“Brown, Rev. George” appears as an index entry in many books on the 19th century in the Pacific region. However, Helen Gardner’s *Gathering for God: George Brown in Oceania* is the first book to critically examine the life of this interesting and often controversial figure. (Brown wrote an autobiography published in 1908, and a respectful admirer published a life in 1944.) There are good reasons for this delay. The challenges of writing about George Brown are considerable. He lived a long life (1835-1917), resided in six different countries, travelled constantly, was actively engaged in many fields of endeavour, and left vast holdings of documents, artefacts, natural history specimens and photographs; and the volume of research materials is overwhelming. Few writers would feel competent to deal adequately with the range of disciplines that engaged him. There has also been, over the years, some unease in approaching the subject of a missionary, particularly one who was a devout, politically active, amateur scientist.

Helen Gardner has wisely narrowed her focus and not attempted to cover all aspects of Brown’s life. She sets out her boundaries—“not a psychological biography” (p.15), “not a traditional biography” (p.18)—and while she sketches the outlines of a long and very full life, she only hints at some aspects of it. Her focus is on the intersection of the missionary’s culture and beliefs with the political and scientific spheres of the period. This is expressed through an examination of Brown’s own documents, published and personal, exploring the distinctive elements of material variously intended for close friends, church audiences, the scientific community or the general public. It would have been interesting to see more observations about Brown by his contemporaries, but that was not the purpose of this work.

To deal with his multiplicity of interests, Gardner uses the analogy of “gathering”—Brown as gatherer of languages, cultures, specimens, photographic images and converts. This analogy works best in the sections about his scientific interests. It is less adequate as a tool for understanding his approach to theology, politics and mission theory.

The challenges of dealing with a missionary figure are handled well and with honesty. While not at all tempted by the idea of writing hagiography, Gardner steers away from the “view that holding a religious faith precluded the observer from objective analysis which effectively excluded all missionary observations from serious consideration in the new science” (p.14). Brown, with all his flaws, is taken seriously. There was a time when missionaries were viewed with respect, even if they were
thought misguided, and then came the era when the cry was “Missionary, go home” and the whole missionary enterprise was called into question. Today there is a re-examination of the way Pacific Islanders have understood and incorporated Christianity as a significant part of their lives, and Gardner has been fair in her analysis.

_Gathering for God_ is not intended as a classic biography, but the first half of the work follows the chronology of George Brown’s long life, setting each chapter in its context as Brown moves from the north of England to New Zealand, then to Samoa in 1860 and the New Britain region in 1875. Gardner offers a thoughtful analysis of the cultural, inter-mission, political and colonial complexities of the era in Samoa and New Britain.

Set centrally in the book is the chapter discussing Brown’s role in the punitive raid that followed the murders of several of his island colleagues in 1878. Any assessment of the life and work of the Rev. Dr. George Brown swings around this pivotal event. Gardner provides a strong and detailed account of the debates and the narratives of the various players: the colonial authorities, Brown’s church compatriots, travellers and traders, and by the local people of the islands. She demonstrates how close Brown came to withdrawal from his mission, censure by his own church, and criminal charges with a possible jail sentence imposed by the judiciary of the Western Pacific High Commission.

The second half of the book, which begins in 1881 when Brown was based in Sydney, is arranged by themes: Brown as political commentator and person of influence in an era of colonial expansion, Brown as anthropologist in the context of the lively debates of that emerging discipline, Brown as avid collector of everything. Limited reference is made to other aspects of Brown’s life and work. In choosing a focus for her work, Gardner has illuminated much of Brown’s contribution to colonialism and the sciences. His role as church leader, President and later President-General of the Methodist Church, his other mission initiatives and his influence on church opinion in the major debates of his day are left largely unexplored.

The chapters on Brown as anthropologist, linguist, collector, and contributor to the scientific debates of his day are of particular interest. This may be the first time that a substantial discussion has been offered concerning Brown’s opinions, his correspondence with other practitioners and his place among his contemporaries in the scientific sphere. Much of his thought on these issues was formed concurrently with his very active work in the church. As usual, he was never far from controversy, and the tensions between his often-separated worlds—Christian missionary and curious explorer of new territories, theologian and scientist, friend both of people in high places and those deemed “primitive”—are carefully examined.

_Gathering for God_ offers good maps and a selection of Brown’s fine photographs. These enhance the publication as well as raising further questions about what was being recorded. The question of accurate captions will remain open. Gardner’s extensive bibliography and end notes confirm her thorough exploration of the available texts. There is room for other interpretations of the source material, his documents can be read in other tones of voice, but this is a valuable contribution to our understanding of 19th century Oceania and the man George Brown.

ABBY MCLEOD
Australian National University

In challenging popular perceptions and stereotypes about Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, *The Unseen City* contributes to contemporary understandings of a much-maligned city. The book seeks to examine multiple issues including the sociality of urban settlements, the bases of urban prestige, the social organisation of gangs, raskolism, informal usury and the workings of urban village courts. Goddard’s first book draws upon his lengthy experience in Papua New Guinea and is based upon six previously published articles and a book chapter, preceded by an original introduction. *The Unseen City* is to be commended for problematising a social milieu that is frequently represented in an overly simplistic fashion. The book will be of most value to those for whom Port Moresby remains “unseen” and could potentially provide a useful catalyst for a more thoughtful analysis by overseas donors of Port Moresby’s perceived problems. Indeed, Goddard’s work challenges a number of assumptions upon which both locally driven and externally derived “interventions” are founded. Most notably, using historical evidence and interview data, he replaces popular perceptions of Port Moresby’s settlements as havens of unemployed, disenfranchised criminal elements, with a more nuanced account of socially and economically diverse communities. Goddard cleverly provides not only a moral challenge to state driven settlement sweeps, but also a theoretical challenge to the purported outcomes of such actions.

Similarly, *The Unseen City* provides an alternative perspective on criminality, which in the Papua New Guinea context is frequently causally associated with unemployment and modernisation. Like others before him, such as Dinnen and Banks, Goddard challenges the application of external explanations of crime to Papua New Guinea and argues that criminality should be seen within its local socio-historical context. Specifically, he posits a link between pre-capitalist social behaviour and crime gangs, suggesting that the impetus for gangs may be more organic than imported global theories suggest. Rather than wholly rejecting the relevance of global theories of criminality, as Goddard does, it might be more convincing to argue the co-existence of multiple explanations of crime and gangs in Port Moresby. In particular, one might question how pre-capitalist modes of social behaviour relate to gang crimes involving violence and sexual violence in which property acquisition is not involved. The development of a more complete understanding of criminality in the Port Moresby context would be assisted by the consideration of such issues.

In addition to challenging simplistic understandings of settlement composition and criminality, *The Unseen City* devotes substantial attention to village courts in Port Moresby, which are important forums for both formal and informal dispute resolution. For the reader familiar with the village court system, which has been written about extensively, a number of observations, as well as omissions, made by the author are...
striking. First, while claims such as “… they are obliged to keep records of the cases they hear …” (p.125) and “… Village Courts are under considerable pressure to perform to standards of efficiency determined by bureaucratic and judicial overseers…” (p.156) reflect official requirements, in practice many village courts (both in Port Moresby and particularly beyond) are poorly supervised and exercise powers beyond their jurisdiction owing to pressures placed upon them to resolve disputes swiftly as well as the difficulties that disputants face in gaining access to the more formal state agencies. In the context of the author’s discussion of Migdal’s “state-in-society” model, it is therefore important to question the degree to which the village courts are in practice an element of the State. At what point do magistrates who the state fails to pay and who act unfettered by jurisdiction cease to be practical agents of the state?

Secondly, despite the fact that the situation of women before the village courts is widely criticised as problematic, the author’s sole comment on the fate of women is that there is “… occasional criticism alleging miscarriages of justice, particularly in respect of women in some parts of the Highlands …” (p.156). Criticisms of miscarriages of justice, particularly in respect of women, are indeed far more extensive than “occasional” and are certainly not limited to “some parts of the Highlands”. Given that women constitute almost 50 percent of Papua New Guinea’s population, one would expect their inequality before the country’s major forums of dispute resolution to be given due attention in a book that focuses so heavily upon the village courts.

_The Unseen City_ strikes the reader as a collection of essays rather than a book, the genesis of which is acknowledged by the author. For the reader who wishes to read the book as a whole, particularly if familiar with the original works, the experience is hampered by a lack of interconnectedness of chapters, significant repetition and inattention to the reordering of information. This is most apparent in the case of those chapters dealing with the village courts (Chapters 2, 5, 6 and 7). The origins of the institution are described at length in Chapter 6, at which point the reader has already completed two chapters concerned with village courts. Some of these structural issues might have been remedied by the addition of a conclusion, in which key themes were explicated and tied together for the reader.

Ultimately, _The Unseen City_ offers an informative collection of essays about Port Moresby. While many issues warrant further attention, the author has dealt with a broad range of topics, with the admirable aim of problematising simplistic representations of Port Moresby. The book has certainly succeeded in challenging “the popular imagination” (p.2). For the academic reader, however, greater thematic unity and more thorough engagement with the theories presented (e.g., Migdal, restorative justice) would add to the reading experience.

DOUG MUNRO

*Victoria University of Wellington*

It is probably one of a kind: a building that comprises three adjoining hexagons on split-levels. The frequent turns in the corridors have a disorientating effect and quirky legends abound of visitors, and occupants, who get seriously lost in the maze. The Coombs Building at the Australian National University, which opened in 1964, will be familiar to many readers of this journal, as the distinctive structure that houses the Research School of Social Sciences (RSSS) and the Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies (RSPAS); the book under review concerns the latter. As well as having a physical fabric, every building acquires a social fabric of human interaction. Brij Lal and Allison Ley had the inspired idea of a social history of reminiscences across a broad spectrum of experience—from the mighty Directors to the humble tea lady. I have no knowledge of a similar book and no awareness that this concept has been tried before.

*The Coombs* is divided into five sections. Part I comprises an engaging introduction by Brij Lal, the high point of which is the battle over the design of the Coombs Building between J.W. Davidson (the Professor of Pacific History) and W.K. Hancock (Director, RSSS), followed by the republication of an unofficial 1988 valedictory seminar by the late Oskar Spate (foundation Professor of Geography and a Director of RSPAS), which splendidly imparts some of the flavour of ANU’s salad days when “we knew we were on the ground floor of a good thing”. Part II comprises chapters by surviving Directors of RSPAS, written from the vantage point of their “room at the top”. Part III is a collection of chapters on most of the academic components of RSPAS. Part IV’s chapters concern the running the Coombs Building, mostly written by the so-called support staff who make the place function. Part V is a miscellany of chapters concerned with activities as varied as seminars and the security of the building. Part VI contains the reminiscences of four former Ph.D. students. There has been an attempt to share the honours but Anthropology and Pacific History are the two academic areas that receive the greatest attention.

Any book comprising 33 chapters from such diverse contributors is likely to be something of a mixed bag. So how does one comment on the relative merits of individual chapters for a book of this sort? The exemplary contributions by geographer Bryant Allen and defence analyst Desmond Ball provide pointers through their skilful interweaving of autobiography, commentary on former colleagues and vignettes of departmental history. The anecdotes always have a purpose, either to evoke a scene or to illuminate a larger point. In that way, Allen and Ball strike exactly the right note between reminiscence and a consideration of wider issues, and between issues of choice and circumstance. Another model chapter is by Ewan Maidment on the history and workings of the Pacific Manuscripts Bureau; it is informative and evocative and, without fanfare, gives an idea of the sheer effort it takes to locate and preserve at-risk archival sources in the Pacific Islands. What these chapters reveal, as do most of the
others, is that the personal factor remains critical to understanding the workings of a university at whatever level.

Several themes run through *The Coombs*. The question of academic productivity is one. There is no question that RSPAS has been the source of an effluent of first-class research. But at an individual level there have been under-performers. A former Director makes the valid point that ANU’s research schools have always been “judged in Australia by the performances of their weakest staff, whereas internationally (where no one has heard of these poor performers) the schools are judged by their best performances” (p.57). And, indeed, the consensus and evidence in *The Coombs* is that the freeloaders were comparatively rare. A more pronounced theme is the “ burgeoning of bureaucracy” and its suffocating effects—the endless fights “with an inefficient and bloated central administration” (p.85) and the exponential proliferation of paperwork (p.226). Were they still alive, Spate, Davidson and Hancock would be appalled at the extent to which today’s universities have become corporatised and commodified, at how disabling the ever-encroaching bureaucratic overlay has become to academics and RSPAC administrators alike, and how this negates a university being a community of scholars.

Several individuals recur through *The Coombs*. Sir John Crawford, the first Director, is hailed by Ron Crocombe as a source of “constant inspiration although he kept right off your back and left you to run your own show. You just by feel knew that he was supportive” (p.7). Another great enabler was the long-serving Business Manager Peter Grimshaw, a workaholic who got things done and who is remembered with notable affection for his humanity and largeness of heart (pp.16, 43-44, 56, 176-78, 222). J.W. Davidson also features prominently. Peter Corris and Kerry Howe, both former Ph.D. students in Pacific History, make it very clear that the Davidson era was a golden age, and that a decline set in after Davidson’s death in 1973 (pp.267, 271). The singular character is the anthropologist Derek Freeman, whose confrontational style, overpowering personality and occasionally bizarre behaviour endeared him to few. Animus can lead to error: it is simply not correct that Freeman “had never done any research in the Pacific” (p.276), when in fact he had engaged in two periods of fieldwork in Western Samoa. Disputatious and unyielding, convinced of having ultimate answers and always being right, Freeman finds little favour with some of the contributors—a notable exception being Niel Gunson who indicates that there was indeed a kind side to Derek Freeman.

The idea of a book that treats a building—at least that half of the building that houses RSPAS—almost as a living organism is bold and novel. Arguably the 1950s and 1960s are under-represented, partly because survivors from those earlier decades are thin on the ground. The variety of the chapters, both in subject matter and writing styles, is largely successful: while the chapters that are formal accounts of an academic discipline’s progress are not altogether satisfactory, those that combine straight history with reminiscence and accounts of personal interactions are rewarding. As well as celebration, not to mention nostalgia, there is sometimes an edge—mostly muted—when lovingly-nurtured gripes are recounted. In all, it is a heady mix. *The Coombs* is at once engaging to read and instructive to ponder, as well as contributing to the intellectual history of Pacific Islands studies and Australian academia.

LYNETTE CARTER
Waliriki Institute

*New Zealand Identities* is a collection of conversations (p.11) that reflect upon the diverse nature of New Zealand’s contemporary demographic make-up. The contributors represent diverse ethnic and disciplinary backgrounds, which influence the tone of each voice in discussing New Zealand’s national identity.

The Preface outlines the origin of the book—a workshop sponsored by the Centre for Applied Cross Cultural Research at Victoria University of Wellington. The Centre’s aim is to bring together academics, government agencies and community organisations to engage in “mutually productive dialogue” that will hopefully build “a more inclusive [New Zealand] society that understands and manages its diversity together” (p.7).

The Introduction outlines the ideas and themes that underpin the 15 articles in the book: identities are dynamic and multi-layered, identities are socially constructed and identities carry ideologies. Some writers deal with identity from a specific perspective and experience (McIntosh, McCreanor, Ip and Pang, Teaiwa and Mallon). Others examine the broader issues surrounding identity and how it can be influenced by immigration, biculturalism, cultural essentialism, democracy, foreign policy and spirituality (Pearson, Liu, Byrnes, Levine, Barclay, Zodgekar, Ward and En-Yi Lin, Capie and McGhie, and Morris). The final article examines the issues of identity through four made-up scenarios (Frame, Molisa, Taylor, Toia and Shueng). The Afterword from Joris de Bres, the New Zealand Race Relations Commissioner, summarises the themes in the book in the context of a human rights report issued in 2003-2004. The report claimed that New Zealand was entering a stage of inclusive national identity, an idea pursued by several of the authors in their discussions of the inclusive/exclusive hypotheses prevalent in identity politics theory. The Afterword is followed by a short biography of each of the contributors.

In reviewing the book, I found that the diverse nature of hypotheses and theories made it difficult to get really comfortable with the book. The articles slipped and slid around different themes; but this is, of course, exactly the problem with trying to determine what a “New Zealand identity” is, and more specifically, what a “New Zealander” is. By its very nature, the book supports the notion that identity is determined by a myriad of variables. Each of these depends very much on context, perceptions and self-evaluation.

Perhaps the last article (“100% Pure Conjecture: Accounts of Our Future States(s)”, p.255) is a good place to begin. The format of the article is a play set in 2055 that follows an interview between an “Elderly Relative” and a “Young Person”. They discuss four scenarios that use economic and political variables that are both global and local to describe a future nation-state called Aotearoa (or in one case, New Zealand). I liked this approach because it imagines how the issues raised by the book’s other
contributors might be played out. Each of the four scenarios, while not dealing with identity *per se*, discusses the ideologies and views that shaped a future Aotearoa/New Zealand. Historical ideologies such as the 1950s idea that New Zealand was a nation of racial harmony, the clean green image, and inclusive national identity are also apparent throughout the scenarios. The Elderly Relative asks the Young Person whether they got it right, particularly in including all the “voices” (pp.285-88), and Young Person’s answer outlines the difficulties faced, even in imaginary nations, of determining a national identity that accommodates all voices and all the defining variables.

Identity markers often encourage stereotyping of ethnicity, with certain biological and behavioural markers used to describe ethnic groups. Tim McCreanor and James Liu discuss how racial stereotyping has a lasting influence on perceptions of ethnicity and therefore on identity. Tracey McIntosh and Belinda Borell critique identity markers and their influence in Māori identity maintenance. McIntosh discusses the marginalisation of Māori who have become disassociated for various reasons from their *whakapapa* (‘genealogy’) and tribal ties. Borell further critiques the infallibility of prescribed identity markers when they do not fit with the reality of a lived experience. Her case study demonstrates how young Māori youths living in South Auckland prioritise the prescribed Māori identity criteria in different ways. For them, location is more important than homeland; *whanau* (‘extended family’) is more important than tribe.

The importance of the Treaty of Waitangi is discussed by all the writers to varying degrees, confirming that the Treaty partnership between Māori and the Crown continues to matter in fundamental ways. Giselle Burns suggests that much of the current debate on national identity centres on the Treaty of Waitangi, and the Treaty is understood to operate through the work of the Waitangi Tribunal. Burns examines the way that history has been recorded by the Tribunal, and states that history “is always a product of its times and its own historical moment and the historical narratives can never be divorced from their immediate social and political contexts” (p.101). The Treaty of Waitangi exerts a strong influence in determining national identity and, in particular, the place of immigrants in the wider scheme of belonging in New Zealand. It is understandable that later migrants feel a need to add their own unique identities into the cultural mix of their adopted country. Notions of citizenship, identity and belonging are taken up David Pearson (p.21) when he discusses how these variables influence ideas of inclusion and exclusion in identity politics.

Arvind Zodgekar examines immigration policies since 1986 and considers how the policies have modified the composition of the population in significant ways. He states that by removing the preferences for traditional sources of migration, such as British or White European target markets, the policies have facilitated the entry of a wide range of cultural groups into New Zealand (p.142). This has shifted the focus from biculturalism to multiculturalism with each new migrant group vying for political and social status and position.

A discussion on New Zealand Chinese identity by Manying Ip and David Pang (p.174) emphasises the belief that Chinese migrant population has status and rights in New Zealand built on history and ancestry. These variables give them their sense
of place and position within New Zealand. They acknowledge that New Zealand Chinese have origins elsewhere, but are now very much a part of a wider New Zealand identity. The exportability of a culture to another country is an important variable in any national identity debate: origins matter in the formation of new identity.

Colleen Ward and En-Yi Lin’s article discusses the notion of origins, and they maintain that “birthplace and generational status may exert an important influence on how identities are balanced” (p.159). Ward and Lin examine cultural diversity in New Zealand from its bicultural foundation to the way it has evolved in debates centred on multiculturalism. They place particular emphasis on “ethnic and national identity, issues arising from past and recent immigration, and the understanding and representation of nationhood” (p.155). Their article opens up the conversation to questions that challenge the way culture is adapted in order to establish a viable place within the adopted nation without losing identity. This brings me to two of the more provocative articles in the book: Kelly Barclay’s “Rethinking Inclusion and Biculturalism: Towards a More Relational Practice of Democratic Justice” and Hal Levine’s “Moving Beyond Cultural Essentialism”.

Hal Levine argues that cultural essentialism should be replaced by discussions about political and democratic rights. He maintains the need to change from a debate about biculturalism, which is inherently culture-based, to one about power sharing and resource distribution. He asks whether a culturally-based story of claims and rights can continue to advance indigenous rights in New Zealand, and suggests that cultural essentialism limits development. Part of Levine’s argument is that “collective rights are inherently political and democratic, rather than cultural …” (p.105). He asserts that cultural essentialism has reached its limits “as an idiom of grievance”, particularly when it involves the sharing of resources as Treaty settlements invariably do. It is in the context of Treaty grievances that cultural difference and the notion of special ethnic rights is often brought into question. Levine concludes that by moving away from cultural essentialist alternatives such as biculturalism, the struggle for the assertion of indigenous rights will move towards power, the distribution of resources and political legitimacy. I would suggest that this is what the majority of Māori have been arguing for quite some time now—particularly the idea of determining their own identity and mechanisms for identity maintenance. But this has not always been possible because of the way they have been “bounded by culture” in the directives and expectations of government settlement policies.

The question of the democratic space in New Zealand is the subject of Kelly Barclay’s chapter (p.118). Barclay explores his theory of “relational justice” in democracy and asks what sorts of assumptions are being made about democratic space (p.123). Barclay argues that it is futile to consider democracy as one space into which everyone should fit, and he suggests that ethnic diversity would be better served if democratic inclusion was refocused as participation (p.129).

In attempting to shift the debate from biculturalism and cultural essentialism to one of participation, power and sharing of democratic rights, the contributions by Levine and Barclay perhaps go further than the others in creating controversy in the New Zealand identity debate. That said, however, they come very close to moving
the debate back to favouring multiculturalism, a stance that would affect the status of the Treaty partnership in any debate on national identity. The identity debate contains many voices and perspectives, all clamouring to be heard, but as the final article puts it, “We wanted readers to stretch the scenarios, to build their own versions and to create controversy to fuel constructive debate” (p.286). The book more than adequately adds fuel to the debate on New Zealand identities.


JUDITH A. BENNETT
University of Otago.

As New Zealand readers will know, the *wharenui* or ‘great house’ found on the Māori *marae* often has carved *poupou* or posts along the walls holding up the roof. The *poupou* are story-boards of ancestral figures who are interrelated, each being the founder of a lineage or *hapū* linked to the first founder whose name is often given to the *wharenui* itself. At gatherings, descendants will often cluster near the boards to talk and listen at the ancestors’ feet. In a metaphoric analogy of that, the *wharenui* of Pacific History built in the 1950s, holds several such ancestral types whose descendants, as former students and fellows, have gone on to form their own *hapū*, and to expand the scope of the discipline and the location of its practitioners.

Like some urbanised Māori, new historians and students in the diverse and far-flung settlements of Pacific History often find the stories of these ancestors, their interconnections, deeds and adventures, vague or even unknown. *Texts and Contexts* seeks to remedy this memory loss of the origins of, and influences on, Pacific History via a series of essays on what the editors consider to be its foundational texts written by the intellectual ancestors of this sub-discipline. Thus, as the subtitle suggests, they are offering the reader a view of Pacific Islands’ historiography. And, as often is the case with family histories, cousins, rather than sons or daughters of the foundation department of Pacific History at the Australian National University, are the instigators of this project: neither Doug Munro nor Brij Lal was a doctoral student in that department. Both have, nonetheless, a long association with it and its mutations since the days when the founding ancestor of the Canberra school of Pacific History, Jim Davidson, graced the corridors of the Coombs Building. As Doug Munro is Davidson’s biographer it is not surprising that he has written three and a half of the 19 essays.

Effectively, the 36 foundation texts that contributors discuss begin in the 1950s, spanning the decades to the 1980s, with Ralph Kuykendall’s in 1938, *The Hawaiian Kingdom, Volume 1*, as the outside front-runner and Bernard Smith’s *Imagining the Pacific* of 1992 as the last. Just as the writers reviewed are nearly all male and all but one are Europeans, so too are most of the commentators, which tells us much about the discipline’s early directions, but less about its women and Islander practitioners. Brij Lal, of course, is an Indo-Fijian who was born and bred in Fiji and has contributed
significantly to writing the history of his people. The only essayist with direct Pacific Islander heritage is Hawaiian Jonathan Osorio. This paucity of indigenous historians does not reflect necessarily on the directions of Davidson’s department because several Pacific Islanders who obtained doctorates in Pacific History, such as John Waiko and Kilifotí Eteuati, went on serve their governments or churches, not academia. The absence of Islander commentators on the texts may well be an outcome of their intense concentration on writing their own histories, rather than commenting on those of others, as much as it does the need for the elders to commemorate books and teachers that excited them.

The books, however, that can excite the scholar, the specialist and the academic are not always books that the intelligent general reader knows about or wants to read. I cannot quote sales figures for these foundational texts, but my guess is that those that sold well were or are either set texts in colleges and universities, such as Kerry Howe’s *Where the Waves Fall*, or those written with the general reader in mind, such as Gavin Souter’s *New Guinea: The Last Unknown*, which, in spite of its accessibility, did only moderately well in an Australia that wanted to know about the colony it was about to launch into independence. Another example, and doubtless the one with greatest audience appeal of all 36 books, is Gavan Daws’ *Shoal of Time: A History of the Hawaiian Islands*. His evocative subject matter and an affluent and curious parade of tourists to these islands certainly aided sales, but the book itself would have moulded on the shelves if he were not telling a fascinating story. Elsewhere, in the *Journal of Pacific History* (September 2006), Daws, a tactical realist and best-selling historian, has used *Texts and Contexts* to chide so many Pacific historians for just that—failing to consider who the audience might be and failing to frame their writing to that audience. He is right about this collection’s failure to see audience appeal as a significant factor in what makes a history book foundational. And this mind-set has badly served the graduates of Davidson’s school. But the enduring dilemma of any historian is still with us—do we write for an academic audience or a general one? Do we wish to be read by a selective and select few, or by many? This is certainly an issue for all graduate schools of history; the wrong choice can be costly.

The editors of *Texts and Contexts* have taken the first course. Academic historians wrote it and that is the readership it will attract. Few would quarrel with these *poupou* erected in Pacific History’s great tribal house. Their commentators tell us much of about how and why 36 histories were written and how they mirror their times and writers. It is a worthy historiography.

But, be warned that some ancestors on the *poupou* gather dust and can die to the memory unless their descendants visit the house and burnish the images with their touching, the warmth of their breath, and their talk of what is important to them, the latest and living layer in the genealogy. Some of these—the third generation, if you like—have already moved their *hapū* away and built their own houses, and some turn less and less to these foundational texts, bypassing them for more meaningful intellectual ancestors from the islands of the Pacific or indeed the best in the rest of the world. In the future, their living talk—whether actually spoken, danced, sung, written in books, in films, on websites or in other electronic formats—will best demonstrate how a newer generation evaluates the texts and their writers eulogised with such filial care in this book.
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