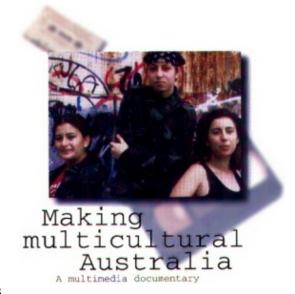# NEW MEDIA AND THE NATIONAL IMAGINARY:
THE MAKING OF 'MAKING MULTICULTURAL AUSTRALIA - A MULTIMEDIA DOCUMENTARY'

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In the waves of debate over the future of new media technologies, it is important to grasp the ideological and political implications and opportunities that they contain (Cherny and Weise 1996; Jankowski and Hanssen 1996; Sardar and Ravetz 1996; Jones 1997; Murray 1997). This article addresses a specific part of this debate - the role of new media in education, and the issues it can raise in relation to learning about multicultural societies.

As large corporations move into the development of educational software, and educational systems become more dependent on centrally generated curriculum materials, multicultural societies face the dangers of being overwhelmed by representations of the 'real' which significantly distort the nature of race and ethnic relations. Nowhere is this more important for a generation bred on computer games, on-line gaming and net surfing, than in the exploration of the history of metropolitan societies.

If we bring together cyber space and cultural conflict, we can begin to see a point of intersection where communities can take greater control of the representation of their own histories, and in so doing, move towards a future which is infused with a greater awareness of the necessity but also the fragility of cultural collaboration. In some circles, such collaboration has been identified with the emergence of hybrid cultures, through a post-modernist fusion, where the edges of cultures (which ethnic purists have sought to freeze and sharpen), are instead softened, melded and dissolved into something new and inclusive. There is pain in such dissolution, and the fear of loss marks the politics of ethnic conflict with a particular anger and viciousness.

Yet if we start to spell out the elements that may be necessary to move through this pain, we can see that the new media can provide an avenue for building multi-focal narratives. Such approaches can, if used creatively and in ways which recognise the power relations embedded in new media practices, empower audiences to build their own stories of the past

and their own analyses of the present, by offering them a range of materials and competing interpretations.

The authorship of interactive projects may be collective - as with a film - and it surely depends on the multiplicity of audience readings to provide meaning - as with screen and text experiences more widely. Yet there is an additional dimension, one which is not simply assignable to the 'loss of control' by the author/s endemic in 'reading' theories of audience role. For authors of interactive media projects generate so many potential pathways (not all of them with disciplined intent), that the more regulated readings which emerge in analyses of linear narratives can be overwhelmed by the multiplicity of pathways opened up by multimedia complexity.

The Development of New Media Models for Social Change

Despite the rapid growth of new media as technology and content, there has been very little reflection on the implications of the growth for strategies of social change. While social movements have moved with varying degrees of comfort into usage of the World Wide Web (Mitra 1997), both through the establishment of focussed web sites, and the promulgation of discussion lists, education providers have tended to create fairly conservative and limited materials. In his discussion of the 'locations' of arguments about the virtual worlds created by new technology, Harris Breslow has suggested that the Internet (which is only one arena of new media communication) has generated three intellectual/political spaces (Breslow 1997). These can be summarised as the 'anarchist' space of unmediated communication, the post-modernist space of multiple subjectivities, and the moral space of state control of both of these components (Jakubowicz 1998).

Thus one strand of discourse argues that the nature of new media facilitates, if not necessitates, the empowerment of users, allowing them to become 'producers' de-facto of information and ideas, and by-passing historic control mechanisms associated with large owners of the means of production of information - media companies in particular. The proliferation of web-pages in which every subjectivity imaginable is given cyber-form, provides evidence in support of these perspectives. Often these initiatives are matched by attempts at governmental control, as in Singapore's requirement for sanctified mirror sites as the only access for Singaporeans, or Malaysia's requirements for registration of internet sites. In Australia there is a fierce political debate over censorship of the Internet, and the prohibition of access to morally objectionable sites (as defined by government bodies).

In this context it is apparent that a post-modern engagement with 'acceptable' subjectivities lies at the heart of the arguments. One of the dimensions under discussion has been the representation of race relations and racism on the Net, and by extrapolation, in other new media products. We can see three possible models for the use of new media in national identity education in an environment of rapid social change. Broadly speaking, these can involve

- the creation of materials by corporate players, within a broad set of parameters set down by government;

- the tightly controlled development of materials under government regulation and fitting in with government ideology; and

- the development by educators of more open and exploratory materials which challenge the creative learning capacities of students.

Evidence from the USA suggests that new media associated with education are in fact coming under tighter corporate control, with the strategies of major text-book and information software suppliers geared towards market dominance (Perlmutter 1997). Commenting on the US scene Sewall and Emberling have noted, 'Educational publishing is a

business, and it is a business increasingly linked to global communications corporations. These media giants see school textbooks as one product among many other media that must make money or else.' They go on to note:

> The mass-market textbooks that succeed in the market beyond the next few years will have vast influence on social studies … they will reveal the kinds of civic knowledge and the literacy skills that educators expect of younger citizens. They will reflect how the nation intends to represent itself and its ideals to the youth of the twenty-first century. They will be important indicators of 'who we are' and 'what we are' as a nation and a people after a decade of exposure to multiculturalism. (Sewall and Emberling 1998)

While Sewall and Emberling refer primarily to textbooks, their commentary is clearly relevant to new media in education. In addition it is important to recognise that they are hostile to what they see as a dangerous California-isation of curriculum (spreading to other states - and they refer in particular to Texas) with its associated multiculturalism and orientation to world cultures. They are also hostile to new media which they claim 'dumbs down' the quality of education, and are unaware of the development of cyberliteracy and its associated multimedia skills.

The most significant US creation in relation to cultural diversity has been the proliferation of various anthropological encyclopaedias on CD-ROM, where again large corporations have sought to provide authoritative accounts of ethnicities and their content. Jasco's review of three of these (by the Gale Corporation, Macmillan, and Microsoft in conjunction with Brigham Young University's Culturgram project) indicates that they offer little if any scope to interrogate or question the interpretations offered, and provide no sense that culture is a contested space in which conflict and change is characteristic rather than deviant (Jasco 1999).

Within the USA there are now multitudes of CD-ROMS that attempt to address the national history of invasion and occupation - two of which give a sense of how the position of indigenous people and other minorities have been addressed. In Microsoft's '500 nations: Stories of the North American Indian Experience' produced in 1995, Kevin Costner hosts a CD-ROM version of a book and film of the same name. The project offers the authoritative narrator introducing a variety of locales - from Mexico to Canada - and offers both a celebration of pre-contact societies and a memorial to the history of the Indian peoples after European contact. It pays little attention to the contemporary situation and the processes of de- and re-tribalisation, building as it does on the uncritical celebration of indigenous nobility which marked Costner's film *Dancing with Wolves*.

As well as the database and encyclopaedic approaches, there are many simulation games - the most heralded of which have been the two versions of 'The Oregon Trail'. In his review of the CDs, Bigelow undertakes a detailed deconstruction of the content, examining the highly individualised subjectivities the simulation requires of its participants (Bigelow 1997:92). He concludes by noting 'Which social groups are students not invited to identify with in the simulation? For example, Native Americans, African Americans, women and Latinos are superficially represented in The Oregon Trail, but the 'stuff' of their lives is missing'.

The new media - with CD-ROMs linking through the Internet to WWW sites and other on-line databases and up-date sources - are becoming a central element in educational strategies in advanced capitalist societies. Holzberg notes in her brief discussion of historical narratives on CD-ROM, the increasingly important role they were playing even in 1995 (Holzberg 1995). In the USA nearly all schools will have multimedia capable machines and access to the Internet by the year 2000, while in other technologically sophisticated societies such as Singapore all schools and most residential locations will have direct access to high speed Internet connections within two to three years. In New South Wales, Australia, the state government has committed every school to have multiple computers and Internet access

within the next three years, and is now demanding all teachers, irrespective of discipline, be computer literate.

In new media projects about national histories we have already seen how little room is given to controversy, and how much energy is spent on producing anodyne and non-confronting material. Perlmutter concludes that ' the visual depiction of history and society...is a construction derived from industrial, commercial and social influences... [and] undermines the assumption that visual or verbal educational messages are neutral transmissions of self-evident, naturally arising, unstructured or objective content' (Perlmutter 1997:80).

Thus we need to be aware of the processes through which new media national imaginings are produced (such as 'Vital Links' produced by Davidson and Associates and published by Addison Wesley, to support the U.S. history curriculum 'Vital Issues: reshaping and Industrializing the Nation' Holzberg 1995) These products provide very carefully programmed learning environments that help students build cyber-literacy skills, but may not facilitate alternative interpretations of events.

However when the new technologies are used specifically with the aim of empowering the traditionally 'silenced' elements of society, voices emerge which have a resonance and authority that might otherwise not be available. While most histories are written by the victors, and tell the stories of the powerful and victorious, popular history can move beyond these versions to more subtle, multi-layered and complex pictures of the past and the present. This is Thomson's conclusion in his discussion of oral history practices, where he sees in new media 'the potential to expand such possibilities. Multimedia formats can include a massive amount of textual, oral, visual, and video material. They facilitate the simultaneous juxtaposition of diverse forms of evidence, including both complementary and contradictory accounts...' (Thomson 1998:594).

Given these issues, the context, dangers and constraints, and the opportunities, we turn to an Australian example of the making of a 'national imagining' CD-ROM project, 'Making Multicultural Australia: a multimedia documentary'. It was based on original research, while skirting along the thin boundaries of industrial production, commercial pressures and social conflict and interpretation. The consortium that produced it came together with different institutional priorities. The agreed goal was a multimedia product that would somehow engage its audiences with the dynamic history of Australia as a multicultural society, without becoming propagandistic or defensive.

It would have to be a project that could be used in high schools, and would thereby pass the educational curriculum criteria of the co-ordinating government educational agency; it had to be positive about the achievements of governments in managing ethnic conflict and delivering services in a diverse society, and thus pass the political antennae of the relevant government ethnic affairs agency (and primary funder); it had to fit within the charter of operation of the national multicultural broadcaster to ensure access to copyright video materials; and it had to be independent in stance and accurate and balanced in academic terms, while retaining an intellectually critical, culturally incisive and socially exploratory address to the materials to justify university participation. Finally it had to be well designed, easy to use, accessible to a range of potential audiences and 'users', economically viable, and commercially marketable.

The Australian context - new media and the national imaginary

One of the characteristics of the post- Cold War world, linked to spreading globalisation of economic and cultural relations, has been the re-emergence of 'ethnic identity' as a focus for nationalist struggles. In many previously multicultural states, ethnic struggles have fragmented trans-cultural linkages, and generated demands for state forms that either suppress or exclude previously tolerated minorities.

Australia is no different in this regard - as a colonial settler society, its past is based on the invasion by British and later other European and Asian immigrants. The Act which federated the former colonies allowed for the creation of a 'White Australia' in 1901, in which all would be equal as long as they were white - populist democracy based on rigid views of race and culture. For three generations this view persisted until, after a rising call for social reform, White Australia was abandoned in the early 1970s.

By the late 1970s, 'Multiculturalism' had been installed as the official ideology of nation building, and race had been reduced if not removed as a criterion for entry to Australia. For a short period this policy remained unquestioned, until in the early 1980s voices began to be heard querying the policy.

These critics came from the libertarian Right of Australian politics, and from among populist intellectuals whose celebration of Australian cultural traditions had become a crucial part of the national imagining. For them, Australian democracy and freedom was a fragile plant that could be eroded by the introduction of culturally distinctive and physically differentiated populations - people who would undermine by their very presence the 'social cohesion' which was claimed to be typical of Australian society. This offered, in distant echo, elements of the same arguments which had been used to justify White Australia in the late nineteenth century - that Asian cultures were lower in quality and capacity to those of White Europe, and in particular, were unable to cope with concepts of democracy, civil behaviour, and social responsibility.

Thus from about the mid-1980s a growing social debate developed around the whole question of cultural diversity. Ethnic organisations and coalitions argued for more specific services and programs for immigrants, while assimilationist forces argued against 'multiculturalism' , portraying it as a policy that promoted 'tribalism'. Key institutions that supported multiculturalism included the Special Broadcasting Service with its charter to reflect cultural diversity, multicultural education and community language programs, and bodies such as the Australian Institute of Multicultural Affairs (abolished in 1986 and replaced over the next few years with an Office of Multicultural Affairs and a Bureau for Immigration, Multicultural and Population Research).

The early 1990s were thus a period of rising tensions over policies associated with immigration and settlement, complicated by the local effects of globalisation and the accession to the Prime Ministership of Paul Keating. Keating made two major contributions to the debate on the imaging of the nation - one concerned his acceptance of responsibility for the tragedies experienced by indigenous people during and after the invasion; the second emerged from his re-orientation of Australian national policy to be seen as part of Asia. In 1993 ethnic leaders, political representatives and public sector managers met to put together an educational project about multiculturalism. In that context I was asked to participate, as an academic with a record of independent but critical support for multicultural policies.

Australia on CD

Australian governments have taken a particular interest in the development of new media - focussing especially on software and content development. From the early 1990s various government bodies have been involved in 'scoping' the field, and developing a local software design industry (Harley 1993; Australia 1995). Over recent years the digital media industry has grown in scope and influence, with films such as *Babe* (George Miller, Australia 1995) and *Babe in the City* (George Miller, Australia 1998), and the special effects of *Matrix* (The Wachowski Brothers, USA,1999), examples of the work emerging from the 'digital ghettos' of Sydney's Ultimo and Crows Nest. Part of this was pre-figured in initiatives developed in the early and mid 1990s, particularly through the former Labor Party government's strategy of 'Creative Nation' (launched by then Prime Minister Paul Keating in 1994).

Within the broader vision of 'Creative Nation' (abandoned by the current conservative

government but adopted as a catch-cry by Singapore), there were a number of major initiatives associated with new digital media. These ranged broadly across political economy, policy, and content strategies. Thus an Australian Multimedia venture finance corporation was established, as were a string of joint tertiary education and industry co-operative research centres.

Funds were also provided to make ten CD-ROMs, which would link Australian national cultural institutions with multimedia producers (and in most cases universities). The final two of these were released in March 1999 (*Stagestruck* -theatrical production virtual reality - and *Mission Australia* - an environmental protection interactive game), from a portfolio which included *Real Wild Child* (1996) (Australian rock music history) and *From Convict Ships to Dragon Boats* (1998) (Australian immigration history). Each of the 'Oz on CD' discs was given free to over 10, 000 schools and libraries. Their direct relationship to curriculum varied, with some finding readier acceptance, and others not taken up as widely due to limitations in content and design.

Board of Studies NSW Interactive Design Group

The Interactive Design Group at the NSW Board of Studies is probably the most experienced multimedia educational producer in Australia, with 15 CD ROM packages produced and in use by 1999 - all of which have direct curriculum relevance, with attractive and user-friendly interfaces and design. In 1993 it had created its first projects, including *Flashback*, an exploration of Australians at War, and *Oz ID*, an examination of key symbols and moments in Australian popular culture and history.

The effectiveness of the group depended on the two brothers at its heart - Lyndon and Lloyd Sharp. Lyndon, a history teacher, brought the curriculum and organisational skills, while Lloyd was a digital artist and programmer. Their personal trajectories offered in miniature a synopsis of the characteristics emerging as necessary for effective educational multimedia - educational integrity and creative innovation. They were backed by the experienced curriculum teams and editors at the Board, and a marketing organisation geared to the school system.

Making multicultural Australia project

In 1993, the steering group for what had become to be called 'The Making multicultural Australia project' agreed to explore CD-ROM technology as a delivery strategy for the material it wanted to make accessible to the educational system. And so began the consortium that was to work together over the next six years in the production of the CD-ROM project [1].

The final form of the project was achieved after many months of argument over content, educational strategy, size and trade-offs between programming space and media. The tensions over intellectual integrity, efficient multimedia design, and audience involvement contributed to the dynamism of the project.

A number of key principles were protected through the process - this was to be a people's history, one which looked at the impact of immigration and settlement on the public culture of Australia. It was not to be a history of immigration, nor an ethnographic encyclopaedia. Rather it was an exploration of social and cultural interaction and change, in which questions of power, gender, race and class would all find a place. It was a work of original social history as well as a multimedia educational project.

How does one conceptualise a project like this? The most straightforward way would be a time-line history - and many attempts at Australian and other histories have done this (e.g.

Australia through Time). The encyclopaedic approach (and in this case what we end up with is a multimedia database with little interactivity) usually translates from an existing printed text, and seeks to be as exhaustive as possible. There tends to be little if any conscious editorialising, though domain assumptions about the value of specific events can readily structure the material. In this case, as the material grew and the concept developed, MmA became three discs - the first dealing with the temporal dimension of cultural and political transformation, the second with contemporary cultural, social and political issues, and the third a resources base of documents, transcripts, and articles relevant to researchers.

A detailed map of the project reveals the pedagogical and political structures underlying its presentation. The project was designed to facilitate 'discovery learning'. Unlike educational projects which have a structured learning philosophy, where the audience is constituted as student and interrogated in an interactive question and answer (Laurillard, 1999:63), MmA promotes what has been referred to as 'discovery learning'. Discovery learning requires exploration by the audience, where the user builds the questions s/he wants to understand, and uses the materials as resources. While MmA can run as two sequential documentaries, audiences are prompted to freeze the authorial narrative and test the proposals advanced at the 'top level'. Audiences can dig more deeply into the body of the materials presented to support and contest the narrative. The materials could be video interviews, video documentary or news material, video performances, audio interviews and clips or texts. The texts include diaries, book excerpts, original documents, government reports, policy papers, newspaper and magazine articles, photographs, art works, and dozens of commentaries prepared for the project. There are over 100 video clips, 300 audio interviews, 1000 photographs and graphics, and 2500 pages of printed text.

The primary target audience - high school students and their teachers - meant that the CD-ROMs had to be designed to be simple to use in the class-room, and to be linked to curricula. All of the graphics and text can be printed and the open architecture of the program design allows teachers and students to access all of the copyright-cleared images, text, audio and video files. Thus teachers can produce their own class-room tailored multimedia presentations - almost an impossibility with commercial products that are concerned about protecting their investment in content.

The three discs in the set each have a different format. The first, labelled 'Timeline', uses the metaphor of a documentary set around specific key events in the history of Australian politico-cultural development under the impact of immigration [2]. It begins prior to the European invasion, documenting the diversity of cultural and language communities which inhabited the continent before 1788 (the date of British claim to the land). It them moves through the European settlement period until the Federation of the Colonies into a White Nation in 1901 (Hage, 1998:54). As the material moves towards the present the content becomes more intense and the time periods shorter.

So if not a more shallow overview, how to select the 'moments' which are historically important for culturally transformative relations? The Australian story had to begin prior to the arrival of Europeans, to provide a basis for a later discussion of the struggles between

Indigenous and invading peoples. It also needed to stress the complexity and richness of Indigenous cultural experiences, and highlight the cross-cultural communication that went on between Indigenous communities long before European settlement. There had to be an Indigenous- centred world view available, so that users could 'read' the story of settlement from a position which reflected Indigenous experiences, and have an alternative frame of reference to reflect on later issues of race relations and human rights. However, 'multicultural' in Australia has tended to be an adjective which refers to issues associated with the post-invasion populations, even though the latest Australian government position seeks to extend the term to include Indigenous people - (see http://www.immi.gov.au/nmac.)

The project was not to be a chronology of key events in immigration - but rather an exploration of the transforming of public culture. Thus the detailed history of immigration was not used - rather the points at which particular paradigms were embedded in the culture and its institutions - most notably the demonisation of Asia, and the creation of the concept and legislative armoury of White Australia at the time of federation (1901). The problem was to explain the close link between racism and egalitarianism, the fervent belief that only north western Europeans - White people - could understand and operate an egalitarian democracy that escaped the hierarchies of Europe and the autarchies of Asia.

The third key process was that associated with public culture - the Government decision, within the context of the aftermath of the Second World War, to embark on a major recruitment campaign to attract immigrants and thereby convert Australia from a 'farm to a factory'. This element combined contemporary cinema clips, newsreels, documents, and interviews, with reminiscences recorded in the 1990s.

Once the immigration tap was turned on, the White Australia/ assimilationist ground-rules were soon overwhelmed by the reality of a de-colonising world and a population which resisted total absorption into traditional Anglo-Australian mores and practices. Here we find social movement materials - murals and artworks, newsreel, photographs and documents, interviews with activists, prime ministers, bureaucrats and academics. Legal and community strategies for combating racism are explored, including whole school approaches, and community arts projects. Within the last decade the particular character of Australian multiculturalism - with all its contradictions- has been formed. It has also been challenged - from the Left, through deconstruction of the hegemonic practices involved; from the Right in discourses of populist and unitary nationalisms. The user can explore a series of possible futures, in which a variety of roads are taken, through the visions of their advocates.

History is one thing -contemporary cultural and political debates take us into a different realm, where selecting perspectives and approaches can be fraught with problems. In exploring popular discourses of multiculturalism, we set up a series of themes - 'problems' central to social relationships. These included laying out popular conceptions of multiculturalism - as food, as song and dance, as a license for importing 'homeland' conflict, as a basis for cross-group co-operation, as the cause of social collapse, or the basic underpinning of social cohesion in a pluralist society.

The selection of three areas of social conflict - the economy, media and politics - allowed the project to examine specific areas in some depth. These included a major segment on women and employment - covering the politics and realities of outwork in the clothing industry, and the fourteen year struggle for equal job rights undertaken by women in the industrial city of Wollongong.

One of the major concerns of the project was to explore and expose the emergence of new cultural expressions of Australian multiculturalism. The Arts Festival is structured around four fields of artistic work - the visual arts, performance, cinema and creative writing. It is the arts festival where the users/audience/participants are most empowered to explore and reflect on materials - dozens of art works with artist comments, interviews, and thematic presentations are provided. For instance, the Balkans provides a set for the discussion of

identity, the past and the present, Australian political uses of older histories - a Macedonian graphic artist and a sculptor, Greek artists and writers, a Croation sculptor - are some of the creators involved in this. Another segment works through representations of being a refugee, by artists from Vietnam, Somalia, Poland, Russia, and Yugoslavia.

One way of understanding the story overall is through a scroll painting of the Chinese experience of Australia. Originally a 50 metre long 2 metre high celebration of the bi-centennial of 1988, it has been digitised with annotations, and covers the detail of a Sino-centric vision of Australia from the early 1800s until 1988. The first frames are set in a landscape of tortured bush, kangaroos and nomadic indentured labourers - the last frames picture lawyers, politicians, business people and two bleached blond Chinese boys with surf-boards. The scroll serves as a celebration of Australian Chinese culture and history, and argues that despite White racism, Australia now accepts Chinese Australians as participants in the broad public culture, a signal of their fortitude and resilience.

The third disc contains all the written texts (2500 pages) in a searchable (Adobe Acrobat) and downloadable format, with a 2600 item reference library (including abstracts), and a data base of Australian archives of multicultural materials. This research library provides a more systematic research resource than that in any school library, and matches specialist collections needed for graduate level research and teaching.

Conclusion

The MmA project provides an example of how educational multimedia can be developed in ways that do not 'dumb-down' or sanitise history. The project will be used extensively in the schools' system, and due to the nature of the production can be used for primary to tertiary teaching and learning.

One of the questions that has been raised about new media refers to concerns that it is an intrinsically inferior intellectual and narrative form. It might be argued the work of imagination required to convert written argument to understanding, the linguistic and conceptual skills thus developed, are of a higher order to other forms of communication. It could further be claimed that the lack of a sustained and developed argument - the equivalent of an academic article or a book - is a significant loss, and that the student gains greatly from experiencing such an argument and undertaking the intellectual labor necessary to understand it.

Janet Murray argues that 'narrative beauty is independent of medium. … We need every available form of expression and all the new ones we can muster to help understand who we are and what we are doing here. The real literary hierarchy is not of medium but of meaning' (Murray 1997: 273-274). I would suggest that there is an authorial voice and a substantive intellectual argument in projects such as 'Making multicultural Australia'. Indeed, the use of the producer's voice as narrator and guide allows the participants to recognise that there is an authorial position, but that furthermore, the evidence to test that authorial position is also provided. Participants can choose to accept, contest, reinterpret and challenge the authorial position - but can only do that effectively as they grasp the dimensions of the argument and the social perspective that underpins the project. Their imagining of the arguments and their responses to them can now carry a dimension of authenticity - both from written texts if this is required and desired, but also from direct access to the contextualised accounts by people who have been and are part of the making of multicultural Australia.

As 'Making multicultural Australia' has entered the classrooms of Australia and universities and libraries around the world, it has become the standard primary multimedia resource for understanding a society in transition. Soon the CDROMs will be supported by a major on-line educational website, which will provide new material and offer the opportunities for participants to launch out from the specific location of the discs, into the more adventurous possibilities that will challenge those concerned with the working of multicultural societies

and the creative hybridities they require.

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Notes

1. A state government body, the Ethnic Affairs Commission, seconded staff to the project as researchers. Funds were brought together from a variety of sources including the University of Technology Sydney, the Australian Research Council, the Australian Foundation for Culture and the Humanities, the Australia Council for the Arts under its new-media and audience development programs, and the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission. The Special Broadcasting Service, Australia's second notional (multicultural public) broadcaster, also agreed to join the consortium, and provided access to its video and sound archives.

2. There are six major sections - Before the Australian nation (up to 1901); White Australia (from 1901 to about 1965); From assimilation to multiculturalism (about 1966- 1978); Multiculturalism in practice (1978- 1985); Transforming multiculturalism (1985-1992); This generation (1992 to 1999). At the 'top level' it runs for just under an hour - some forty screens establish the chronology and the controversial issue which can be taken further in the 'explore' level.

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