents an opportunity to redress the silences and disparities in our public memory. A number of criticial issues must now be addressed that were not when the state commemorated its 150th anniverary in 1979. Our public record demands the inclusion of women, labour, convict, migrant and other historical actors, whose stories were largely marginalised in past

[1] Vergo, "Introduction," 3; McCall and Gray, "Museums and the 'New Museology': Theory, Practice and Organisational Change," 30.

[2] Jennings et al., "The Empathetic Museum: A New Institutional Identity," 506-07; Savenije and de Bruijn, "Historical Empathy in a Museum: Uniting Contextualisation and Emotional Engagement," 833.

interpretations. In particular, the telling of Aboriginal experiences and culture within our history, including that of the frontier, requires redress. To this end, Danjoo Koorliny and other community groups have begun working with the state government to ensure Aboriginal-led events and content development that will focus on truth-telling and knowledge-sharing.[3] Local and state government institutions will be involved in various research-driven projects, as will leading organisations such as the History Council of Western Australia and community-led historical societies. Some, such as the Bridgetown Police Station Museum, are already taking steps towards the inclusion of marginalised voices in their work.[4] The bicentenary is an opportunity to recognise the multiple and varied experiences within Western Australia's history. This presents an opportunity to consider experiences of European women who travelled to Western Australia as daughters of the Enlightenment, and who have, until this time, been largely invisible in our public history. Efforts in truth-telling will propel the bicentenary and transform our understandings of the past. This exhibition plays a small role in challenging the traditional narrative of colonisation in Western Australia.

This exhibition concept applies learnings from Parts One and Two of this thesis, applying New Museology principles, understandings of the female form, and relational autonomy theories to experiences of early nineteenth-century European women who demonstrated autonomous behaviours. It places these women—Rose de Freycinet, Mary Ann Friend and others—in the context of women's engagement with the Scientific Revolution and Enlightenment, which can be said to lead directly to their education and then their self-reflexive engagement with travel. By using written records, artwork and artefacts related to their expeditions, the display will remove the traditional patriarchal overtures that have dominated the telling of these women's stories.

The methods of display, grounded in New Museology, will be multifaceted and based on empathetic museum practice, which encourages enhanced visitor-made meaning.[5] These methods are designed to be achievable with minimal budget and can be adapted to variable gallery spaces. Here, I outline facets of the exhibition's design that impact visitors' engagement with the interpretive content on display. The concept does not include more detailed visual or exhibition design features, as it is intended as a curatorial document only. Elements include curatorial plans and justification for the entry and visual introduction; approach to the interpretation of objects and text; consideration of sensory engagement, including images, soundscape and olfactory engagement; physical

[3] "Danjoo Koorliny: Walking together towards 2029 and beyond" 2021, https://www.danjookoorliny.com/.

[4] "History Council of Western Australia Awards 2021," History Council of Western Australia, 2021, https://www.historycouncilwa.org.au/awards

[5] Wood and Latham, *The Objects of Experience: Transforming Visitor-Object Encounters in Museums*, 24.

representation, beyond mannequin displays; interactive elements and technology; and universal accessibility requirements.

As a blueprint for a proposed exhibition, in which identified best practices are used to curate stories of women's autonomy, this concept is an adaptable curatorial design. It is structured as a small exhibition with the interpretation dependent upon curatorial content and not dictated by visual design elements that may be restrictive for smaller or regional galleries if adopted as a travelling exhibition. The concept forms a guide for curatorial intent and is designed for adaption by visual and exhibition designers before it is suitable for display. This means that the design can be applied to variable gallery settings and dimensions to suit individual institutions without losing curatorial cohesion. The intended audience are those interested in Australian women's, colonial, and maritime histories. Although the interpretive text will be aimed at an adult audience, there are planned elements to engage children and provide universal accessibility. The Curatorial Concept is structured using the interpretive elements described above. The Exhibition Catalogue provides a published expression of the curatorial interpretation as it is grouped into chronology and themes within Freycinet and Friend's writing.

This Curatorial Concept is followed by a final chapter in the form of an exhibition catalogue, which represents the narrative arc and materials of the exhibition. In print form, it demonstrates the key themes intended for display and represents interpretive material that will be offered through text panels to visitors. Designed as a double-page spread, the catalogue includes text, imagery and selected museum objects, chosen to communicate the curatorial intent and narrative themes of the exhibition. Due to the ephemeral nature of the women's historical footprint, few provenanced artefacts are available for display. Further, to overcome potential restrictions in display requirements due to conservation standards, representative objects and facsimile copies can be a viable alternative for smaller or regional gallery spaces. The catalogue is focussed on the experiences and written records of Freycinet and Friend, set within the context of women's contribution to the Scientific Revolution and Enlightenment that preceded and influenced their voyages to Western Australia between 1818 and 1830. Freycinet and Friend's stories are represented thematically through their relationships, actions and experiences in science, ethnography, religion, diplomacy and art. These stories are supported by more general narrative themes, including the scientific engagement of women as *salonnières* and invisible assistants, stowaway women aboard voyages of Enlightenment and women's travel writing.

Figure 34. Cascades Female Factory entrance, 2017. Photos by Toni Church.

Entry and visual introduction

The entry panels of a museum exhibition are a crucial, but often overlooked, aspect of useable gallery space. After what is usually a visually dynamic entrance, designed to entice visitors into the room, exhibition panels in the immediate entrance tend to contain attribution information such as details about sponsors, partners and those involved in developing the exhibition. However, this is valuable real estate into which design can be deployed; here we can set the exhibition's tone, immersing visitors into the stories they will share. The Cascades Female Factory in Hobart is a powerful example of how minimalistic interpretation can be employed in an otherwise utilitarian space to provoke a deep emotional connection with the audience during their first steps into the interpretive space.[6] Inscribed into the heavily rusted steel gates of the Cascades entrance, are words in large text taken from the records of the female convicts who once lived there.[7] Such descriptive language provides the audience with a multi-layered first impression of these convict women and how they were harshly perceived by others. It offers the visitor a mental visual of what these women looked like and how they must have felt while entering the same space.

A new interpretative centre is now proposed for the Cascades, to be designed by the architectural firm Liminal Studio and Snøhetta. In April 2020, the designers declared their intent to extend the empathy of the museum's current entrance.[8] Their work will ensure holistic elements that:

[6] Port Arthur Historic Site Management Authority, "Cascades Female Factory Historic Site," https://femalefactory.org.au/.

[7] Ibid.

[8] ArchitectureAU, "Liminal, Snøhetta and Rush Wright Project at Hobart's Cascades Female Factory Progresses," https://architectureau.com/articles/liminal-and-snohetta-project-at-hobarts-cascades-female-factory-progresses/.

> are a powerful reminder of the struggle between light and dark, imprisonment and liberty, punishment and reform, threat and opportunity, horror and hope. These dualities have informed an experience that is revelatory and transformative, culminating in an open forum, dubbed "the empatheatre".[9]

While "the emphatheatre" will emotionally connect visitors to the museum's story through its architectural design, the interpretive centre will guide visitors through architectural and exhibition spaces that evoke the experiences of convict women who lived at the factory: "The intention is not to oppress, but to aid understanding and acknowledgement of what has previously taken place at this site".[10] This consideration of the significance of emotional connection with an audience is key to any curatorial interpretation of the women's stories placed inside the proposed interpretive centre. The combination of empathetic design with curatorial interpretation and educational material powerfully intends to recognise the "social, cultural and political foundations laid by the convict women, building upon their legacy, connecting to the past to inform the future".[11]

Emotional connection is vital to engage the visitor from the beginning of their interaction with an exhibition space. As Ross Gibson and John Berger have both reflected, emotional connection can be curated to involve visitors with the exhibition's subject and foster a heightened sense of imagined community and connection (which was discussed in Chapter One of this thesis).[12] This dynamic concept is employed in the introductory section of the *Maiden Voyagers* exhibition by including personal testimony from Friend, Freycinet and others, that personally connects the audience with their stories. Framed on horizontal text panels that act as a tunnel to move visitors through to the main gallery space, the text overlaps with phrasing in easy-to-read handwriting-style font. This text highlights words used frequently by the travelling women or phrases evocative of their journeys. This personal connection is integral to communicating the purpose and significant themes of the exhibition, but also transforms the visitor-object experience through design that transcends the senses.[13] For example, the inclusion of excerpts from a letter written by Freycinet to her mother before departing from Toulon is laced with trepidation and invites the audience to consider Freycinet's fear and bravery: "I confess that I am agitated by a thousand fears. The thought of that sea frightens me; I greatly need to have my courage strengthened by Him who commands the wind and the

[9] Snøhetta, "The Cascades Female Factory Historic Site," https://snohetta.com/projects/371-the-cascades-female-factory-historic-site.

[10] Liminal Studio, "Cascades Female Factory History and Interpretation Centre," https://www.liminalstudio.com.au/cascades-female-factory/.

[11] Ibid.

[12] Gibson, *Memoryscopes: Remnants, Forensics, Aesthetics*, 1, 64; Berger, *Ways of Seeing*, 129.

[13] Wood and Latham, *The Objects of Experience: Transforming Visitor-Object Encounters in Museums*, 24.

waves."[14] By immediately immersing the audience within the words written by the women to their closest friends and relatives, they are engaged with that writer's inner world, with the curatorial intent to make the visitor feel as if they are part of the author's world.

These worded entry panels lead to the introductory section of the exhibition, where a large-scale vinyl map of the world is installed on the gallery wall or, preferably, onto the floor, and on which each woman's voyage is traced in contrasting colours. The map is especially aimed at engaging young people, and will assist all visitors to locate the places visited and understand the sheer distances travelled by the exhibition subjects. By physically stepping through the women's voyages, visitors are introduced to the names and locations explored within the exhibition's narrative. Similar interactive design treatments were used in the *Art of Science: Baudin's voyages, 1800—1804* and *Guardians of Sunda Strait* exhibitions, both displayed at the Australian National Maritime Museum in 2017. The technique charted sea voyages across countries and territories that either no longer exist in current political and geographical understandings of the world.[15] Encouraging physical interaction between visitors and curatorial content is a characteristic of New Museology that rose to prominence in the 1990s and early 2000s as a museological theory, first coined in Peter Vergo's edited publication, and which has since informed understandings of best practice in Australian museums (discussed in Chapter One).[16] Content is made more appealing and engaging through heightened audience interaction and design that appeals to the senses.[17] Mimicking reality through the transference of the journeys onto a large-scale map encourages the visitor to engage with historical material in a more present and involved manner which, as cultural theorist Rhiannon Mason has discussed, produces feelings of authenticity within the audience.[18]

Concurrently, the colours used in mapping the travel routes in *Maiden Voyagers* will be mirrored in the text panel design for the individual women, aiming for a visual connection between the map and the voyager, between entry and exhibition, and within the visitor themselves. The Western Australian Museum's *Journeys of Enlightenment: French exploration of Terra Australis*, displayed from October 2008 to October 2009, adopted this method as a subtle way of demarcating

[14] Bassett, *Realms and Islands: The World Voyage of Rose De Freycinet in the Corvette Uranie, 1817-1820*, 5-6.

[15] Australian National Maritime Museum, "Guardians of Sunda Strait," http://www.sea.museum/whats-on/exhibitions/guardians-of-sunda-strait; "The Art of Science: Baudin's Voyagers 1800 -1804," https://www.sea.museum/whats-on/exhibitions/baudin.

[16] Vergo, *The New Museology*.

[17] Henning, *Museums, Media and Cultural Theory*, 5, 31.

[18] Rhiannon Mason, "Cultural Theory and Museum Studies," 20.

various French voyages to Australia and ensuring a mental connection was made throughout the exhibition and in its online content.[19]

Objects

This exhibition is designed to work within a small budget and restricted access to borrowing collection objects. Due to such limitations, it is intended that the exhibitions objects will be facsimile copies of material held in archives, or representative items that can carry the authentic impact of what would otherwise be an original artefact. This also resolves a critical problem: the curatorial subjects are not well documented in collections worldwide. Due to their ephemeral existence aboard the expeditions, there are very few artefacts that are positively provenanced to these women that have been collected. Objects that do exist are largely delicate and of a domestic or personal nature. These include locks of hair belonging to lovers and children, paper-based items such as diaries and letters, and organic materials related to the domestic realm they inhabited such as clothing, aprons, and similar textiles that do not generally stand the wear and tear of time. Adding further complications are the conservation requirements for such delicate artefacts, which reduces the feasibility and longevity of their proposed display. Therefore, wherever possible, reproductions will be made of significant items that are provenanced to the curatorial subjects, such as their original diaries, artworks or portraits and keepsakes. Representative items will be used to creatively reimagine objects that would otherwise have been collected to represent these women's stories in the exhibition.

There has been much consideration of the accessibility and tactility of elements for the audience to more fully connect with the content on display and overcome a lack of authenticity due to missing original artefacts. For example, museums are heightening access by creating facsimile copies of artworks that can be touched by vision-impaired visitors and curious children alike, while industry organisations conduct research and training into inclusive curatorial practices that emphasise access to collections through reproductions due to conservation requirements.[20] Facsimile reproductions and representative objects without provenance will be supplemented by design features that allow the audience to physically interact with the items, such as physically holding copies of facsimile diaries. Further, visual (or audio) references will be added to extend an object's curatorial

[19] Western Australian Museum, "Journeys of Enlightenment".

[20] Van Abbemuseum, "Delinking and Relinking: New Collection Display," https://vanabbemuseum.nl/en/programme/programme/delinking-and-relinking/; Australian Museums and Galleries Association, "Access for People with a Disability," https://www.amaga.org.au/access.

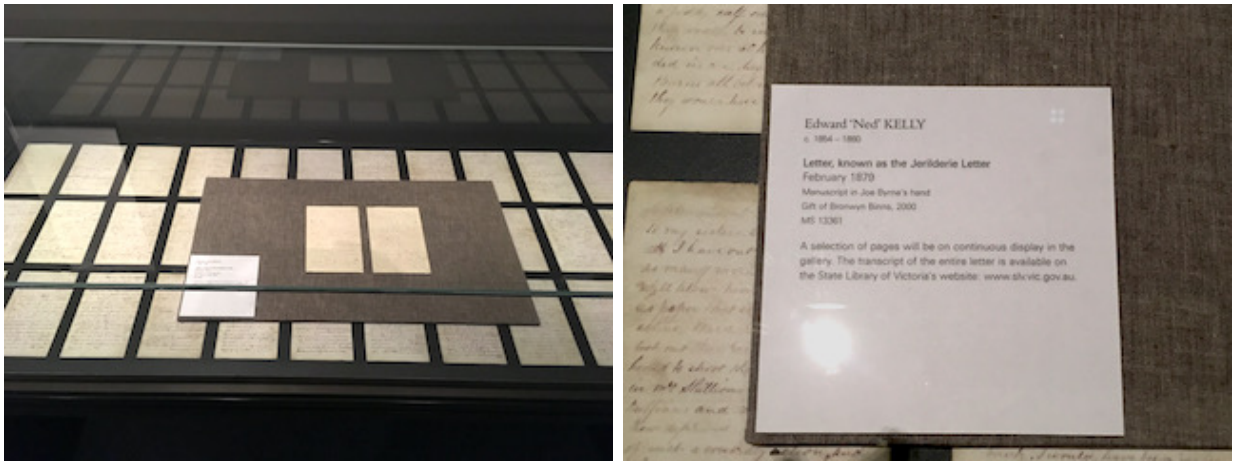

Figure 35. Ned Kelly's Jerilderie letter, *Changing Face of Victoria* exhibition at the State Library of Victoria, 2017. Photos by Toni Church.

interpretation, such as the inclusion of bright overlaid projections or access through touch-screen interactives. Additional graphic and exhibition design options can be incorporated to lend further authenticity to reproduction artefacts to evoke life onboard a nineteenth-century voyage of Enlightenment. The inclusion of audience-recognisable shipboard design elements, such as ropes, weathered timber or items that sensitively evoke more tropical colonial destinations, will heighten the immersive feeling of the exhibition. This approach was inspired by the efficacy of the exhibition design of *The House of Dior: Seventy Years of Haute Couture* exhibition.[21] *Dior* was separated into distinct sections, beginning with the modest shop front style of the designer's early years, through to an atelier-inspired set that displayed the behind-the-scenes design work of the fashion house, to a runway-style display that evoked the bright glamour of international fashion week shows.[22] Although *Maiden Voyagers* is not a high fashion exhibition, the exhibition design can equally evoke the themes communicated through the writing of nineteenth-century travelling women. With a shortage of authentic artefacts to display, the set design can adopt an atmosphere that physically places the audience inside the recreated world of those women, accompanied by their personal testimonies to evoke a greater sense of connection, as mentioned earlier in this chapter.

The use of reproduction artefacts provides an opportunity to introduce elements that museum conservation standards would ordinarily preclude from the display. For example, facsimile copies of documents or letters in the women's handwriting that would otherwise be displayed in a low-light and sterile environment if they were original, are accompanied in the display cases with

[21] National Gallery of Victoria, "The House of Dior: Seventy Years of Haute Couture, 27 August - 7 November 2017," https://www.ngv.vic.gov.au/exhibition/the-house-of-dior/.

[22] National Gallery of Victoria, "The House of Dior: Seventy Years of Haute Couture, 27 August - 7 November 2017".

organic materials that represent the content within the document. A document that evokes foreign landscapes with references to bright white beach sand, exotic flowers or geological formations is surrounded within the showcase by these elements; be it crushed limestone reminiscent of the blinding white roads that caused Mary Ann Friend to suffer from opthamalia for months after leaving the Swan River Colony, or vibrant dried tropical flowers that Rose de Freycinet admired upon landing in islands in the Pacific. This approach has been used effectively within many exhibitions, including the Sculpture Trail in Battery Point, Hobart, where crushed shells have been pressed into the pathways to evoke the original shoreline of the harbour and physically invite the audience to consider how the landscape has changed through the addition of a tactile design element. [23]

An alternative to displaying multiple pages of the diaries, which are lengthy and challenging to read for untrained eyes in their original form, the effect of reading (or writing) these pages can be communicated through magnified images of the pages being used as the background within display cases. For example, an important page of Mary Ann Friend's diary will be reproduced in easy-to-read font alongside one of her watercolours to communicate a significant theme or experience connected to the adjacent text panel. This page will be displayed on a neutral-coloured matte plinth, on top of a vinyl backing board printed with the cross-hatched handwriting of her original diary. The State Library of Victoria adopted a similar approach in displaying Ned Kelly's Jerilderie Letter in the exhibition *Changing Face of Victoria*, with various original pages displayed on rotation from 2004 to 2020.[24] Using a historically evocative backdrop of reproduced images of the Jerilderie letter, along with a transcription of the cross-hatched cursive handwriting, made the exhibition accessible to more age groups, education levels and physical abilities while preserving the delicate original paper objects. The removal of elitist elements, such as the ability to read older cursive texts or references understood only by those who received advanced education, is a tenet of New Museology. [25] Vergo himself has attested that museums are responsible for displaying treasures to their audiences and "actively engaging in mass education" by making meaningfully designed exhibitions.[26] By acknowledging the diversity of visitors within the museum's community and placing the visitor at the heart of an

[23] City of Hobart, "Battery Point Sculpture Trail," https://www.hobartcity.com.au/files/assets/public/arts-and-culture/public-art/battery_point_sculpture_trail_brochure_03-02-14.pdf.

[24] State Library Victoria, "Changing Face of Victoria," https://www.slv.vic.gov.au/cfov; "Ned Kelly," https://www.slv.vic.gov.au/search-discover/explore-collections-theme/australian-history/ned-kelly; Library Board of Victoria, "Annual Report," (Melbourne2004-2005), 29.

[25] Fyfe, "Sociology and the Social Aspects of Museums," 42.

[26] Vergo, *The New Museology*, 2.

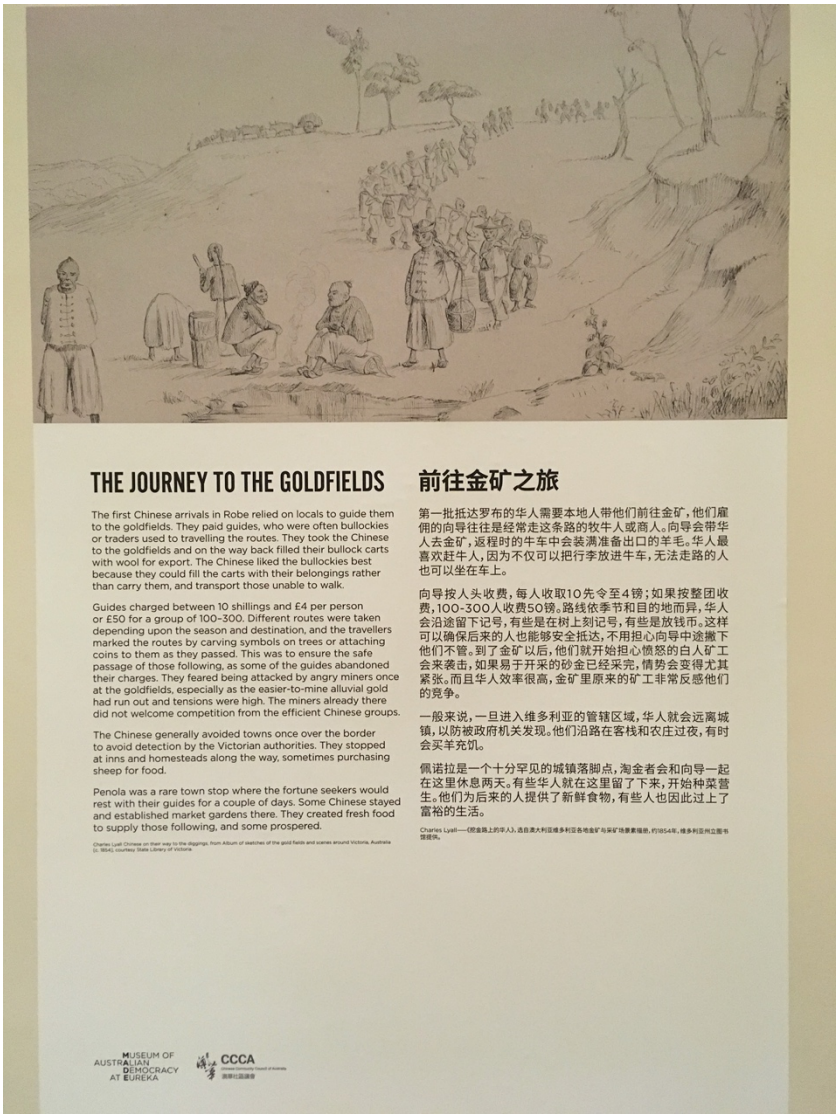

Figure 36. Text panel in *From Robe to Chinese Fortunes* exhibition at the Immigration Museum, Melbourne, 2017. Photo by Toni Church.

exhibition's purpose, curators and designers can increase the accessibility of their collection to all of these visitors by using clever and dynamic display techniques and approaches.[27]

To further expand accessibility and diversity in the shaping of exhibition design, languages other than English will be included to connect with the curatorial content and broaden the potential audience reach. Many travelling women of the Enlightenment age were from European countries that did not speak English as their first language (discussed in Chapters Four and Five), so there is an opportunity to display their stories in their own language. Direct quotations from women such as Freycinet will be presented in both English and French. This approach was used in the *From Robes to Chinese Fortunes* exhibition displayed at the Immigration Museum, Melbourne, in 2017, where text

[27] Wood and Latham, *The Objects of Experience: Transforming Visitor-Object Encounters in Museums*, 24.

panels were in both Chinese characters and English to increase accessibility for visitors of diverse backgrounds.[28] Developed in partnership with the Chinese Community Council of Australia, the peak advocacy body for the Chinese community in Australia, the exhibition was conceptualised as "a new view on an old story", reflecting the enduring significance of Chinese immigration and social marginalisation experienced by the Australian-Chinese community.[29] The use of bilingual text panels aimed to more effectively engage this community, one of the largest immigrant groups in Australia, and visually acknowledge the diversity of languages spoken within Australia to those visitors who weren't Chinese.[30]

Similarly, the text panels in *The Art of Science: Baudin's voyages, 1800-1804*, displayed at the Australian National Maritime Museum in 2017, were written in three languages to represent the languages used by the curatorial subjects and partnering curatorial institutions while also enabling visitors who spoke these languages to engage with the content in a different way.[31] Nuances of phrase and expression in the women traveller's native tongue can be watered down or even misrepresented when translated to English. Hence, the addition of original language alongside the English translation provides a more authentic representation of their words and caters for a broader and more diverse audience. It is not just the words of the women who wrote of their travels that can be represented in other languages, but also those of the people they encountered during their voyages. Where representations of Indigenous cultures and foreign languages exist in the historical record on display, these can be accompanied by modern translations from Indigenous communities themselves. This empowerment of Indigenous voices is one way that this heavily colonial and westernised exhibition can be more inclusive and acknowledge the power imbalance of the Enlightenment expeditions.

Finally, where provenanced objects do not exist to carry the stories of the curatorial narrative, there lies an opportunity to provide a tactile experience for the audience through an interactive display that creatively reimagines, and invites the audience to take part in, an experience shared by the travelling women. This curatorial concept will employ simple tactile interactive elements to avoid expensive technological elements as part of the exhibition design. An example of this

[28] Immigration Museum, "From Robe to Chinese Fortunes," https://museumsvictoria.com.au/immigrationmuseum/.

[29] Museums Board of Victoria, "Annual Report," (Melbourne2017-18), 4; Chinese Community Council of Australia (VIC), "About Ccca," https://cccavic.org.au/aboutus/.

[30] Jie Cao, "'From Robe to Chinese Fortune' Exhibition Launches in Melbourne Immigration Museum," Cultural Perspectives, https://www.culper.com.au/blog/from-robe-to-chinese-fortune-exhibition-launches-in-melbourne-immigration-museum.

[31] Australian National Maritime Museum, "The Art of Science: Baudin's Voyagers 1800 -1804"; National Museum of Australia, "The Art of Science: Baudin's Voyagers 1800-1804," https://www.nma.gov.au/exhibitions/the-art-of-science.

Figure 37. The interactive element inside the experiential cabin, *Journeys of a Lifetime* exhibition, Immigration Museum, Melbourne, 2017. Photos by Toni Church.

simplicity is a proposed travel chest, solid and wooden with multiple compartments or drawers filled with representative items, packed and used by women during their nineteenth-century voyages of Enlightenment. The Immigration Museum in Melbourne employed a similar concept as part of an experiential cabin display in the *Journeys of a Lifetime* interactive exhibition which brought the audience inside shipboard life for migrants travelling to Australia after World War Two.[32] The use of representative items replaces authentic artefacts that were either destroyed through over-use, age or lack of collecting and conservation by traditional museums that did not collect domestic artefacts. Visitors are invited to open the case, peer inside and then consider what they would pack for a voyage that would take them around the world to unknown locations and societies without the possibility of restocking for months at a time. Such items may include clothing and underwear, art supplies, toiletries and personal effects, items for babies born on the voyage, medicinal products, and preparations for the genuine consideration of death and mourning while on board. Placing the domestic sphere of the nineteenth century in front of a modern audience who recognises their own lives and hobbies within the case provides an opportunity for emotional and empathetic engagement between visitors and the curatorial subject.

[32] Immigration Museum, "Journeys of a Lifetime," https://museumsvictoria.com.au/immigrationmuseum.

Images and soundscape

Visual and audio elements within the exhibition will be drawn from the records of the travelling women themselves, wherever possible. Using artwork produced by Friend and those scientific artists aboard *L'Uranie* presents the experiences of these women first-hand. Although the artworks are likely to have been completed at a later date and, in the case of the French expeditionary artists, may have been influenced by official agendas, they remain as primary evidence of the voyages through the eyes of these Europeans. The style and design of their artwork, choice of subjects, and how they incorporated these works into their records inform the reader of the women's character and experiences. It also emphasises their education and class, literally illustrating how valuable their education has proven to the history of these women.[33] Such visual elements are integral to a holistic representation of the curatorial subjects within the exhibition and provide "visual signposts" to better connect the audience with these women's historical written expression.[34] Artworks will appear as larger-scaled installations, placed as objects within the display or as complementary visuals alongside the written text panel interpretation.

Further, artistic works will be translated into audio-visual elements. Either projected or appearing on a large screen within a designated quiet space, providing a reflective area and room for those visitors sensitive to sensory overload in a noisy gallery. The projections will be accompanied by gentle orchestral music or oceanic white noise, interspersed with quotes from diaries and letters that are evocative of the images on display, read by soft female voices with subtitles for the hard of hearing. This simplified approach in a sensitive sensory space was achieved in *The Pool* exhibition at the Ian Potter Centre: National Gallery of Victoria Australia in 2017.[35] The designers of *The Pool* were architects chosen to represent Australia at the 2016 Venice Architecture Biennale, whose intent was "to create an immersive and memorable experience that would leave a lasting impression" while also providing "an opportunity to create a place of respite within the busy and information-heavy Biennale experience".[36] Accompanied by an ambient soundscape and gentle-smelling scents to evoke the Australian summer, *The Pool* was an oasis of calm and reflection for more than 100,000 visitors.[37] A reflective space inside *Maiden Voyagers* accommodates greater accessibility and rest while also

[33] Anderson and Zinsser, *A History of Their Own: Women in Europe from Prehistory to the Present*, 139-140.

[34] Mark B. Sandberg, *Living Pictures, Missing Persons: Mannequins, Museums, and Modernity* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003), 17.

[35] The Ian Potter Centre: NGV Australia, "The Pool," https://www.ngv.vic.gov.au/exhibition/the-pool/.

[36] Australian Design Review, "Venice Biennale Q+A: Aileen Sage and Michelle Tabet," https://www.australiandesignreview.com/architecture/venice-biennale-qa-aileen-sage-michelle-tabet/.

[37] Australian Arts Review, "The Pool: Architecture, Culture and Identity," https://artsreview.com.au/the-pool-architecture-culture-and-identity/.

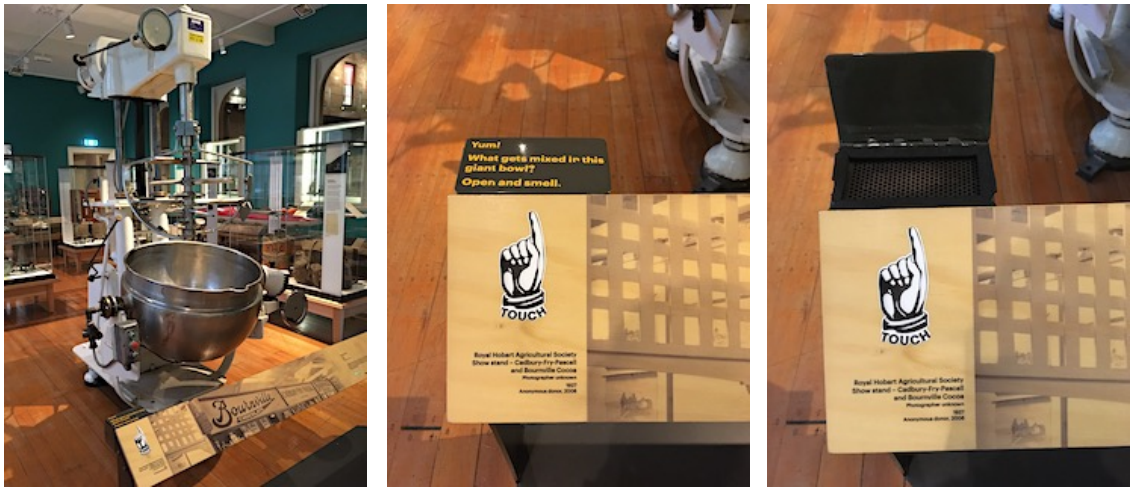

Figure 38. *Power of Change* exhibition chocolate smell interactive, Tasmanian Museum and Gallery, 2017. Photos by Toni Church.

prompting the visitor to reflect on the artwork as an extension of the women's experiences expressed in their words. A selection of travel writing will be broadcast to enliven the quiet space and provide a more embodied experience for the audience.

Olfactory engagement

To embody the curatorial subject as fully as possible within the exhibition space, olfactory interactives will be employed to communicate not only what the travelling women saw, how they recorded their experiences, but also how those experiences smelt. Smell is powerfully connected to memory and provides another avenue for emotional engagement with the audience through association with memories.[38] The inclusion of smell within exhibition design is well established. For example, the Western Australian Maritime Museum re-created a spice market within their *Indian Ocean Gallery*; a chocolate pan was placed within *The Power of Change: Tasmania in the Twentieth Century* at the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery; and there was the memorable addition of a vomit smell-bottle in *Rough Medicine: Life & Death in the Age of Sail*, a travelling exhibition by the South Australian Maritime Museum. [39] Overseas, the Van Abbemuseum in Eindhoven, The Netherlands, recently

[38] Henning, *Museums, Media and Cultural Theory*, 129; Chris Weedon and Glenn Jordan, "Collective Memory: Theory and Politics," *Social Semiotics* 22, no. 2 (2012): 143; Crane, "The Conundrum of Ephemerality: Time, Memory, and Museums," 104-05.

[39] South Australian Maritime Museum, "Rough Medicine: Life & Death in the Age of Sail (Travelling Exhibition)," http://museum.wa.gov.au/museums/maritime/rough-medicine; Western Australian Maritime Museum, "Indian Ocean Gallery," https://visit.museum.wa.gov.au/maritime/indian-ocean-gallery; Tasmanian Museum & Art Gallery, "The Power of Change: Tasmania in the Twentieth Century," https://www.tmag.tas.gov.au/whats_on/exhibitions/archive/now_showing.

launched a fully multi-sensory exhibition throughout their entire gallery space.[40] *Delinking and Relinking* encourages visitors to engage with 25 sensory tools designed to be touched, smelled or listened to in order to experience artworks in dynamic new ways.[41] The curators collaborated with numerous experts in physical accessibility and various interest groups to ensure broader perspectives were included in the curatorial content, so that the audience experiences art in new ways physically and "metaphorically, by giving expression to different, lesser-known voices".[42] To deepen visitor engagement, the olfactory experience of travelling aboard a voyage of Enlightenment will be captured in simple smells that are easily replicated within the gallery. Floral scents that would have been foreign to nineteenth-century European women, salty sea air, spices from the Indian Ocean islands nearer the equator, even the unsavoury smells of shipboard life can be replicated. Once again, by providing the audience with a multisensory gallery experience in which they are given relatable parallels to those experiences shared by the travelling women in their writings, an emotive connection is created between exhibition content and the visitor.

Physical representation

The use of mannequins to represent the curatorial subjects will be limited within this exhibition. As discussed earlier (see Chapter Two), traditional forms of female representation have been heavily influenced by the male gaze and, as such, are rarely accurate portrayals of the curatorial subject. Indeed, there is value to displaying costume and physical representations of women within the gallery. They provide a tangible sense of historical embodiment by the audience, who can more readily relate to this bodily experience of wearing costume. [43] As Julia Petrov has emphasised, museum audiences engage with dress in museums by remembering and connecting with the objects due to their personal histories; they see the items as fashion, not artefact.[44] However, to avoid the trappings of the male gaze tied up with traditional mannequin models that distract from an accurate embodied representation of nineteenth-century travelling women, alternative design approaches have been sought to provide similar experiences of connection and personal embodiment within the audience.[45]

[40] Van Abbemuseum, "Delinking and Relinking: New Collection Display," https://vanabbemuseum.nl/en/programme/programme/delinking-and-relinking/.

[41] Adrian Murphy, "Van Abbemuseum Launches the Netherlands' First, Fully Multi-Sensory Exhibition," https://www.museumnext.com/article/van-abbemuseum-launches-the-netherlands-first-fully-multi-sensory-exhibition/.

[42] Van Abbemuseum, "Delinking and Relinking: New Collection Display".

[43] Petrov, "Cross-Purposes: Museum Display and Material Culture," 223.

[44] Julia Petrov, "Cross-Purposes: Museum Display and Material Culture," 219, 31.

[45] Entwistle, "Fashion and the Fleshy Body: Dress as Embodied Practice," 335.

The *Journeys of a Lifetime* travelling case interactive inspired a simple method to display clothing and textiles. A reproduced nineteenth-century travelling case will be used to artistically display the types of clothing worn by Friend and Freycinet. Some artistic records illustrate their clothing, and their diaries detail textile choices that can be matched to comparative styles recorded on the Australian Dress Register and held in collections such as the Swan Guildford Historical Society in Western Australia.[46] Rather than being displayed on mannequins, the dresses will be supported by invisible props to show them as if they are being pulled out of the travelling case for the day's wear. The cases themselves can be lined with fabrics to prevent damage to original costumes while also providing the illusion of a case filled with clothing for the long voyage ahead. Further, contemporary samples of the textiles will be available for visitors to feel the fabrics worn and described by Friend and Freycinet. These tactile swatches of heavy, scratchy or luxurious cloth allow the audience to feel on their skin an understanding of what it was like to stand in the shoes of the women aboard these voyages. A similar approach was used in the atelier section of *The House of Dior: Seventy Years of Haute Couture* at the National Gallery of Victoria International, Melbourne. Visitors could not touch the expensive garments, but swatches of fabric were available for closer inspection. [47] Australian and international period costume designers, such as Amanda Nichols of Replica Project and Hainsworth in England, have developed design techniques and sourced original fabrics to recreate costumes for stage and screen.[48] Such high-quality skills will be required to ensure authenticity in the finished exhibition product. Swatches will accompany quotes from the historical record. The women's voices will describe the heat of such layers while walking through Swan River in high summer, or the unexpected glamour of church services in Brazil where the local women wore bright finery, to the light muslin cloth required while visiting Pacific islands close to the equator where the weather was stifling beyond anything they had experienced. As Joanne Entwistle has stated, "dress is an embodied practice, a situated bodily practice that is embedded within the social world".[49] By displaying either period-specific costume or high-quality reproductions in an embodied manner that mirrors how travelling women would have carried and stored their clothing—rather than relying on mannequin bodies whose cultural interpretation may interfere with the curatorial meaning—the dress objects maintain their connection to the social

[46] "Australian Dress Register," Museum of Applied Arts & Sciences, https://www.australiandressregister.org/; Swan Guildford Historical Society, "Exhibitions," https://www.swanguildfordhistoricalsociety.org.au/guildford-wa-history-historic-attractions/exhibition-in-the-court-house/; Lydia Edwards, *How to Read a Dress: A Guide to Changing Fashion from the 16th to the 20th Century* (London: Bloomsbury, 2017).

[47] National Gallery of Victoria, "The House of Dior: Seventy Years of Haute Couture, 27 August - 7 November 2017".

[48] Amanda Nichols, "Replica Project," https://www.replicaproject.com/about/; Hainsworth, "Hainsworth: The Fabric of a Nation," https://www.hainsworth.co.uk/.

[49] Entwistle, "Fashion and the Fleshy Body: Dress as Embodied Practice," 325.

world of the early nineteenth century and communicate an embodied experience for the audience through tactile elements.

With a larger budget and more technological expertise, animated projections based on augmented reality can be adopted to bring to life existing portraits of these women. Augmented reality is when technology superimposes computer-generated images onto a user's view of the real world and is now widely available to audiences through their smartphones. This technology adopts the use of the smartphone's camera to view an enhanced reality through the screen by bringing print, objects and places to life using digital content—such as the recent Pokémon Go phenomenon.[50] Overlaying an augmented reality feature to physical installations would bring the women to life in the palms of the audience who have smartphones, while not detracting from the real-world gallery experience of those visitors who choose not to engage with the technology. An effective example of this physical presence is the silhouettes of women in period dress that were installed as cut-out installations at the Officer's Quarters Museum at Eaglehawk Neck in Tasmania, overlaid with text to detail their experience.[51] This simple but effective design technique made the visitor consider these women's experiences in this place. They took up physical and historical space in the record by forcing the visitor to manoeuvre around the cut-outs as they navigated the exhibition. Standing eye-to-eye with a silhouette that causes you to step around it projects an understanding to the audience that these women had a presence in this place and thus deserve a historical memory. Adding a further technological layer to this type of installation through the use of augmented reality where the cut-outs could speak to you about their experiences on screen would add another layer of interaction—albeit somewhat uncanny. Placing the power of historical interpretation back into the voices of the women themselves through augmented reality goes some way to balancing the traditionally dominant understanding of women's physical presence in museums and galleries that is heavily influenced by the male gaze.

[50] Bridget Guthrie and Amber Standley, "Using Augmented Reality in Galleries and Museums," *Museums Galleries Australia Magazine* 25, no. 2 (2017): 24; Brett Williamson, "Pokemon Go Technology Brings 1800s Artworks to Life for Augmented Reality Experience," ABC Radio, http://www.abc.net.au/new/2016-07-15/pokemon-go-tech-brings-1800s-artworks-to-life-at-maritime-museum/7632038.

[51] Tasmania Parks & Wildlife Service, "The Officers' Quarters, Eaglehawk Neck Historic Site," https://parks.tas.gov.au/explore-our-parks/eaglehawk-neck-historic-site.

Figure 39. Officer's Quarters Museum, Eaglehawk Neck, Tasmania, 2017. Photo by Toni Church.

Interactive elements

Simple interactives that rely on limited technology but engage a broad swathe of the intended audience and contribute to visitors' understandings of the curatorial content have been given precedence in this Curatorial Concept. Without a confirmed budget and variable gallery dimensions, these proposed interactives intend to be low cost with a small physical footprint that aim to enhance, not detract from, the overall exhibition design and curatorial intent. Using the framework of an empathetic museum, the interactives are foremost designed to impart an embodied historical experience to the audience (expanded upon in Chapters One and Two).[52] The most simple of these is a set of dress-ups, based on costumes worn by the female stowaways of the French voyages of Enlightenment so that children can use play to understand what it was like to disguise themselves on board a ship of male sailors.[53] Some prompting cards will accompany these dress-ups so that adults can pose light-hearted questions to children in costume that connect with the heart of these women's experiences; such as "how will you go to the toilet up on deck while pretending to be a male sailor?" or "dressing in costume is the easy part, but how do you hide who you are while cleaning yourself?".

[52] Henning, *Museums, Media and Cultural Theory*, 31; Rhiannon Mason, "Cultural Theory and Museum Studies," 20.

[53] This interactive is dependent upon COVID-19 restrictions and public health guidelines.

Using the primary ways of being human, often the most comedic to children (young and old), to pose serious questions about gender identity that posed a genuine danger to these women is a simple way for younger audiences to consider the subject's experiences more deeply. Further, given that the French stowaway women remained hidden and were from the working class, both records of what they wore and the original textiles themselves have been largely lost to history. A reimagined portrait of Jeanne Baret will be used as a reference point in reproducing articles of clothing for the dress-up interactive, and French naval records about uniform orders for the positions Girardin and Baret fulfilled while onboard their expeditions (expanded upon in Chapter Five).

Figure 40. "MAD^{LLA} BARÉ", engraving, artist unknown. From *Navigazioni de Cook pel grande oceano e itorno al globo*, Volume 2, 1816, Sonzogono e Comp, Milano. State Library of New South Wales.

Similarly, a simple hands-on interactive to engage visitors with the reality of life on board for these travelling women would be a desk set up to wobble while the visitor tries to write a journal entry. A small table set on rollers, or with the top installed on ball bearings to slide about, will emulate the swaying of a ship on the ocean. This is where the visitor's book for the exhibition could be displayed, allowing an opportunity for feedback and an interactive experience of writing a diary onboard. These simple tactile interactives are relatively low-budget but provide a broad age range of visitors with an embodied experience of what it physically felt like for the curatorial subjects.

Technology

Key to the main aim of the exhibition is imparting the audience an understanding of women's experiences by highlighting their voices through their writing about their voyages. To avoid conservation limitations on all original paper-based materials, technology will be employed to bridge

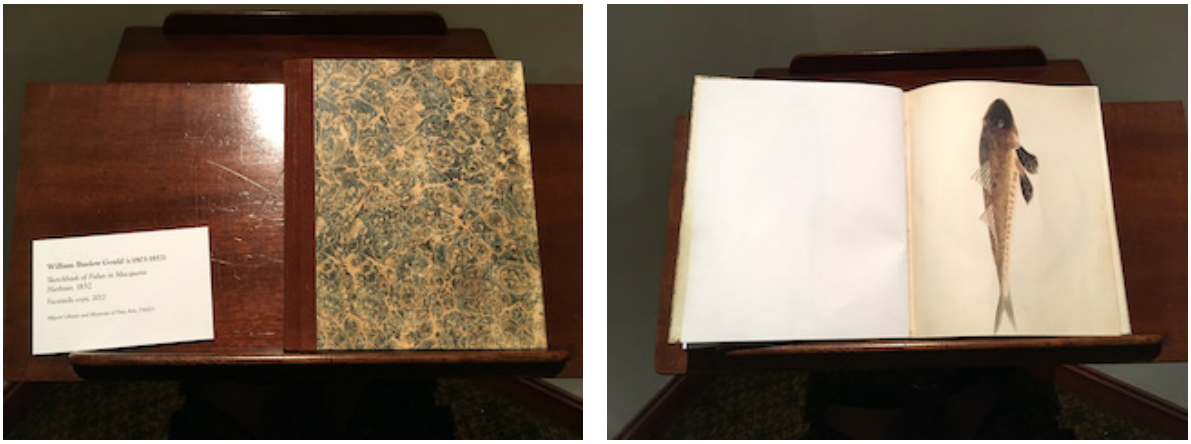

Figure 41. Facsimile archives for visitor handling, Allport Library and Museum, Hobart, 2017. Photos by Toni Church.

the divide between authenticity and practical hands-on engagement.[54] Allowing visitors to read the original diaries is a simple way of engaging them with the original archive by using high-resolution images of the pages either on digital tablets or reproduced facsimiles. Both options would require a magnification function (or a simple magnifying glass with the facsimile copies) and a transcription for a modern audience not trained in reading nineteenth-century cursive (or French language, in the case of Rose de Freycinet). The Allport Library and Archive at the State Library of Tasmania in Hobart adopted this approach to engage visitors with select items from their archive that were too delicate to handle. They provided facsimile copies of texts related to their display, situated near seating within the exhibition to provide a reflective space for the audience to engage more deeply with the archival content. [55]

Textual elements must be universally accessible, which is why a simple and recognisable digital functionality, such as the inclusion of QR codes to accompany such interactives, has been incorporated into the exhibition design.[56] QR codes are a recognisable element, thanks to their use as a 'check-in' for smartphone devices during the COVID-19 pandemic since 2020, and as such, are a user-friendly digital inclusion. QR codes allow for flexibility in developing digital content to accompany the exhibition, with a simple landing page allowing for many interactive elements. The inclusion of additional digital content, designed to be accessed through a visitor's device while standing in the physical gallery space, has become common practice in recent museum designs. App-based curatorial

[54] Pille Runnel and Pille Pruulmann-Vengerfeldt, *Democratising the Museum: Reflections on Participatory Technologies* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang Ag, 2014).

[55] Allport Library and Museum of Fine Arts, "Allport Collection Display," https://libraries.tas.gov.au/allport/Pages/default.aspx.

[56] Helen McHugh and Deb Sulway, "Look, Think, Respond: Simple RFID Technology Helping Students Engage at the Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House," in *Interesting Times: New Roles for Collections* (University of Melbourne: Museums Australia, 2010).

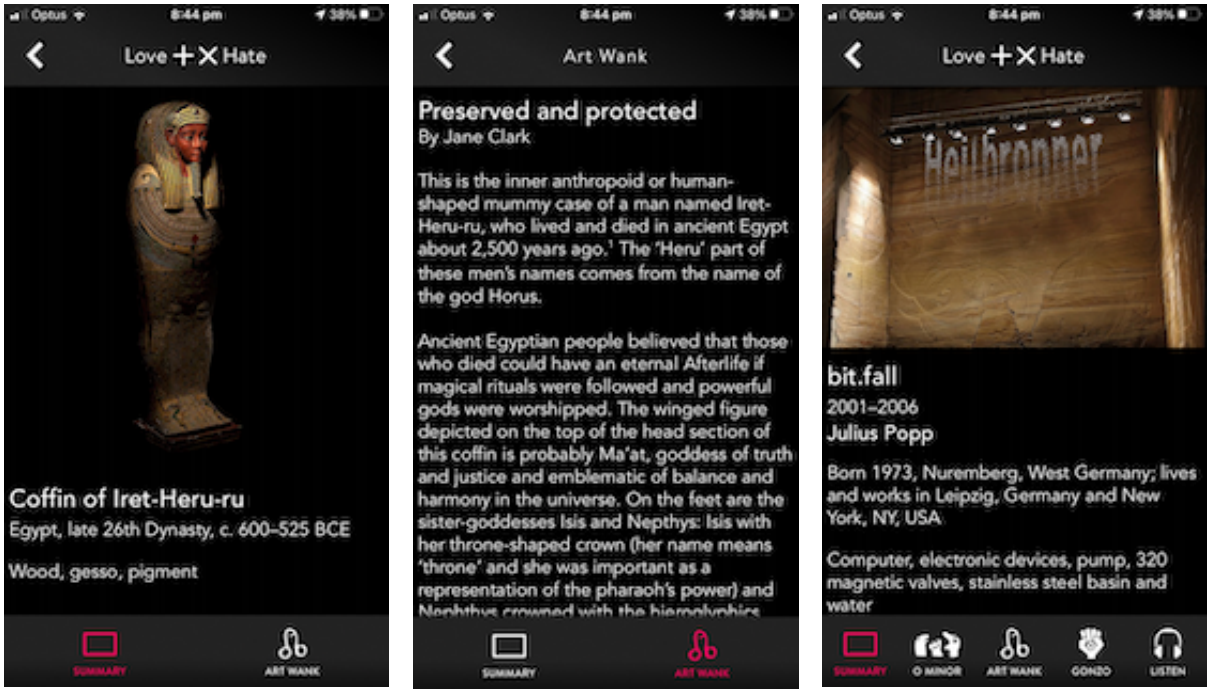

Figure 42. Screenshots from MONA's "The O" app, 2017. Screenshots by Toni Church.

interpretation at MONA in Tasmania, Western Australian Museum Boola Bardip and additional digital content, including audio, available to visitors at the *First Peoples* exhibition at Melbourne Museum are popular examples.[57] Audio layering, in particular, can be linked to QR codes for those visitors who have difficulty reading exhibition text. Further, it can assist visitors in engaging with the cursive text of the original documents, which are often difficult to decipher for the untrained eye. A 'read along' audio voiced by an actor of similar cultural background as the author is a simple tool to add depth to curatorial interpretation. The design of the QR code can be in contrasting colours or printed in braille to allow for easier recognition for visitors with visual impairment, and the link can automatically play audio on the visitor's devices to reduce the need for further reading by those visitors who may find this challenging. Implanting an audio interactive within an individual's device, at their discretion, also reduces the challenges of providing earphones and hand-held communal devices as the COVID-19 pandemic continues to impact high-visitation spaces such as museums and galleries.

[57] MONA, "The O," https://mona.net.au/museum/the-o; Art Processors, "Creating Dark, Different Experimental Experiences: The O," https://www.artprocessors.net/projects/mona; Western Australian Museum, "Gogo Digital Guide," https://visit.museum.wa.gov.au/boolabardip/gogo-digital-guide; Gina Fairley, "The Audio Tour Has Just Been Reimagined: We Tell You How," ArtsHub, https://www.artshub.com.au/news/sponsored-content/the-audio-tour-has-just-been-reimagined-we-tell-you-how-261970-2370078/; Melbourne Museum, "First Peoples," https://museumsvictoria.com.au/bunjilaka/about-us/first-peoples/.

Universal Accessibility

Universal accessibility is a crucial driver behind design decisions in this Curatorial Concept. Making the exhibition available to as many visitors as possible is an opportunity to increase the audience's size and scope to benefit the exhibition's exposure and deepen the levels of engagement with this audience. Western Australian Churchill Fellow Caine Chennatt has emphasised that the accessibility of museums, and related curatorial considerations, benefit *all* visitors. [58] By making the exhibition more meaningful for more visitors through universal accessibility design considerations, it more strongly aligns with the more community-minded concept of the empathetic museum that drives the purpose of this exhibition.[59] Enhancing universal accessibility can be achieved in numerous simple ways that do not necessarily increase an exhibition's projected budget or footprint. Disability Access and Inclusion plans are standard practice in Australian museums and galleries, so enhanced accessibility elements are included in this curatorial concept as a minimum standard.[60] Incorporating recognised universal design principles into basic exhibition design choices, such as contrasting text colours against the gallery walls or text panel design and considered font styling, makes an exhibition easier to read for the entire audience, especially for those who are vision impaired.[61] Further, by using facsimile objects and reimagined artefacts, the gallery lighting can be brighter to benefit those who have difficulty reading in low light environments, rather than the dimmed lighting required for original objects that also need regular page-turning and storage after three months of display for preservation. The physical object labels will be placed at an accessible height to allow those in wheelchairs to easily read them. Labels for children can also be incorporated at this lower height, with simplified text or questions about the content to encourage critical engagement for younger audiences. This was seen in two exhibitions across both NGV sites in Melbourne, with adult and child exhibition labels matching design and curatorial intent but with adapted simplified text for children.[62]

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[58] Caine Chennatt, "State of Access: Creating Inclusive Galleries, Museums and Performing Art Centres," (Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery, University of Western Australia2017).

[59] Jennings et al., "The Empathetic Museum: A New Institutional Identity," 505.

[60] Australian Museums and Galleries Association, "Access for People with a Disability"; Western Australian Museum, "Disability Access & Inclusion Plan 2018-2022," https://museum.wa.gov.au/about/corporate-documents/daip.

[61] Kevin Galvin, "Online and Print Inclusive Design and Legibility Considerations," Vision Australia, https://www.visionaustralia.org/services/digital-access/blog/12-03-2014/online-and-print-inclusive-design-and-legibility-considerations; VisAbility, "Providing Access for People with Vision Impairment," https://www.visability.com.au/about-visability/vision-resources/providing-access-for-people-with-vision-impairment/.

[62] The Ian Potter Centre: NGV Australia, "Brave New World: Australia 1930s," https://www.ngv.vic.gov.au/exhibition/brave-new-world/; National Gallery of Victoria: International, "Jim Dine: A Life in Print," https://www.ngv.vic.gov.au/exhibition/jim-dine/.

Figure 43. Views from the Old Court House Law Museum virtual tour. Law Society of Western Australia.

Any audiovisual elements should have subtitles or AUSLAN interpretation, with a hearing loop and descriptive audio captions for images.[63] Consideration should also be given to facilitate accessible tours of the exhibition with AUSLAN interpreters and provide a low sensory environment session for neuro-diverse visitors, such as those on the autism spectrum.[64] To counteract the potential closure of public sites due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and provide exhibition content to

[63] Department of Health, "Telecoils and Hearing Loops," Commonwealth Government of Australia, https://hearingservices.gov.au/wps/portal/hso/site/eligibility/abouthearing/telecoils_hearing_loops/!ut/p/a0/04_Sj9CPykssy0xPLMnMz0vMAfGjzOK9A03NDD0NjLwtwvzdDBwd_UJ9vNxMjAwcDfULsh0VAav0Y6c!/.

[64] Manar Matusiak, "How to Create an Autism-Friendly Environment," Living Autism, https://livingautism.com/create-autism-friendly-environment/.

potential audiences who are physically unable to visit the gallery space, technology can be harnessed to produce an interactive 3D tour of the exhibition. This technology is becoming commonplace and is increasingly easy to both photograph and host on online platforms. Using a relatively low budget and minimal staffing resources, the Old Court House Law Museum in Perth contracted local imaging company Aspect 360 to produce a virtual tour of the permanent and temporary exhibitions within the Old Court House building. [65] Given the age of the building, the gallery spaces were not universally accessible, so the virtual tour allowed visitors who could not traverse steps to experience the entire exhibition space. Further, the tour allowed visitors not to physically visit the building to view the exhibitions and boost the museum's visitation with a new digital audience.[66] Planning physical and digital exhibition elements to be universally accessible during the development stages of the exhibition allows for the possibility of a broader potential audience and greater resonance with this audience once the exhibition is in place. Further, any content that is born digital has a lifespan beyond the physical display of the exhibition and can be repurposed for education programs and social media content to further enhance the visitor experience and understanding of the curatorial interpretation.

Chapter Conclusion

Maiden Voyagers: Travelling Women to Western Australia, 1818-1830 has been curated with the audience experience of the content as the exhibition's focus. With an emphasis on empathetic engagement and universal access as best practice, this curatorial concept aims to emotionally engage the audience more fully in the curatorial subject matter. The design is low-budget, low technology and adaptable to most standard gallery spaces. However, the importance of the design intent has been well addressed and aligns with the major themes covered in the exegesis. Further to the physical elements of the exhibition outlined above are the text panels, objects and object labels that communicate the curatorial content. These written elements embody the feminist and autonomy theory principles outlined in Chapter Three and represent the research presented in Chapters Four, Five and Six. The selection of objects and written elements are included in the following chapter and are designed to complement the audience engagement elements proposed in this chapter.

[65] The Law Society of Western Australia, "Old Court House Law Museum Virtual Tour," https://aspect360.captur3d.io/view/the-law-society-of-wa/the-old-court-house-law-museum-perth.

[66] I was the Museum Curator at the Old Court House Law Museum during the development and delivery of this virtual tour.

Maiden Voyagers

Travelling women to Western Australia 1818 - 1830

Exhibition Catalogue

CHAPTER EIGHT
CATALOGUE

Introduction

The earliest European women to travel to Western Australia before and shortly after British Settlement at Swan River were the wives of great men. That is how history remembers them.

This exhibition shines a light on the stories and experiences of Rose de Freycinet and Mary Ann Friend and their contemporaries, drawing them out of the historical shadow of their husbands' achievements. Their stories are shared in their own words, as they wrote them by hand on the board voyages of Enlightenment science and empire-making that defined European expansion across the globe in the early nineteenth century.

As early travel writers, who most commonly addressed their words to friends and confidants, these women are frank and open, vibrant and funny. Both supported their husbands but demonstrated an independence and fierce intelligence that official histories of these voyages have not rightfully acknowledged.

They were women of their time, raised with the morality of religion and curiosity of science, loyal and abiding of their husbands but possessing independence and a lust for adventure that drove them to board a ship into the literal unknown. This exhibition shares the stories of these maiden voyagers.

Voyages of Enlightenment were an intensely male experience. The King nominated male ministers to establish trade, undertaken by men, in far-flung colonies, settled and administered by men, and visited by travelling naturalists trained in exclusively male academies across western Europe.

As a rule, women did not travel in this nature.

Scientific work was masculine and, combined with the purported physical dangers to women travelling beyond Europe's shores, kept women from participating in voyages of Enlightenment. Yet, women did travel during the Enlightenment. While it was uncommon, it was not wholly unusual for women to accompany male relatives who were merchants, missionaries or diplomats to European colonies—although no woman served on board the ships as part of the scientific or expeditionary team (at least not officially).

Some women disguised their true identities to stow away aboard voyages of Enlightenment. In contrast, others acted officially as their husband's companions. Still, all of these adventuring women of the nineteenth century contributed to European understandings of science, culture and knowledge of the 'new world'.

They were simultaneously white and female, privileged and subordinate, intrepid explorers and domestic angels, capitalist agents and moral exemplars.

Cover page: Jacques Arago, 'Réception à Diely', Timor, 1818'. National Library of Australia.

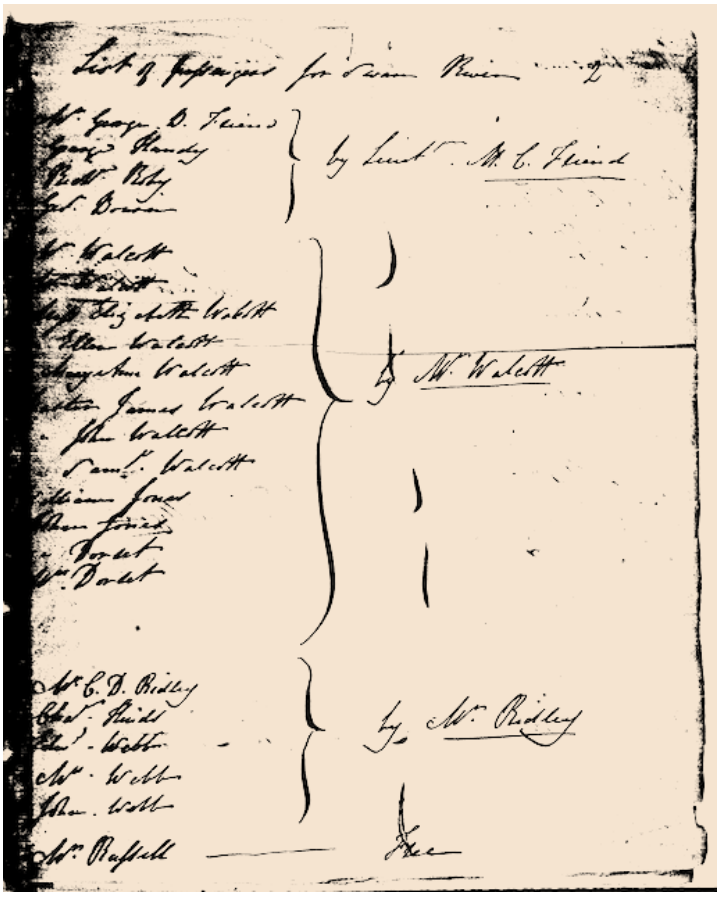
The Disappearing Woman

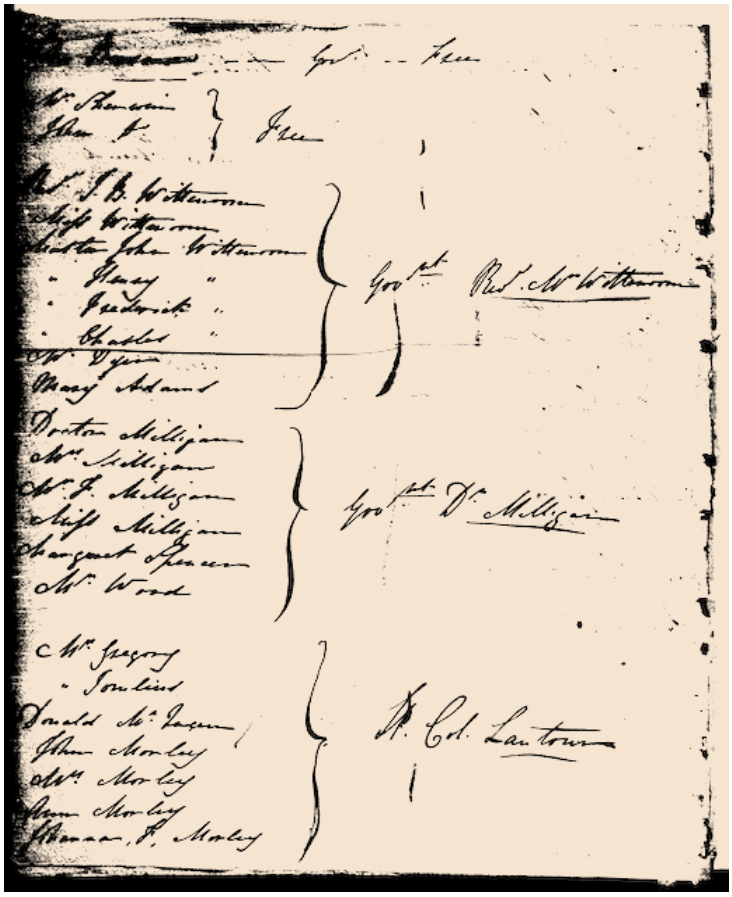
In September 1818, the French artist, J. Alphonse Pellion, used watercolours to paint the crew of *L'Uranie* on the beach in Shark Bay, Western Australia. The captain's wife, Rose de Freycinet, had been smuggled aboard for the lengthy naval voyage to the south seas.

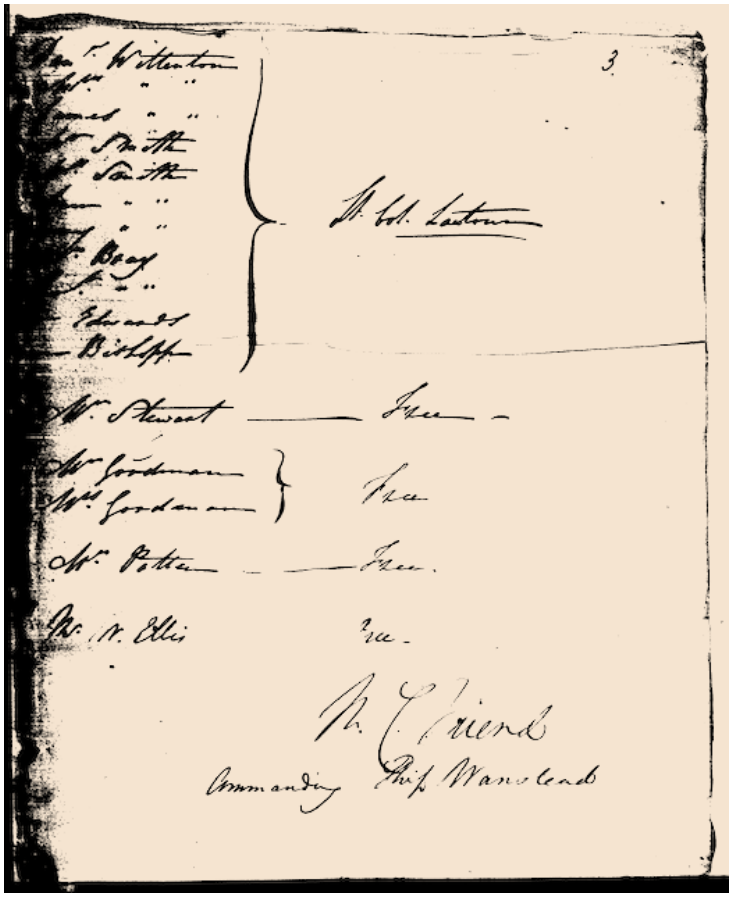
In Pellion's painting (top image), preserved within his journal, Rose is reading beneath the shade of her tent. She is positioned to the right of other tents and sailors. But, in the official record of the voyage, published in lithograph form (bottom image), Rose de Freycinet has been erased from the image.

Wives were forbidden to travel with the French Navy.

J. Alphonse Pellion, 'Shark Bay, as observed from the Uranie', watercolour on paper, 1818. State Library of Western Australia; and J. Alphonse Pellion, 'Shark Bay, as observed from the Uranie', lithograph, 1818. State Library of Western Australia.







Passenger Lists, Fremantle 1830

Rose de Freycinet was the not the only wife to travel on her husband's ship.

In 1829, Mary Ann Friend accompanied her husband, Lieutenant M.C. Friend, who was a decorated war hero. Now retired from the British Navy, Friend was captain of the *Wanstead*.

Most of the ship's passengers were destined for the newly established Swan River Colony, though some travelled on to Hobart.

On arrival at Fremantle in January 1830, Captain Friend lodged a register of his passengers with the colony's Harbourmaster, Matthew Currie (also a retired British naval officer).

A number of early Western Australian colonial families landed from the Wanstead, including the Wittenooms, Morleys, Walcotts and Milligans.

Captain Friend's brothers were listed as on board, and travelled on to Hobart.

Mary Ann Friend, however, was missing from the official list of passengers. She was another invisible, travelling woman.

M.C. Friend, 'List of Passengers for Swan River', January 1830. State Records Office of Western Australia.

L'ASTRONOME.

Paris chez Niquet Place Maubert près la rue des Lavandieres.
et chez Dubois rue de Grenelle S.t Honoré vis-a-vis celle des deux Ecus.

The Mind Has No Sex: The Scientific Engagement of Women

The expansion of scientific knowledge was a dominant cultural force of the Enlightenment era. More practically, it was seen as a pathway to greater importance and wealth through scientific discovery and colonisation. For centuries, religion framed the lives of Europeans, affecting law, social and intellectual discourse, and domesticity. Religion provided order.

The Scientific Revolution of the seventeenth century transformed this system of beliefs into the Enlightenment of the eighteenth century. With scientific discovery as a driving force, the world was no longer wholly understood as the result of God's will. It became understood as a global history of men who used science and rationality to inform their world view, expand their horizons of trade and wealth, and gain knowledge—valuable for its own sake.

While women were present and active in the Enlightenment's burgeoning scientific and cultural revolution, the cultural subordination from earlier centuries continued. Science replaced religion in defining cultural expectations of women during the Enlightenment. Biological difference was equated with traditional gender roles. Numerous Enlightenment thinkers and published texts increasingly relied on medical evidence to support their ideas of feminine inferiority.

Despite the waning strength of belief in God's will amongst men of science, they selectively perceived traditional gender roles as God-given and an expression of God's 'ordering hand'. This religious expression established ideals of 'goodness' and cultural expectations of morality in European women that stretched well into the nineteenth century.

Despite the Scientific Revolution and Enlightenment periods reinforcing cultural stereotypes about women's inferiority, there were detractors to this movement. Numerous philosophes, aristocrats and women themselves worked to vindicate women's subjugated position in modern European society.

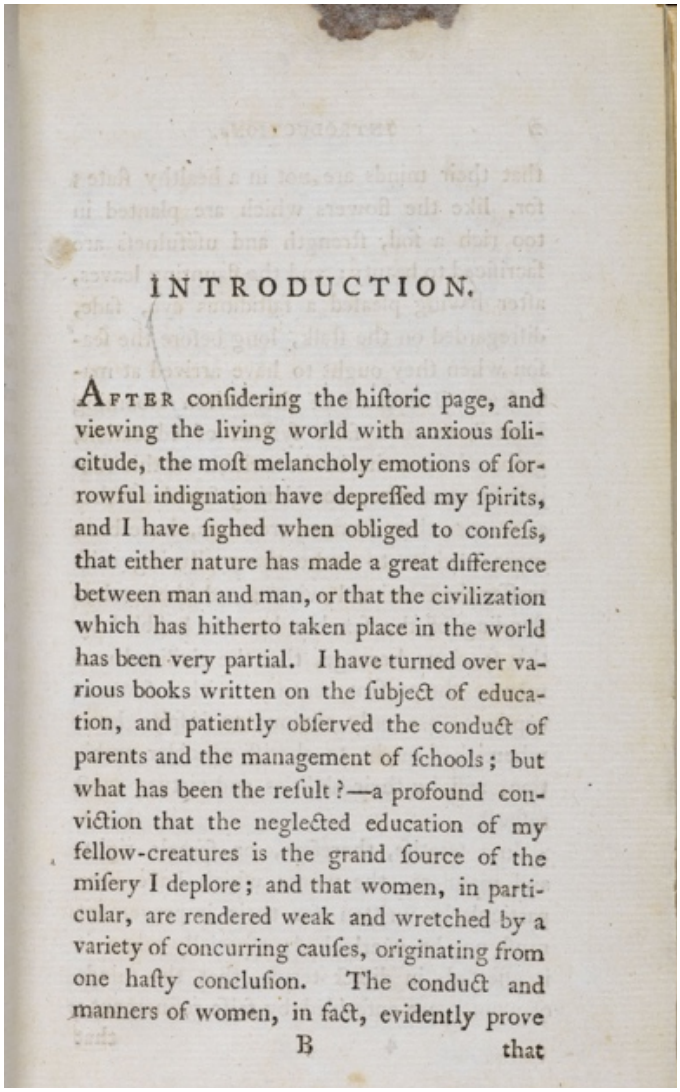
While the disruption of social hierarchy was a threat elucidated by Jean-Baptiste Molières in Les Femmes Savants, which in 1672 mocked Cartesian women who had gone mad after exposure to philosophy; in the same decade, François Poullain de La Barre supported women's education by using Descartes' musings on the separation of mind and body to argue that "the mind has no sex".

Mary Wollstonecraft became the most prominent advocate of this idea with the modern popularisation of her published contradictions of Enlightenment thoughts on gender and weakness, most notably *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792).

Wollstonecraft argued that reason and virtue were innate in all human beings, challenging philosophes such as Rousseau, Voltaire, Kant, Montesquieu, Fichte, Hegel and Locke. They variously reduced women's value to their sexuality or simply declared them subordinate, restricting them to their 'nature'.

Wollstonecraft was not alone in her assertions, having been preceded by Théodore de Hippel's writings on franchise for women in 1790 and Olympe de Gouges' call for the abolition of all male privilege in 1791.

Jean Edme Nochez, 'L'Astronome', lithograph, 1750-1800. Metropolitan Museum of Art.



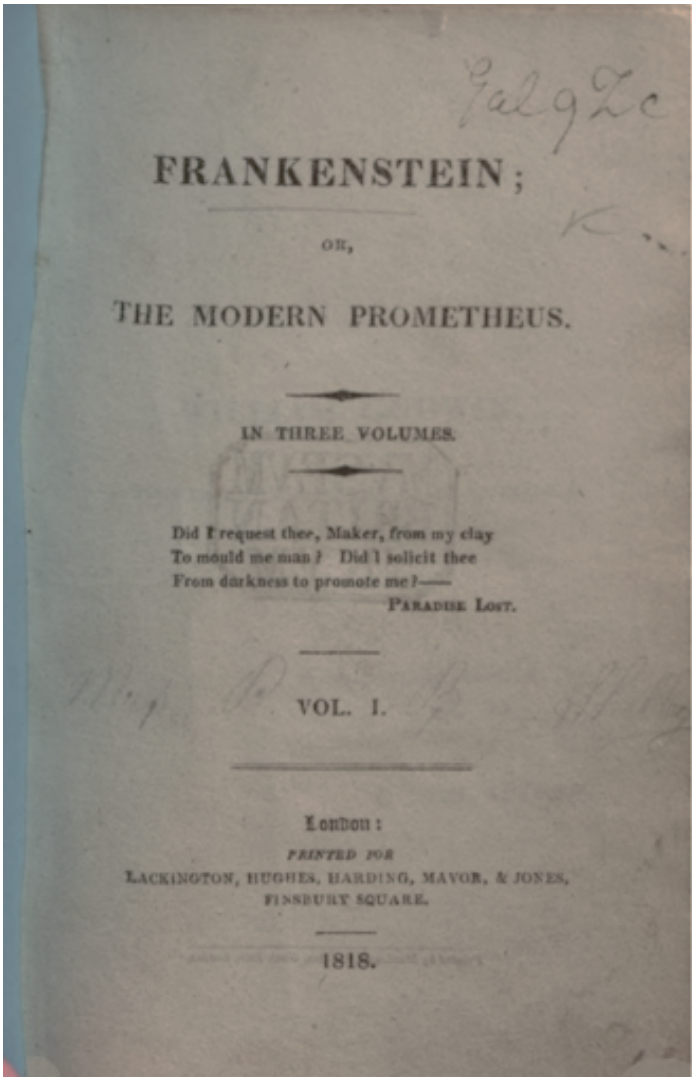
INTRODUCTION.

AFTER conſidering the hiſtoric page, and viewing the living world with anxious ſolicitude, the moſt melancholy emotions of ſorrowful indignation have depreſſed my ſpirits, and I have ſighed when obliged to confeſs, that either nature has made a great difference between man and man, or that the civilization which has hitherto taken place in the world has been very partial. I have turned over various books written on the ſubject of education, and patiently obſerved the conduct of parents and the management of ſchools; but what has been the reſult?—a profound conviction that the neglected education of my fellow-creatures is the grand ſource of the miſery I deplore; and that women, in particular, are rendered weak and wretched by a variety of concurring cauſes, originating from one haſty concluſion. The conduct and manners of women, in fact, evidently prove

B that

In 1792, Mary Wollstonecraft wrote a blazing condemnation of the disempowerment of women in western societies, which is now acknowledged as a critical text of the Enlightenment.

Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman. With Strictures on political and moral subjects*, second edition, 1792.



FRANKENSTEIN;

OR,

THE MODERN PROMETHEUS.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

Did I request thee, Maker, from my clay
To mould me man? Did I solicit thee
From darkness to promote me?——
PARADISE LOST.

VOL. I.

London:
PRINTED FOR
LACKINGTON, HUGHES, HARDING, MAVOR, & JONES,
FINSBURY SQUARE.

1818.

Proving that reason and virtue were universal qualities, Wollstonecraft's daughter, Mary Shelley, explored the scientific nature of man in her gothic novel, *Frankenstien*, first published in 1818.

Provoked by philosophical discussions with her husband Percy Shelley and close friend Lord Byron about "the nature of the principle of life", Shelley wrote *Frankenstein* as a thinly veiled warning of the scientific power of man playing God in the age of Enlightenment. Grappling with the philosophical balance between religion and science in her own life, Shelley developed the novel from a dream about the horrifying "effect of any human endeavour to mock the stupendous mechanism of the Creator of the world".

Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein, or, the Modern Prometheus*. Volume 1, (London: Lackington, Hughes, Harding, etc., 1818). British Library.

Salonnières: Patrons but not peers

Despite warnings and derisions from Enlightenment philosophes, European women were active consumers of science and philosophical discussions. Informal networks of upper-class women took advantage of their social prestige to access scientific knowledge through meetings and letters with other educated noblewomen or dealings with common patrons—most prominently through Salons. *Salonnières* were wealthy and socially prominent women who hosted intellectual scientific or literary gatherings in their homes, selecting promising young male philosophes or natural scientists to engage in discussions of their work with the social elite.

Well-established by the end of the seventeenth century, *Salonnières* actively engaged in the circles of power who frequented their home. They had control over their patrons' artistic, literary or scientific reputations—statesmen, ambassadors, artists, intellectuals, philosophers and scientists—even affecting political policies, as government ministers were appointed from the most prominent and exclusive salons.

However, as *Salonnieres*, these women were following, not creating, the scientific and intellectual movements of the Enlightenment. Just as their birth privilege granted them only limited access to royal and political power, their social standing gave them only limited access to a meaningful education. Should they have been men, they could have turned their patrons into their peers and intellectual equals.

Jean François de Troy."La Lecture de Molière", oil on canvas, c.1728. From the collection of the late Marchioness of Cholmondeley, Houghton.

Gabrielle-Emilie Le Tonnelier de Breteuil, Marquise du Châtelet (1706-1749) was one *Salonnière* who earned the title of Philosophe among her male peers. A prominent French noblewoman, mathematician, scientist, linguist and philosopher who received a formal education at the Sorbonne, history has reduced Châtelet to her series of sexual liaisons and a fifteen-year relationship with the famed philosophe, Voltaire.

Châtelet met Voltaire upon her return to Paris in 1733, after the birth of her second child, and soon entered his circle of intellectual peers by exchanging her patronage for 'intellectual stature'; quickly outsmarting him with her mathematical and scientific prowess. Despite her genius, frequent correspondence with institutional officials, and even her connections to her mentors and Voltaire, Châtelet was refused entrance to the *Académie Royale de Sciences* in Paris on the basis of her gender.

Portrait of Émilie du Châtelet by Maurice Quentin de La Tour, from the private collection of the Marquis de Breteuil.

Institutions de Physique, first edition, 1740. Abe Books

Invisible assistants

It was not only the upper-class ladies of Europe who had access to scientific learning and discovery. Working women became involved in the new sciences through their social settings, including guilds or craftsmen and artisan workshops. They also worked in scientific circles, most commonly as illustrators, drawing anatomy, astronomy, botany and zoology. Craft skills were significant to the promulgation of modern science by developing innovative, practical training in illustration, calculations and observations skills over book-based education. Astronomy, in particular, was an artisanal enterprise using a master and apprentice approach to science that uniquely attracted women to work in family observatories, starting as amateurs and often training their daughters to work alongside them to take over the family business of science.

Between 1650 to 1710, 14 percent of Germany's astronomers were women.

Maria Margaretha Winkelmann (later, Kirch) (1670-1720) was one such woman who became a prominent German astronomer. She astutely recognised that, as an independent woman, academies would not recognise her work. Through a strategic marriage to her mentor Gottfried Kirch (30 years her senior), she worked as his assistant and became widely recognised as his equal partner in the observatory and gained access to the Berlin academy.

In 1710, Kirch recognised his wife's equal contribution to their 1702 discovery of a comet and supported the publication of three tracts under her name—and yet she was still refused a formal position with the *Societas Regia Scientarium* (Academy of Sciences), Berlin. This invisibility became the norm for women of science, both in aristocratic circles or the guild tradition.

Maria Sibylla Merian (1647-1717) was a talented artist who showed an early aptitude and passion for entomology, which she independently pursued from Frankfurt to Amsterdam and across the world to the Dutch colony of Surinam.

Merian's entomological studies began in her step-father's painting studio, developing her skills in the guild, capturing in delicate detail insects and plants for scientific publications. However, her chief interest was the study of insects, which she chose to pursue in earnest after divorcing her husband of 20 years and moving to Amsterdam from Frankfurt with her two daughters in 1685. After years of fundraising and working as a single mother, at the age of 52, Merian deposited her will and set sail for Dutch Guiana to collect and cultivate the exotic flora and fauna of Surinam.

Merian proved herself to be an exceptional scientist. Upon her return to Amsterdam, she published *Metamorphosis Insectorum Surinamensium* in 1705, a major etymological work detailing the life cycles of numerous insects with 60 detailed and coloured illustrations. She continued to publish from her fieldwork until her death, with her books receiving multiple editions. She was highly regarded in scientific circles and had six plants, nine butterflies and two beetles named after her.

Metamorphosis Insectorum Surinamensium, plate 11. Smithsonian Libraries.


Navig.di Cook-Bougainville T.II. pag.204.
Dall'Acqua inc.
MAD.LLA BARÈ.
Lazaretti colorì

Stowaways

Jeanne Baret was the first (recorded) woman to circumnavigate the world when she travelled aboard Louis-Antoine de Bougainville's voyage in 1766-1769, disguised as a man, Jean Baret, who worked as a valet and botanical assistant.

She shared a cabin with her lover, the physician and royal naturalist Philibert Commerson. She acted as his personal valet, even undertaking some of his scientific fieldwork when he fell ill on the voyage.

Although suspicions of her gender began early in the journey, it wasn't until 18 months into the voyage that locals discovered that she was a woman during a shore visit in Tahiti in 1768.

Baret was seemingly unapologetic during the investigation, stating that she disguised herself as a male valet previously, adopting male garb as a resolution to remove herself from abject poverty when orphaned at a young age. She admitted that she knew the voyage would take her around the world, which piqued her curiosity and encouraged her deception.

Bougainville praised her behaviour while aboard, citing her as an 'expert botanist', and noted that he took measures so that 'nothing disagreeable' happened to her after her discovery. Despite the assurances of her Commander, Baret left nothing to chance and was said to carry two loaded pistols to protect herself at all times while aboard the ship.

At least one table from Commerson's notebooks has been attributed to Baret, given her herb woman's knowledge using plants either native to France or readily available for purchase.

At least one other French woman, Marie-Louise Victoire Girardin, travelled the world with naval expeditions, disguised as a man.

In 1791 Girardin joined Antoine Raymond Joseph de Bruni D'Entrecasteaux's 1791 voyage of Enlightenment.

Dressed as a man, Girardin served as the ship's steward (granting her exemption from medical examination and her own cabin) and never revealed her true identity—even challenging a fellow sailor to a duel over his accusations of her sex (suffering a slashed arm in the melee).

Even after the ship's capture by the Dutch at Batavia, in the aftermath of the French Revolution when the French and Dutch were at war, Girardin maintained her assumed masculinity—only upon her death from dysentery in Batavia 1794 did a doctor unveil her true identity.

Girardin left no personal writings from her time aboard the voyage, nor is she mentioned in official correspondence from the expedition. However, there is evidence in *L'Espérance* officer Jacques-Malo La Motte du Portail's journal that Girardin developed a relationship with a young enseigne on board, Mérite, to whom she may have revealed her true identity.

But not all attempts at stowing away were successful.

'MAD^{LLA} BARÉ, Engraving, artist unknown. From Navigazioni de Cook pel grande oceano e itorno al globo, Volume 2, 1816, Sonzogono e Comp, Milano. State Library of New South Wales.

Ann Flinders

Annette 'Ann' Flinders tried, but failed, to join her husband's expedition to New South Wales in 1801. The wife of English naval Captain Matthew Flinders, she was barred by officials from joining her husband's expedition to Australia precisely because she was his wife.

The Flinders' ship *Investigator* was bound for Port Jackson (Sydney), where the couple planned that Ann Flinders would stay while her husband embarked on charting large tracts of Australia's coastline.

However, when commissioners for the Admiralty made their final inspection of the ship in May 1801, they were appalled to find Ann Flinders in the Captain's cabin "without her bonnet".

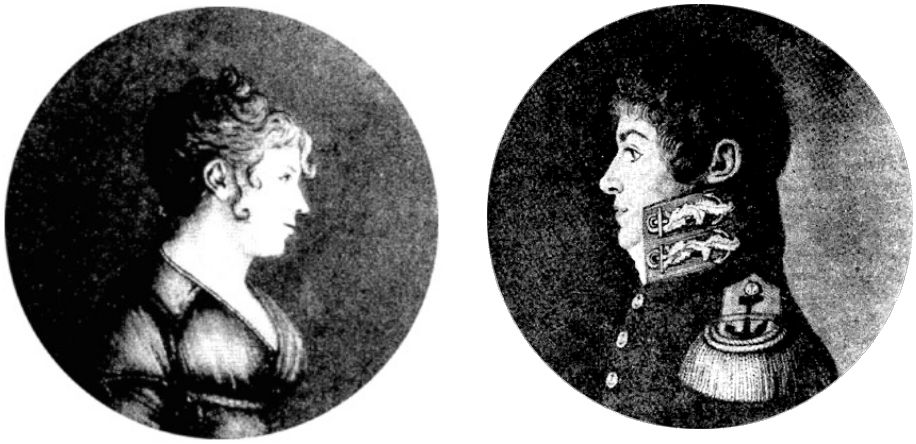
In later correspondence from Joseph Banks, it was made clear that this display of comfort in her surroundings seemed "too open a declaration of that being her home" for the Admiralty, and she was thus barred from joining her husband on board the *Investigator*.

After being married for only three months, Ann Flinders was left behind in England once her husband sailed to Australia in July 1801 and was not reunited with him until his return in October 1810. His time way included a period in French captivity.

She kept this locket, featuring a miniature portrait of her husband along with a lock of his hair, during their nine-year separation.

Matthew Flinders', watercolour on ivory, with lock of hair, ca. 1800. State Library of New South Wales.

Ann Flinders' memory box containing tokens from loved ones, including locks of hair and pressed flowers, 1800—1830. State Library of New South Wales.



Portraits of Rose de Freycinet and Louis de Freycinet, published in Marnie Bassett, *Realms and Islands: The World Voyage of Rose De Freycinet in the Corvette Uranie*, 1817-1820, 1962.

Rose de Freycinet

Rose Pinon was born in Paris in September 1794 to a solidly middle-class family. She received classical scholarly training from her headmistress mother, to whom she was deeply devoted for her entire life, having relied upon her as a sole parent after her father passed away in 1803.

In June 1814, at the age of 19, she married Louis (then 35 years) and became Rose de Freycinet. It is clear from the couple's letters and private accounts, and in Louis' choice of a bride from a lower-class family, that the couple were deeply in love. It was this love that drove Rose de Freycinet to stow away aboard her husband's voyage of Enlightenment. Disguised as a young boy, with her hair cropped short and fearful of both being discovered and the dangers that lay ahead, she embarked aboard *L'Uranie* on the adventure of a lifetime.

"…my mind is made up: I will follow my husband in his expedition around the world…"

Rose de Freycinet, letter to her mother Madame Pinon written in the hours before L'Uranie's embarkation from Toulon, in September 1817.

The diary she kept while aboard *L'Uranie* is the earliest example of travel writing produced by a European woman who travelled to Western Australia. Her entries are insightful, unabashedly frank in places, and communicate the intense curiosity Freycinet held for the world.

Freycinet seems to have charmed almost everyone with whom she had contact. She was described as a "typically vivacious and frivolous pretty girl of her class and time". However, her outward appearance and social behaviour "belied a tenacious loyalty", bravery, resilience and strength of character that is abundantly clear through the actions she detailed in her writing.

"If I have to do one more thing it is to improve the happiness of my amiable companion, I know that I will never acquit myself enough to her and that it is not sufficient to pay her back of the most tenderness to have for her dear person an eternal and sincere affection."

Louis de Freycinet in a letter to his brother in 1814.

J. Alphonse Pellion, 'Drawing of the Camp in the Falkland Islands and the Wreck of the Uranie', pencil on paper, 1820. State Library of Western Australia.


Le Camp

Freycinet's decision to challenge French authorities and stow away aboard a naval vessel to avoid being separated from her husband was labelled "one of France's great love stories". It is clear from their letters and private accounts, and decision by Louis—an aristocrat—to marry a bride from a lower-class family, that the couple married for love. This concept was increasingly part of the marital decision-making at the beginning of the eighteenth century, but was by no means the only consideration for couples of this time.

The couple's decision for Freycinet to stow away emphasises their love for one another but also demonstrates her respected position within their marriage. The organisation of marriage in early nineteenth-century France emphasised 'family democracy', in which complex decisions affecting the family were made with the consent of all concerned. The French wife was noted to be a "wise counsellor".

Freycinet evidently supports her husband throughout the voyage, writing proudly of his accomplishments and reflecting on his duty to his crew and country alike. Writing from Bourbon Island in July 1818, Freycinet refers to her stowing away on board the *L'Uranie* and her resolution to defer to her husband's commanding role and duty on the expedition: "With terror in my heart, I resigned myself, wanting to be faithful to the resolution I made on the very first day I set foot aboard, never out of fear or a whim to prevent Louis from doing his duty".

Freycinet's role on board *L'Uranie* was first and foremost that of the expeditionary Commander's wife. She was a guest on board who also played a role in diplomacy, rather than a crew member or scientist. Freycinet biographer Marnie Bassett writes that she was an explorer but while onboard, she continued to play the role of wife above all else: "as housekeeper, managing her husband's table and domestic purse while at sea".

Louis Claude de Saulces de Freycinet was born in August 1779 in Montélimar. Despite suffering prolonged illness as a child and said to have a 'fragile constitution' as an adult, at the age of 15 he joined the Navy to support Revolutionary France's war efforts in Europe. From 1800-1804, he was employed in hydrographic and chart work as a Sub-Lieutenant aboard Nicolas Baudin's expedition to Australia before being promoted to command the schooner Le Casuarina and carry out shallow survey work during the expedition's return to France.

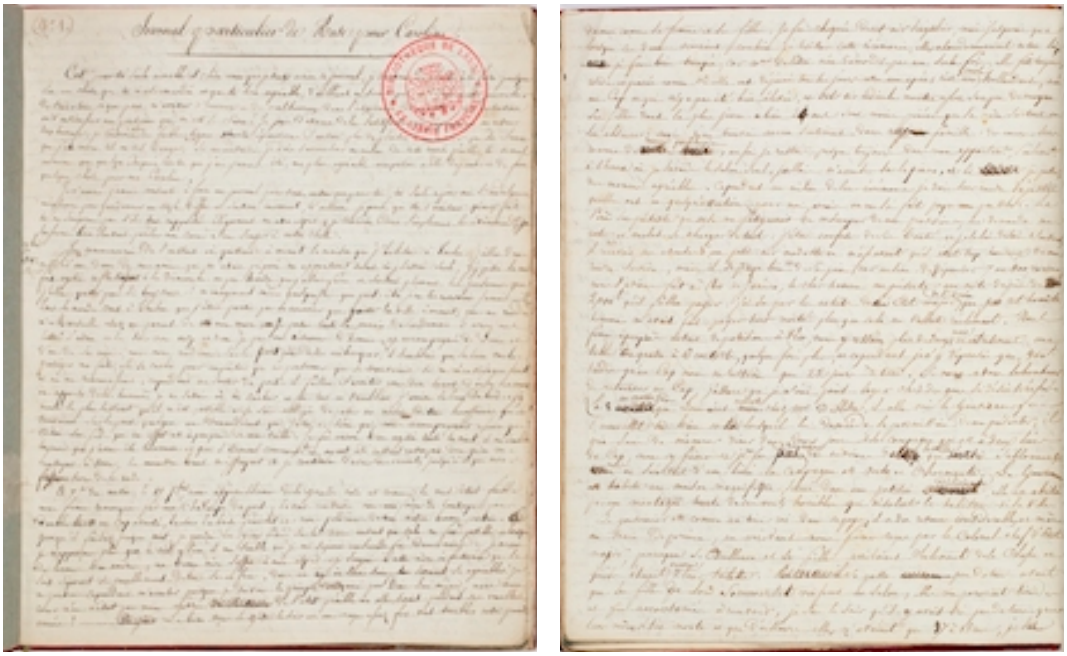
Two years after the downfall of Napoleon in 1815, during which Bourbon France attempted to restore their prestige through maritime exploration, Louis de Freycinet lobbied the government and King Louis XVII for a new mission to finish the work of the Baudin voyage and continue exploring the new world. Although his instructions were primarily scientific, it is likely the French had significant political and territorial interests in assenting to *L'Uranie*'s expedition.

Official duties: *L'Uranie*

L'Uranie's mission was to circumnavigate the world, conduct scientific examinations and experiments in earth sciences and natural history, and provide reports on 596 sub-classes of observations on geography, history, ethnography, government, economics, and more, at the behest of King Louis XVIII. Spurred on by the Enlightenment zeal for scientific discovery and territorial expansion in the wake of lost territories in international wars from the 1750s, the French sent a number of these 'floating laboratories' across the world in a race for imperial dominance of unclaimed colonies, particularly in the South Pacific.

Louis de Freycinet's proposal for the expedition included a circumnavigation of the world. Scientific observations were his chief mission, including measuring the southern hemisphere, observing magnetic and meteorological phenomena, experiments on air pressure, ocean temperatures, gathering natural history specimens and reporting on the culture and customs of Pacific nations.

Leaving Toulon in September 1817, *L'Uranie* undertook a circumnavigation of the world,



Journal particulier de Rose pour Caroline, September 1817 - October 1820. State Library of New South Wales.

travelling to Brazil, South Africa, Australia and many Pacific Islands before returning via South America, where she wrecked on the Falkland Islands in February 1820. Over half of the expedition's scientific specimens were lost in the shipwreck, although the crew saved almost all the scientific records and notes. Despite these losses, the expedition's accrued scientific knowledge included 25 new mammal specimens discovered by expeditionary scientists, as well as 313 specimens of birds, 45 reptiles, 164 species of fish, 1300 insects, 3000 plants and 900 rock samples were collected (before crates were lost during the wreck).

The journal of Rose de Freycinet

Written as a series of letters to her close friend Baronne Caroline de Nantueil (née Barillon), Freycinet's diary provides personal insight into life on board *L'Uranie*, a French government-sponsored expedition captained by husband, with whom she stowed away. She was educated, socially and politically engaged, proven by her commentary on the scientific discoveries, international diplomacy and critical ethnography of colonial cultures she encountered.

In her diary, Freycinet divulged personal details not included in the official records of the voyage. Hers is a more honest commentary on topics ranging from individual dress, social behaviour and etiquette, to the conduct of the colonial or naval hierarchy or commentary on otherness in the descriptions of exotic cultures. Written for her close friend, she claimed to write only what she observed herself but also divulged local gossip and added "feminine malice" to details of people and practices otherwise ignored by official records (which she notes numerous times in her journal her husband should publish).

Although never intended by Freycinet for publication, an abridged version of the journal was transcribed by Charles Duplomb in 1927, in agreement with Baron Charles de Freycinet, a descendent of Freycinet's nephew.

Rose de Freycinet, Journal particulier de Rose pour Caroline, September 1817-October 1820, State Library of New South Wales.

Travel Writing

Europeans increasingly travelled for leisure towards the end of the Enlightenment era, with a period of relative peace between European countries and colonies after the Napoleonic Wars from 1815.

Men could travel alone, but women were to be accompanied at all times (although never alone with another man to whom they were not related or married), which often made organising travel and transport cumbersome.

International travel, while rare, was undertaken by women but always for a purpose—"travelling for enjoyment was frowned upon as frivolous"—so women engaged in their wifely duty by joining their husbands, or increasingly for travel writing.

For readers in Europe, travel writing was entertainment and a source of knowledge and education about the world, even working to enhance imperial might and the adventure of European empires abroad. Much like the published findings from voyages of Enlightenment, travel narratives worked to shape popular European visions of distant parts of the world.

Women travel writers increased in popularity towards the mid-nineteenth century, particularly British, French and German authors. Travel represented a sense of empowerment, with women laying claim to viewing and recording landscapes, art and cultures that was a traditionally masculine practice.

Female travel writers in early-nineteenth-century Western Australia

Mary Ann Friend was one of the earliest European women to visit Swan River (modern-day metropolitan Perth). As a travelling woman, she provides a unique perspective on the fledgling colony, capturing her observations in paintings and a diary that are now held by the State Library of Western Australia.

Friend wasn't the only European woman who wrote about her experiences in Western Australia. Many intended for their writings to be read by loved ones at home, encompassing the Enlightenment's pursuit of knowledge and adventurous spirit.

The expeditions they embarked on were variously driven by colonial pursuits of land and trade in newly or yet to be established outposts of empire across the world; scientific discoveries for the wealthy imperial financial supporters of their voyages; or pursuant to the political machinations of international relations between large (and often feuding) European empires.

Women were often purposely excluded from these voyages but joined as the wives of men leading the expeditions. As commander's wives, these women held a high social standing on board the ship and were treated accordingly when making landfall in colonial outposts. However, due to their sex, they were not included in the official records of these voyages. Their actions of diplomacy, engagement with scientific discoveries, experiences of radically different cultures were not captured or disseminated in the same ways as the reports written by their husbands.

Therefore, these women's memories, anecdotes, and considered reflections are incredibly significant because they provide a personal insight into the voyages. Their words capture the socio-cultural otherness they experienced while travelling, they provide insightful insiders commentary on political and diplomatic engagement, on the nature of colonisation in the new worlds being settled by European nations in Indian and Pacific regions, and they divulge their own interests in science, art, religion and ethnography.

Portrait of Mary Ann Friend, watercolour on ivory in leather case, ca. 1832. National Library of Australia.

Mary Ann Friend

Mary Ann Friend was born in London in 1800. Her father was a prosperous breeches maker in London. She was well educated, as evidenced by her well-practised hand that produced a diary filled with poetic language, a broad vocabulary and references to contemporary literature, as well as her delicate and detailed accompanying watercolours.

Her education was furthered by her husband, Matthew Curling Friend, who was a retired Royal Navy officer and trained scientist. They married only a few years before Captain Friend led the *Wanstead* to Australia. The two shared an intellectual relationship, as well as a genuine affection for one another.

Friend addressed her diary to her sister, Maria Cosgreaves, in language that is open, at times informal and even colloquial, and more revealing of true feeling than sanitised for public consumption or the eyes of officials who received formal reports from similar voyages made by imperial ships. She also indulged her wry sense of humour in witty snapshots of daily life aboard the *Wanstead*, such has her account of a job application received in Bahia (Brazil):

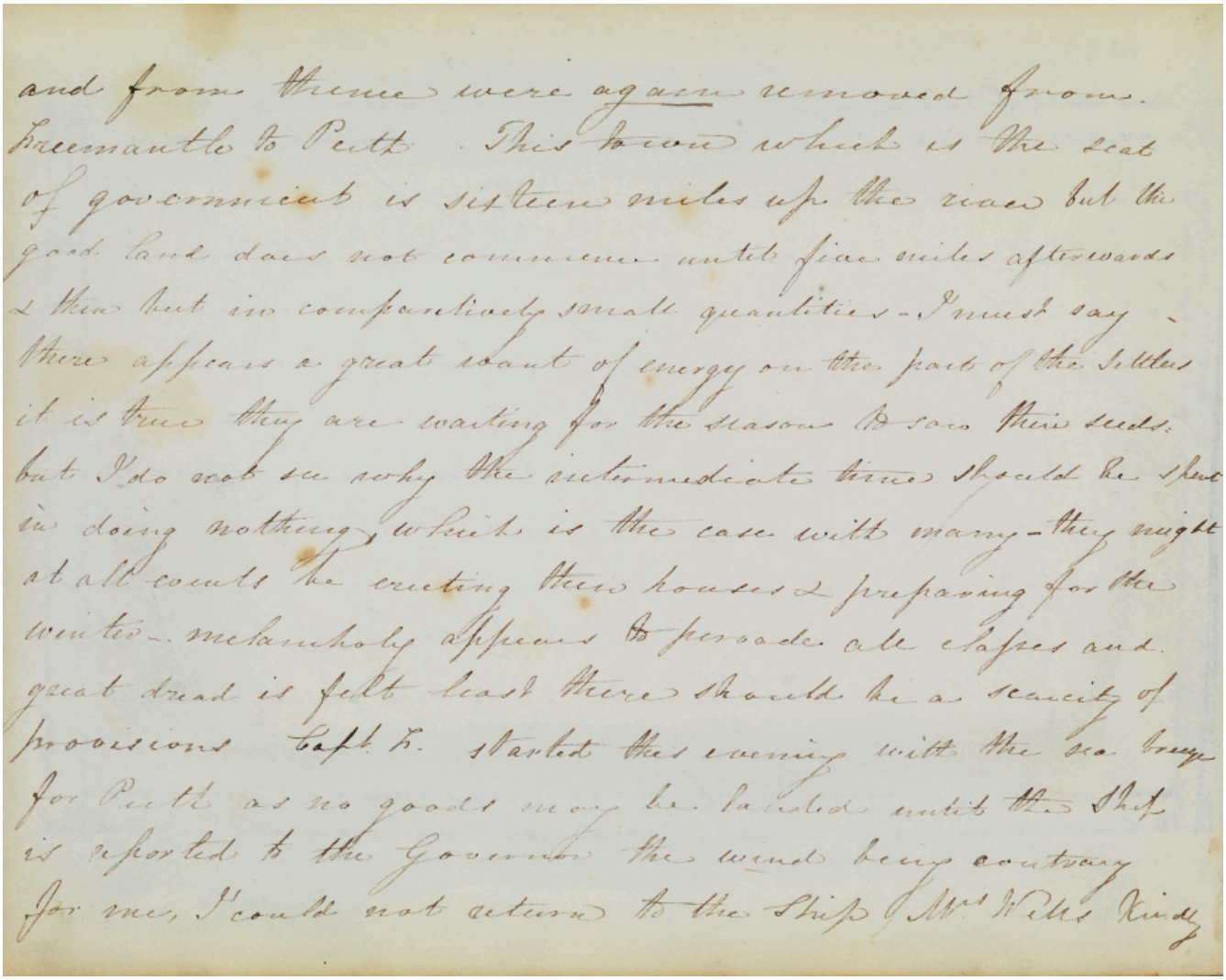
"An English Sailor came up to Captain Friend requesting to be taken on board his Ship. Capt. F. naturally asked him why he left the last vessel he was on and received for answer that he had served on board a Portuguese Ship and had left in consequence of killing the Captain whom he had thrown overboard, but added he was not so deep in the mire as some of the others. Query, was this a recommendation?"

Friend's diary was kept by her husband's family until it was acquired by the State Library of Western Australia with assistance from the federal government in 2012.

The Library's conservators did significant work to repair the binding, covers and torn pages. Some of its surviving watercolours had suffered extensive damage, needing to be pieced together before the entire journal was digitised.

Friend's diary is an extraordinary artefact of early nineteenth-century travel writing, from a well-educated woman of relatively humble means whose strength of curiosity in the world around her spurred on her writing.

Partners in adventure


and from thence were again removed from
Fremantle to Perth. This town which is the seat
of government is sixteen miles up the river but the
good land does not commence until five miles afterwards
& then but in comparatively small quantities - I must say
there appears a great want of energy on the part of the Settlers
it is true they are waiting for the season to sow their seeds
but I do not see why the intermediate times should be spent
in doing nothing, which is the case with many - they might
at all events be erecting their houses & preparing for the
winter - melancholy appears to pervade all classes and
great dread is felt least there should be a scarcity of
provisions Capt. K. started this evening with the ms boys
for Perth as no goods may be landed until the Ship
is reported to the Governor the wind being contrary
for me, I could not return to the Ship / Mrs Wells kindly

Friend's role onboard the *Wanstead* was firmly that of the Captain's wife. She provided comfort and companionship to him, care and protection for unaccompanied young women on board the ship, and all the onshore duties expected of a captain's wife, such as attending events and performing diplomacy.

Although Friend abided by the gendered expectations of a nineteenth-century British wife, it is clear that hers was a marriage of intellectual equals in which both parties had great affection and respect for one another. Friend's collective pronouns describing experiences at sea demonstrate a sense of the reflections about the couple's adventure.

"the appearance of the Island of Madeira is truly beautiful, and we were all anxiety to land the moment we beheld it; some delay however occurred in consequence of our not having a Bill of Health [sic]…"

Mary Ann Friend upon arriving in Madeira on 1 September 1829

Her intellectual relationship with her husband may explain Friend's interest and recording of scientific, anthropological and colonial politics. She recorded their expeditions together and included two charts, early in her journal, depicting rivers in and around the Swan River Colony that are likely to have been completed by Matthew Friend aboard the *Wanstead.*

Collecting New Knowledge

As they did not hold official employment on their expeditions, both Freycinet and Friend devoted their time to domestic tasks befitting

their class and social standing while travelling. This included letter writing and journaling, reading, and painting.

At Swan River, Friend began to capture her experiences of the voyage in watercolour paintings. In Fremantle, she created paintings of the landscape and terrain. As she continued her travels through Hobart and the Asia-Pacific, she included works on biological specimens, architecture and foreign cultures.

In places such as Rangoon, she appears to have been much more focussed on people, their religious deities and traditions, and traditional architecture that was so foreign to the English.

"Went on shore this evening to sketch. The instant I appeared at the Pagoda, the priests came flocking about me and wanted to see my drawings. I shewed them a Butterfly I happened to have with me, when they really uttered screams of delight."

Mary Ann Friend, Rangoon, 22 November 1830

Rose de Freycinet's prolonged and constant exposure to scientific research, experimentation and discovery while onboard *L'Uranie* encouraged her involvement in the expedition's mission. She stated in her journal that she had caught the "scientific bug" as the expedition spent more time at sea, and she devoted significant portions of her days interacting with the expeditionary naturalists.

Mary Ann Friend, 'Journal of a Voyage to Swan River and Hobart', 1829—1831. State Library of Western Australia.

Mary Ann Friend recorded mixed responses when arriving at Swan River in January 1830. She wrote that the country was "beautifully undulating and thinly wooded", but found a town that was nothing but sand. As few permanent dwellings had yet been established, she described the town as like a "country fair", with striped tents by the seaside.

Conditions were harsh. For the six weeks that she was in Fremantle, she lived in a makeshift tent and a repurposed "horse house". The days were bright and glary, while the evenings were tormented with pests.

"I had a wretched night at Mrs. W. She was so kind as to make me up a bed at the foot of hers and put up a curtain to divide the beds; scarcely was the candle out when out rushed Rats.

Two trotted over my head, a third, more bold, came over my face, which so frightened me I was obliged to awake Mr. and Mrs. Wells. A candle was procured but alas there was no chance of sleep for the place was full of the largest fleas I ever saw."

Nonetheless, Friend enjoyed her stay in Fremantle, and intended to return.

Mary Ann Friend, 'View at Swan-River. Sketch of the Encampment of Matw. Curling Friend, Esqr., R.N., 1830', coloured lithograph, 1832. State Library of New South Wales.

The scientists aboard *L'Uranie* brought back many unknown and remarkable specimens to Europe.

Artists on board made sketches and detailed watercolours of scientific specimens that were widely disseminated through scientific circles.

These images were published in 1824, in a book detailing the discoveries of Freycinet's expedition.

This page and next: Louis de Freycinet, Voyage Autour du Monde, enterpris par ordre du Roi, sur les corvettes de S.M. l'Uranie la Physicienne, pendant les annees 1817, 1818, 1819 et 1820, Paris (1824). Museums Victoria.

PHALANGER TACHETÉ

Meeting the 'Other'

Travel to foreign lands, some that mainland European nations had not yet colonised, highlighted for Freycinet and Friend their sense of cultural difference in a way they were unprepared for despite their extensive education. Experiences of otherness, felt at once by them and projected onto others, caused both women to develop a new sense of self-awareness as they were challenged by people and cultural systems they did not understand.

This transformation in Freycinet's self-awareness is evident in her depictions of Indigenous people. As she spent more time away from the 'civilisation' of France, she encountered more varied groups of people, cultures and customs, which broadened her understanding of cultural differences and led her to question the assumed inferiority of local populations.

In Shark Bay in September 1818, Freycinet was confronted with her first experience of perceived savagery. It appears she knew to expect an encounter with such savages, commenting on her friend's prediction of Freycinet cowering "behind Louis' shirt-tail at the first sight of natives", confessing that she was afraid when seeing Aboriginal people at Shark Bay.

As her exposure to various tribes across the Pacific grew along the voyage, so did the depth of her cultural understanding and lessening of difference between her known world and that of 'the other'.

This subtle shift in Freycinet's perception of Indigenous peoples is most profoundly communicated through her diary entries in Guam between April and May 1819. She demonstrates an understanding of her own absurdity to these people by commenting that

"We must, indeed, appear as strange to the natives as they are to us; this thought often occurred to me."

Equally, Mary Ann Friend's reflections frequently characterised indigenous populations as more savage than herself, using demonising language to portray her fears. However, as she became more experienced and worldly, her perceptions of Indigenous populations and cultural assumptions of these people changed.

While Friend did not personally interact with Aboriginal Nyoongar people at Fremantle, she used the testimony of others in her group to perpetuate her cultural assumption of their savagery and violence. Reflecting upon her time at Swan River while on route to Hobart in early March 1830, Friend recounted a story from a family living at Preston Point near Fremantle, who "*used occasionally to see the Natives on the opposite side of the water; they used at night to kindle huge fires and dance round it in the most fantastic manner, more like Demons than anything else."*

As the *Wanstead's* voyage continued, Friend's exposure to 'native' populations seemed to ease her fears towards genuine curiosity. She expressed an interest in cultural differences, such as a Chowra Nicobar Island, on 5 October 1830:

"I was much vexed we could obtain but little insight into their manners and customs -- not speaking their language, and the Interpreter we had, alas, had no soul beyond Cocoa Nuts; it was quite in vain we asked him to put questions to them."

Friend was more at ease when a foreign culture mirrored British social conventions, such as hierarchy. While visiting the chief's wife in Rangoon, Friend recounted a humourous moment of kinship between the two women:

"*The Chief's Wife gave me a Mat to sit upon, which I made signs was not my fashion of sitting; upon which a small box was brought me as a seat. We then sat and looked at each other and laughed."*

The French curiosity of the savage was well-engrained in philosophy and natural history studies, most popularly known by Rousseau's romanticised theory of the noble savage, which must have influenced Freycinet's understanding of Indigenous peoples.

Alphonse Pellion, Preparatory drawings and etchings at various states for the plate 'Nlle Hollande. Port-Jackson. Sauvages des environs de la riviere Nepean. 1. Jedat; 2. Tara; 3. Nemare'], 1819. State Library of New South Wales.

Settler's Tent, at Freemantle.

Religion

The dominant influence in the travel writing of both Friend and Freycinet was their religion. These women regularly attended religious services and visited churches in colonial ports, remarking on the activities of missionaries and including religious allegories throughout their writing. Their religious beliefs provided them with a touchstone for cultural differences and identification of perceived savagery.

Of particular interest is both Freycinet and Friend's preoccupation with determining goodness in those Indigenous populations that expressed religious devotion.

In Guam in April 1819, Freycinet mused on the impact of Christian missionaries operating in the region before *L'Uranie*'s arrival:

"The character of the islanders will provide food for thought for philosophers; cruel and fierce before the arrival of missionaries, they have been transformed by the teachings of Christian dogmas."

Similarly, At Car Nicobar between 11 to 22 October 1830, Friend attempted to engage the local population in a discussion of their religious beliefs and felt it pertinent to record her understanding of their attitudes towards good and evil, relating to notions of heaven and hell:

"When questioned as to where the dead went they pointed to Heaven and said to God; to our question as to bad men, they answered, as at Chowra, all were good -- that there were no bad men."

By writing of their religious understanding as reflective of her own beliefs about heaven, Friend chose to reinforce the goodness of these people, as well as herself.

'Settlers Tent at Freemantle', in Jane Roberts, *Two Years at Sea: Being the narrative of a voyage to Swan River, Van Dieman's Land, thence, through the Torres' Straits, to the Burman Empire; with an account of the services and sufferings of the missionaries in that country, from the date of the first Protestant mission*. Second edition, London, 1837.

Jane Roberts

Jane Roberts was a Christian missionary aboard the *Wanstead*, placed under Friend's protection when her brother suffered a "relapse of brain fever" at the Cape of Good Hope in December 1829. According to Friend's diary, he was "left at this place under strong delusion" and assumed that he died shortly thereafter.

Without her brother's protection, Roberts returned to England without completing her mission. Instead, she filled the time on the voyage with constructing a travel narrative addressed expressly to readers longing to travel or settle in the places she visited, published in two editions in 1834 and a shorter version in 1837.

Roberts devoted much detail in her narrative to those connected with the clergy that she meets on the voyage, the Church services she attends and sermon-like statements, including quotes from the Bible, to reinforce both her pious opinions of the settlement and advice to readers considering emigration to Swan River.

Roberts published the story of her travels on return to England, called *Two Years at Sea*.

Diplomacy and Empire

As the wives of expeditionary naval commanders, Friend and Freycinet played a significant role in the diplomacy work essential to their safe passage and the success of their respective expeditions.

Freycinet's presence aboard the expedition seemingly did not have a scandalous impact, as expected. Freycinet played an active role in diplomacy as the Commander's wife and attended many gatherings with notable local dignitaries at the various ports the *Uranie* visited. At Dili, in November 1819, upon hearing of her presence on board, Freycinet wrote that the Portuguese Governor

"sent me fruit and fresh bread together with an invitation to dine with him the next day. To this end, he announced to my husband that all the notable women of the colony would be gathered at his home to receive me."

As the Captain's wife, maintaining social standing through the reinforcement of British class values and behaviour was important work for Friend during the voyage of the *Wanstead.* Although the colonies were often a world away from England, maintaining gentility into colonial conditions was paramount to the needs of those in the upper classes.

At Swan River, Friend was invited to join the newly established Literary Society at Perth. She was the third lady to be admitted as a member behind Ellen Stirling, the wife of the Governor, and Matilda Roe, the wife of the Surveyor General. Within the first six months of settlement, despite the hardships of food supply, pending frontier warfare with the local Indigenous population and numerous other difficulties facing the settler's survival, the ladies of the colony had endeavoured to begin fundraising for the construction of meeting rooms for their Society.

Jacques Arago, 'Réception à Diely', Timor, 1818'. National Library of Australia.

CONCLUSION
EXHIBITING AUTONOMY

In July 1818, Rose de Freycinet stepped ashore at Bourbon Island (now Réunion), near the southern tip of Africa in the Indian Ocean. She had survived ten months aboard *L'Uranie,* having stowed away against government orders, braved personal threats and dangers at sea to share the adventure of a global expedition with her husband. She was greeted by General Lafitte, the island's governor, who carried orders from the French government to prevent her from continuing aboard the expedition. After a tense meeting, which Freycinet wrote that she was determined to avoid, she recorded in her diary that "the Governor understood full well that if he did not allow me to leave of my own free will, I would still do so in spite of him".[1] This passage is an explicit expression of her autonomy—her stubborn willingness to flout authority not only proves her tenacious spirit but the determination to see out the expedition—and was the direct quote that set the tone for this thesis.

Images and official records from the expedition of *L'Uranie* excluded Freycinet's presence. She was made invisible through her removal from crucial scenes, such as the encampment at Shark Bay (see Figure 14). This silencing of women's contributions to critical periods in European and Australian history spurred my study of how best to represent their stories, specifically as a museum exhibition, given my professional background in the industry. As institutions that collect, research and exhibit objects and narratives for audiences, museums play an intrinsic and significant role in developing collective memory.[2] Derived from a shared sense of historical consciousness, collective memory binds people and nations together through shared experiences and shared knowledge.[3] Traditionally, western cultural museums emphasised the contributions of male colonial power to the detriment of marginalised voices who were not authentically represented within the museum's walls.[4] Modern social justice movements have sought to rebalance this history, reflected in cultural heritage

[1] Rivière, *A Woman of Courage: The Journal of Rose De Freycinet on Her Voyage around the World 1817-1820*, 41.

[2] Crane, "The Conundrum of Ephemerality: Time, Memory, and Museums," 98.

[3] Ross Gibson, *Memoryscopes: Remnants, Forensics, Aesthetic*s (Crawley, Western Australia: UWA Publishing, 2015), vi; Henning, *Museums, Media and Cultural Theory*, 3.

[4] Vergo, "Introduction," 3; McCall and Gray, "Museums and the 'New Museology': Theory, Practice and Organisational Change," 30.

as empathetic museum practice. Empathetic museums embrace revisionist histories to engage with visitors and better represent inclusive and diverse narratives of the past.[5] Particularly for women's histories, this can mean drawing out their autonomy from behind the patriarchal framework that has previously dominated western interpretations of history. In this thesis, I applied this approach to the contributions of travelling European women who visited Western Australia in the early nineteenth century.

Resolution of Research Problem

At the beginning of this thesis, I proposed to solve a research problem to understand the autonomous behaviours of European women who travelled to Western Australia in the early nineteenth century. With a focus on the experiences of Freycinet and Friend, placed within the context of their contemporaries and the women of the Scientific Revolution and Enlightenment, I demonstrated the significant contributions of women to this period of European history, which had not previously been part of the traditional narrative. Further, by applying modern notions of Relational Autonomy theories to written records and other artefacts relating to these women, their autonomous experiences became clear.

I applied the translation of this autonomy to the curatorial concept in Part Three of this thesis through both textual and physical interpretation methods. As part of this creative treatment of the in-depth historical analysis of written records, I aimed to determine how museums might empathetically and authentically communicate historical women's autonomy in curated exhibitions. Examples from recent museum exhibitions in Australia were used to illustrate key museological concepts such as New Museology and empathetic museum practice. Therefore, the significant outcome of this thesis has not only been a broadened knowledge of women's contributions to voyages of Enlightenment to Western Australia but also how this knowledge can be authentically communicated in an exhibition to a broad audience through current museum best practices.

Women and the museum

The first aim of this thesis was to appraise critical problems of museum practice concerning women, particularly interpretations of the female form and autonomous behaviours. I have intended to interpret best museum practices for the future to overcome traditionally exclusionist and elitist

[5] Gordon Fyfe, "Sociology and the Social Aspects of Museums," 42; Hein, "Redressing the Museum in Feminist Theory," 38.

museum practices. To achieve this, Chapter One focussed on the theoretical foundations and practical applications of New Museology and empathetic museum practice as they have evolved into current best practice within the profession. A vital element of this practice is a shift in curatorial thinking about audiences and the intent to connect more deeply in the collection and display of objects. By doing so, the social impact of museums is much more significant, as they produce imagined communities and contribute to a broader collective identity. Reaching beyond the museum's walls is a crucial component of empathetic museum practice and is relatively new in the history of public museums. Conducting extensive fieldwork and research of published exhibition materials, I have determined that empathetic museum practice is dependent on the interpretation and exhibition of personal stories, which elicit an emotional response within the audience. Emotional responses can deeply tie into a visitor's sense of identity and connection to the world around them, contributing to the social impact a museum can have. This sense of connection can be characterised as collective memory.[6] Emotions are central to human connection, which, when applied in an exhibition context, provide the opportunity for historical empathy between the audience and the curatorial subject.[7]

Much of the curatorial interpretation of personal experience is developed through text. It self-evidently provides the means to shift narrative arcs, identify new themes and consider issues not traditionally discussed within exhibitions. But the physical representation of women in museums has proven to be more complex. Chapter Two critically analysed past and present challenges in authentically displaying physical representations of women. Costume collections are one of the most important visual representations of the experience and form of women, and Chapter Two therefore, placed a strong emphasis on the role that mannequins play in curated interpretations of women. An in-depth study of recent costume exhibitions proved that female mannequins are products of socially constructed notions of femininity and undermine the authenticity of historical representations of women.[8] Further, when displayed within the walls of a museum or gallery, these bodies become subject to the male gaze, effectively distorting the historical narrative intended by the curator's textual interpretation.[9] Chapter Two concluded that a balance of engagement with personal stories, emotional connection with the audience through text and objects, modified appropriate conservation supports for clothing, and alternative methods of physical representation, could result in a more empathetic relationship between the audience and the past wearer of a garment.

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[6] Wood and Latham, *The Objects of Experience: Transforming Visitor-Object Encounters in Museums*, 24.

[7] Savenije and de Bruijn, "Historical Empathy in a Museum: Uniting Contextualisation and Emotional Engagement," 833; Wildt, "The City Museum as an Empathic Space," 80.

[8] Sandberg, *Living Pictures, Missing Persons: Mannequins, Museums, and Modernity*, 4.

[9] Berger, *Ways of Seeing;* Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema".

Investigating autonomous behaviours

The second aim of this thesis was to critique written records and other artefacts to investigate autonomous behaviours in the experiences of European women who travelled to Western Australia in the early nineteenth century. Chapters Three to Six all addressed this aim in different ways. Chapter Three surveyed the experiences of nineteenth-century women in Europe to build a contextual understanding of how social and cultural expectations determined their lives and how this might influence museum interpretations. This approach provided a standard from which to measure the autonomy of these women. A critical analysis of modern autonomy theories identified Relational Autonomy as a theory that might be applied to written records and artefacts. Relational Autonomy clearly established that European women of the nineteenth century were autonomous, and it was primarily patriarchal social systems that prevented historical recognition of this autonomy.

This understanding of how autonomy could be read into the lives of historical women was then applied to the experiences of European women labelled as Explorers and Travellers in Chapter Four. The chapter provided a broad investigation of the role of women in the Scientific Revolution and Enlightenment, whose actions and influence precipitated and carried through to the European women who travelled to Western Australia in the early nineteenth century. While these periods of growth and knowledge-sharing revolutionised European academic thought, women were excluded and subjugated in equal parts. However, this chapter profiles the contributions of several women who significantly contributed to Enlightenment and other movements of the nineteenth century and were travel-writing contemporaries of the two women—Mary Ann Friend and Rose de Freycinet—who were the curatorial focus of my exhibition in Part Three.

Chapters Five and Six appraise the written records and other artefacts of Freycinet, Friend and their travelling female contemporaries, investigating their autonomous behaviours as they travelled to Western Australia between 1818 and 1830. Both Freycinet and Friend were captain's wives and in positions of relative privilege. They expressed their autonomy through self-reflection, recorded within diaries and letters written for close friends and family. They were educated and curious women, demonstrating personal explorations into science, ethnography, religion and art while voyaging with their husbands. The contribution of these women to the outcomes of their voyages have traditionally been diminished and, in Freycinet's case, erased from the formal records of these expeditions, though one engraving of Swan River by Friend was published on her return to London. Despite this historical silencing, Chapters Five and Six prove that both Freycinet and Friend were active contributors and advocates of their adventures, with their written and visual records demonstrating strongly autonomous behaviours.

Curating authentic representations of historical women

This thesis's third and fourth aims were to determine achievable methods of curating and displaying authentic representations of historical women in museum exhibitions to design an exhibition that applies empathetic, best museum practices to stories of autonomous, travelling women. This was achieved in Chapters Seven and Eight (or, Part Three) with the development of a Curatorial Concept and Exhibition Catalogue that address the textual, material and physical representation of European women who travelled to Western Australia in the nineteenth century, particularly Freycinet in 1818 and Friend in 1830.

The Curatorial Concept is grounded in empathetic museum practice, informed by the in-depth analysis of Part One and applied to understandings gained in Part Two to propose exhibition themes, narrative and techniques. Using best practice examples from recent Australian museum exhibitions and cultural heritage sites, the Curatorial Concept addresses visitor interaction with text, objects, images and soundscape, olfactory engagement, physical representation, interactive elements, technology and universal accessibility. While it would have been desirable to stage this exhibition and record audience feedback to ascertain the successful application of empathetic museum practice to the chosen curatorial subject, this was not possible within the scope of the project. Instead, the Exhibition Catalogue was used to demonstrate how carefully crafted language and selected artefacts could communicate empathetic museum practice. The Exhibition Catalogue identifies the objects and visual materials in the Curatorial Concept and applies learning from Parts One and Two to frame a critical narrative. In a published form, the Catalogue represents the text panels and other materials from the exhibition. The purposeful selection of language and simplified themes from the earlier chapters provide the proposed audience with emotionally engaging content. Further, having been informed by the autonomy theories outlined in Chapter Three, the text in the Catalogue presents the reader with a new, critical perspective on women's behaviour and partners with the theoretically-informed physical representation of these women that had been thoughtfully constructed in the Curatorial Concept. The result is an authentic and empathetic communication of the autonomous experiences of European women who travelled to Western Australia in the early nineteenth century.

Conclusion: Significance of this Study

This thesis has added to knowledge of early nineteenth-century European women who travelled to Western Australia within the broader context of women's contributions to the Enlightenment and Scientific Revolution. Through a reappraisal of these contributions using a theoretical understanding of Relational Autonomy, a feminist perspective of this history has been provided. Further, this thesis

has determined and demonstrated how New Museology and empathetic museum practice, focussed on visitor engagement, can be practically applied to autonomous interpretations of historical women in order to authentically represent their experiences within a museum exhibition. There is significant potential for the widespread application of this approach in museums of all scales. By diversifying and refocussing curatorial interpretation of written records and museum collections, historically marginalised groups can be more authentically represented in both text and physical presence within traditionally exclusionary and elitist institutions such as museums.

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