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The 'citizens' and 'citizenship' debates:
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**THE 'CITIZENS' AND 'CITIZENSHIP' DEBATES:
'VERNACULAR CITIZENSHIP' and CONTEMPORARY
AUSTRALIAN POLITICS AND SOCIETY**

**A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the
requirements for the award of the degree
Doctor of Philosophy**

from

UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG

by

Simon Maher

Bachelor of Arts with Honours in History.
University of NSW 1999

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Table of Contents

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	5
ABSTRACT	6
GENERAL INTRODUCTION	7
‘CITIZENSHIP’ AND CONTEMPORARY INTELLECTUAL INTEREST	7
SOME REASONS FOR THE RENEWED INTEREST IN ‘CITIZENS’ AND ‘CITIZENSHIP’	8
THE AUSTRALIAN ‘CITIZENS’ AND ‘CITIZENSHIP’ DEBATES:	11
MAJOR CHALLENGES, QUESTIONS AND PRIMARY OBJECTIVES	14
PRIMARY QUESTIONS AND ISSUES	18
AIMS OF THE THESIS	19
METHODS	27
OBSTACLES	34
OVERVIEW.....	36
CHAPTER ONE.....	41
WHAT IS ‘CITIZENSHIP’? AND WHO ARE ‘CITIZENS’?	41
ORIGINS OF “CLASSICAL CITIZENSHIP”	42
THE CHANGING PARAMETERS OF CITIZENSHIP DISCOURSE	48
CHAPTER TWO.....	63
AUSTRALIAN CITIZENSHIP SINCE FEDERATION: THE FOCUS OF CONTEMPORARY ACADEMIC INTEREST.	63
CRITICAL ASSESSMENTS	63
POSITIVE ASSESSMENTS-POLITICAL MODELS	69
CITIZENSHIP AS A PART OF ‘NATION BUILDING’	71
CRITICAL ASSESSMENTS OF THE “CITIZENSHIP AND NATION BUILDING” HYPOTHESIS	74
SUMMARY	77
CHAPTER THREE.....	78
INTRODUCTION-‘VERNACULAR CITIZENSHIP’ AND AUSTRALIAN HISTORY.....	78
‘VERNACULAR CITIZENSHIP’	78
SOURCES OF ‘VERNACULAR CITIZENSHIP’: THEIR PLACE IN THE IMAGINING OF MATTERS POLITICAL IN COLONIAL AUSTRALIA	81
CLASSICAL CONNECTIONS	85
EARLY EXAMPLES OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF ‘VERNACULAR CITIZENSHIP’	86
THE <i>CITIZEN</i> AND THE <i>PEOPLE’S ADVOCATE</i>	90
THE <i>CITIZEN</i> AND THE <i>PEOPLE’S ADVOCATE</i> : READERSHIP AND AIMS.....	92
MAJOR THEMES	94
BROADER AIMS OF THE <i>CITIZEN</i>	100
CONTENTS AND VIEWS – ‘THE ISSUES OF THE DAY’ IN COLONIAL AUSTRALIA	102
SQUATTERS AND SETTLERS	102
LAND.....	104
WEALTH, POWER AND MORAL CONDUCT	105
SHARED INTERESTS AND COMMON GOALS	106
BASIC INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS-EDUCATION AND RELIGIOUS EXPRESSION	107
WORLD AFFAIRS	110
CONVICT TRANSPORTATION.....	111
SUMMARY- THE MAJOR THEMES OF ‘VERNACULAR CITIZENSHIP’	114
EUROPEAN UPRISINGS AND REVOLUTIONS- RADICAL INVOCATIONS	114
AMIDST THE CLARION CALLS, MORE TEMPERED SENSIBILITIES PREVAIL.....	116

NATIONALISTIC IMPLICATIONS.....	120
THE POLITICAL SPHERE:.....	121
CONCLUSIONS	131
CHAPTER FOUR	132
THE LITERARY SPHERE.....	132
THE WRITINGS OF W.G. SPENCE.....	133
JOSEPH FURPHY AND <i>SUCH IS LIFE</i>	145
THE CIRCUMSTANCES IN WHICH <i>SUCH IS LIFE</i> APPEARED	147
‘FURPHY’S CITIZENSHIP’	152
CONCLUSION	159
CHAPTER FIVE.....	161
OFFICIAL MATTERS: CITIZENSHIP AND THE CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION	
DEBATES	161
THE FORMAL DISCUSSIONS ON THE QUESTION OF ‘WHAT IS CITIZENSHIP?’	161
THREE SECTIONS	162
THE CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION DEBATES OF THE 1890S	163
THE DEBATES.....	164
SHAPE OF IDEAS	165
FORMAL DISCUSSIONS SURROUNDING ‘CITIZENS’ AND ‘CITIZENSHIP’ IN THE NEW COMMONWEALTH: THE CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION DEBATES	165
RAISING SOME LESS PRACTICAL, AND MORE CHALLENGING ISSUES	170
FURTHER COMPLEXITIES INVOLVED IN THE QUESTION OF CITIZENSHIP	173
CONCLUSIONS	178
FORMAL AND “SUBSTANTIVE” DIMENSIONS OF CITIZENSHIP.....	178
‘A POLICY FOR THE COMMONWEALTH FEDERAL OLD AGE PENSIONS’	179
THE FRANCHISE.....	186
THE APPROACH OF FEDERATION AND THE NATIONAL VOTE.....	190
VOTING-SYMBOLIC ELEMENTS	192
CHAPTER SIX.....	196
1901 - THE INAUGURATION OF THE NEW NATION	196
THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA: ‘VERNACULAR CITIZENSHIP’ AND THE IMPLICATIONS FOR THE ‘IMAGINING’ OF POLITICAL MATTERS	196
FEDERATION AND HIGH AMBITIONS- A BETTER WORLD	198
THE PEOPLE AS CITIZENS	199
THE DAWN OF FEDERATION.....	201
THE UNIQUE QUALITIES OF THE AUSTRALIAN COMMONWEALTH.....	206
SHARED IDEALS AND AMBITIONS	210
‘EVERYONE’S COMMONWEALTH’	213
THE PEOPLE’S RESPONSE: PATIENT AND PROPER OR BORED AND NONPLUSSED?	217
CRITICAL PERSPECTIVES OF FEDERATION	226
THE EXPECTATIONS FOR FEDERATED AUSTRALIA: PRACTICAL MATTERS	229
CRITICAL DISCUSSIONS EQUALS A HEALTHY POLITY?	233
CHAPTER 7- CONCLUSION	240
The Aftermath of Federation: Disillusion and Disappointment or, Enduring Confidence amongst the Brickbats?	240
ENDURING CONFIDENCE AMONGST THE BRICKBATS	242
CONCLUDING THOUGHTS	249

PRIMARY SOURCES.....	254
<u>NEWSPAPERS</u>	254
<u>OTHER SOURCES</u>	254
<u>BOOKS</u>	255
<u>GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS</u>	255
<u>BIBLIOGRAPHY OF SECONDARY SOURCES</u>	257
<u>BOOKS</u>	257
<u>ARTICLES, CHAPTERS AND ESSAYS</u>	268

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In some ways this thesis is as much the property of my parents William and Josephine as it is mine. They have been my most loyal and devout supporters through many vicissitudes. This thesis is a thank you note to them, and also a shared moment of achievement.

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This PhD represents the culmination of many years of study. Beginning at The University of New South Wales, and now concluding at the University of Wollongong. It has been a rich and rewarding journey, and I feel fortunate to have been able to undertake it. I have been immeasurably enriched by my University experiences and the opportunity to share the great traditions of learning. Many people have inspired and helped me along this path over many years, selflessly sharing their time and selves. In reflecting upon these experiences I believe I have been privileged to access a tradition that is at the heart of our civilization and our humanity. It is for these reasons that I feel it is absolutely essential that this educational experience be available to all who desire to pursue its demands and appreciate its immeasurable riches.

ABSTRACT

'Citizens' and 'citizenship' have become 'buzz words' in contemporary times. Within Australian academia the subjects have attracted an unprecedented level of interest. Typically the focus is on 'formal' definitions and 'official' forms of citizenship found within Government legislation. This focus is problematic because it is possible that it overlooks the existence of 'informal' and 'unofficial' understandings of citizenship.

This thesis challenges the approaches that concentrate on 'official' versions of citizenship. It argues that an 'informal' understanding of citizenship has developed in the minds of the Australian community. This citizenship consists of a range of 'popular' and 'informal' ideas that comprise what might be called, 'vernacular citizenship'. It argues that they have developed from the mid to late 1840s, and continued their influence into the Federation era.

This thesis analyses these 'popular' ideas which appeared in a variety of discourses in colonial and early Federation Australia, drawing upon publications such as the *Citizen* and the *People's Advocate*, as well as the speeches of politicians such as Daniel Deniehy, and the textual works of W.G. Spence and Joseph Furphy. It argues that these sources carried a collection of 'citizenship' ideas sharing a thematic compatibility. This bundle of 'common ideas' provided the foundation for the understanding of 'vernacular citizenship' to develop, playing an instrumental role in shaping the ways that political matters have been imagined in Australia.

As well, the thesis explores the intellectual ancestry of these ideas, and explains why they have proved influential in shaping a 'popular' understanding of citizenship in Australian history. In presenting this case, it examines the historical background of the citizenship debates, as well as analysing contemporary discussions, thereby providing a means for understanding the full intellectual legacy of the citizenship debates and their implications.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

‘Citizenship’ and Contemporary Intellectual Interest

The initial impulse to begin this project sprang from acute curiosity, prompted by the appearance of the terms 'citizen', and 'citizenship' in an increasing number and variety of contemporary debates and forums. Upon researching these topics, I discovered I was not alone in my interest. There has been a recent outpouring of discussion and debate concerning 'citizens' and 'citizenship', both in Australia and beyond these shores. As Marilyn Lake so succinctly stated, "Citizenship has recently been rediscovered - in the east and west, on the left and right, in Australia and overseas, by women and men."¹

One indicator of this increase in interest has been the burgeoning volume of writings and discussion involving 'citizens' and 'citizenship' in the academic forum.² Such is the level of interest, it has been suggested with some veracity that, "...citizenship has become the buzzword among all thinkers on the political spectrum."³ In the prevailing environment of ideas and discussion it is not unusual to come across such enthusiastic appraisals, and in light of this, it is not difficult to comprehend the views of those who in comparatively recent times proposed that citizenship, "...may be the big idea of the nineties."⁴

¹ Marilyn Lake, "Personality, Individuality, Nationality: Feminist Conceptions of Citizenship 1902-1940", p. 25, in *Australian Feminist Studies*, No. 19, Autumn, 1994, pp. 25-38.

The full quotation reads, "Citizenship has recently been rediscovered-in the east and west, on the left and right, in Australia and overseas, by women and men. Following the fall of communist regimes, the decline of left-wing politics, and the stagnation of feminism, radicals have seen in this 'rebirth of citizenship' the possibility of a new democratic politics and the opportunity to rethink the relationship between the collective and the individual, the social and political, difference and democracy, the nation state and sovereignty."

² Ronald Beiner, p. 1, "Why Citizenship Constitutes a Theoretical Problem in the Last Decade of the Twentieth Century", in R. Beiner, (ed.), *Theorizing Citizenship*, State University of New York Press, Albany, U.S.A, 1995, pp. 1-28.

³ Will Kymlicka and Wayne Norman, "Return of the Citizen: A Survey of Recent Work on Citizenship Theory", in *Ethics*, Vol. 104, January 1994, No. 2, pp. 352-381.

⁴ Paul Smyth, p. 7, "The Republic, Citizenship and Social Policy", in, *An Australian Republic: Participation and Citizenship, Discussion Papers, No. 7*, Uniya Publications, Kings Cross, New South Wales, 1995, pp. 4-10.

SOME REASONS FOR THE RENEWED INTEREST IN 'CITIZENS' AND 'CITIZENSHIP'

The most obvious stimulus for this renewed swell of interest in the concepts of 'citizens' and 'citizenship' has been the changing nature of the world itself⁵. During the last twenty five years, major changes in the composition and structure of nations have been precipitated by an era of monumental change.⁶ Geographically, the alterations to national boundaries brought about by the processes of post-colonialism, or the end of the Cold War, symbolically represent the extent of geo-political change that has occurred in this time.⁷ If one observes the arrival of the European Union⁸, and its myriad implications for historical notions of sovereignty, national identities, and other challenges to the contemporary traditions of the 'nation-state', it is possible to grasp an understanding of the forces of economic, political and social change, that have impacted upon world affairs.⁹

In this thesis it is impossible to concisely document these transformations. It is sufficient to state that the collapse of the former Soviet Union of States, the eruption of the Balkan and other civil wars around the globe, and the concomitant waves of

⁵ A point addressed by Stephen Castles and Alastair Davidson, *Citizenship and Migration: Globalization and the Politics of Belonging*, Macmillan Press Ltd., London, 2000, pp. 1-9.

⁶ For a concise introduction to the issues associated with political and geographical changes in contemporary Europe, and the implications for notions of citizenship in this environment, see Jürgen Habermas, "Citizenship And National Identity: Some Reflections On The Future Of Europe", in *Praxis International*, Vol. 12, no. 1, April, 1992, pp.1-19. This article concentrates on the European dimensions of national identity and the implications for citizenship.

Another useful introduction is provided by B. S. Turner, "Contemporary Problems in the Theory of Citizenship", in Turner, (ed.), *Citizenship and Social Theory*, SAGE Publications, London, 1994, pp. 1-18.

⁷ Charles Tilley, "Citizenship, Identity and Social History", pp. 1-2, in, *International Review of Social History*, 40, supplement 3, (1995), pp. 1-17.

⁸ As Preuss, and fellow authors point out, the signing of the Treaty on European Union at Maastricht in 1992 formalised notions of citizenship within the new dimensions of Europe, p. 5, in, U. K. Preuss, M. Everson, M. Koenig-Archibugi & E. Lefebvre, "Traditions of Citizenship in the European Union", *Citizenship Studies*, vol. 7, No. 1, 2003, pp. 3-14.

⁹ For a provocative introduction to the ferment of change in Europe, it is worth reading S. Howe, "Citizenship in the New Europe: A Last Chance for the Enlightenment?", in G. Andrews, (ed.), *Citizenship*, Lawrence & Wishart, London, 1991, pp. 123-135. There is a wealth of study devoted to the issues of citizenship in a Europe that is experiencing considerable challenges to its political, economic, and social traditions. Amongst the multitude of works available, David Cesarani & Mary Fulbrook's, *Citizenship, Nationality and Migration in Europe*, explores many of the pertinent issues. In particular, the articles in this compilation explore the issues of citizenship and national identity, as well as providing a background to the context of political and legislative change within Europe. See also, for an exploration of the issues surrounding citizenship in two individual European nations, R. Brubaker, *Citizenship and Nationhood in Germany and France*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, London, England, 1992.

migration triggered by these events, have irrevocably unsettled existing patterns of settlement and de-stabilised traditional models of political and social integration.¹⁰ These factors, allied with the oscillations of the world's economic markets, are the primary forces of change over the last twenty-five years.¹¹ These varieties of overt political change, as well as the myriad alterations to social life associated with them, have all reshaped the ways in which individuals live as members of national communities.

Arguably the most dramatic change was graphically symbolised by the demolition of the Berlin Wall in 1989. As many commentators have noted, this signified the demise in influence of many theories and practices of social and political economy. In particular, the winds of change have unsettled many of the 'orthodox' conceptions of leftist politics and ideas, prompting a period of intellectual conjecture and soul searching on this side of the political divide.¹² It is almost as if the re-configuration of national borders that has followed in the wake of the major upheavals of the recent past has been reflected in the resulting scramble of political ideas that have been percolating away ever since.

Within this environment of political realignments and intellectual re-adjustments, the concepts of 'citizens' and 'citizenship' have been grasped by many seeking a replacement vessel in which to float their ideas and policies.¹³ One of the more intriguing aspects of this development has been their appeal to an eclectic collection of advocates, attracting proponents on both sides of the political spectrum.¹⁴

¹⁰ Baubock explores the theoretical challenges that rising rates of migration, as well as the increasing patterns of movement of people across national borders, present to notions of citizenship. See, R. Baubock, *Transnational Citizenship: Membership and Rights in International Migration*, Edward Elgar Publishing Limited, England 1994.

¹¹ Stephen Castles, "Citizenship and the Other in the Age of Migration", in A. Davidson & K. Weekley, (eds), *Globalisation and Citizenship in the Asia-Pacific*, Macmillan Press Ltd., Great Britain, 1999, pp. 27-48. Castles examines the impacts of global transformations that have been characterised by increases in levels of global migration. He also details the forces of the 'globalisation' of commerce and markets, and the pressures they have exerted upon traditional concepts of citizenship.

¹² Chantal Mouffe is one writer who has examined the contemporary challenges facing political thinkers on the left and examined ways of dealing with them. She has produced a significant body of work which has explored the topic of citizenship in this context in, *Dimensions of Radical Democracy: Pluralism, Citizenship, Community*, Verso, London, 1992.

¹³ Wayne Hudson & John Kane, "Rethinking Australian Citizenship", p. 1, in, *Rethinking Australian Citizenship*, The University of Cambridge Press, United Kingdom, 2000, pp. 1-14.

¹⁴ J. M. Barbalet, "Developments In Citizenship Theory And Issues In Australian Citizenship", p. 56, in, *Australian Journal Of Social Issues*, Vol. 31, No. 1, February 1996, pp. 55-72.

Another example of the appeal of the lexicon of 'citizens' and 'citizenship' in the political milieu of today is evident in its application by those seeking its mantle to cover more 'localised', or 'micro', issues. Commentators compete to identify what they proclaim to be the 'correct' characteristics of 'citizens', and align them with a range of rights or responsibilities that match the social and political circumstances which are perceived to be at play. One of the primary sites of this 'battle for the soul of the citizens' has taken place at the level of the individual's identity, and the competing perceptions of what constitutes the political and social environment shaping the contours of present day citizenship.

This approach hinges upon the identification of key characteristics of transformational change. On one side of this argument are those who have identified the economic changes that have advanced in line with the rise of free-market orthodoxy, and branded them a major threat to individual and democratic freedoms.¹⁵ As one group of authors opined, "...socialists, social democrats, feminists, radical environmentalists and social liberals have drawn on the language of citizenship, civic life and civil society as a way of resisting the economistic assault on civil life and public institutions."¹⁶ Without wishing to oversimplify, or overgeneralise this body of work, the attention of many writers in this domain concentrates upon the prescription of rights to protect both, individuals within democracies, as well as measures to protect the institutions that are frequently identified as the bulwarks defending their rights and freedoms.¹⁷

To further illustrate the multifaceted appeal of the rubric of 'citizens' and 'citizenship', this focus on the 'localised' level has another side. There are those who largely agree with

¹⁵ Michael Ignatieff has summarised this debate in these terms, "...the tension between the republican discourse on citizenship and liberal political theory of market man, the one an active-participatory-conception of freedom, the other a passive-acquisitive-definition of freedom; the one speaks of society as a polis; the other of society as a market-based association of competitive individuals.", p. 54, *The Myth of Citizenship*, in Ronald Beiner, (ed.), *Theorizing Citizenship*, State University of New York Press, Albany, U.S.A., 1995, pp. 53-77.

¹⁶ I. Barns, J. Dudley, P. Harris, and A. Petersen, "Introduction: themes, context and perspectives", pp.1-24, in, A. Petersen I. Barns, J. Dudley, and P. Harris, *Poststructuralism, Citizenship and Social Policy*, Routledge, U.S.A., and Canada, 1999, p. 16.

¹⁷ This debate over what constitutes citizenship in contemporary times is also discussed by Brian Galligan & Winsome Roberts, *Australian Citizenship*, Melbourne University Publishing Ltd., Melbourne, 2004, p. 12.

the preceding authors' identification of a range of factors that have impacted upon individuals and societies during the last twenty five years.¹⁸ Many would also share their concerns regarding the deleterious effects of present day developments, and the pressures they exert upon individuals and public institutions. However, they tend to differ markedly in the remedies that they prescribe. They believe that by encouraging individuals to exercise their rights and responsibilities as 'active' citizens¹⁹, the community will be invigorated. This approach concentrates upon the 'civic' aspects of the individuals' identity, and their responsibility in fostering a 'civil' society.²⁰ The 'civic component' of an individuals identity and their interaction as individuals within their respective communities, are identified as being the crucial aspects which will both signify, as well as actively encourage a 'healthy' society characterised by its freedoms and responsibilities.

THE AUSTRALIAN 'CITIZENS' AND 'CITIZENSHIP' DEBATES:

An Introduction

As I delved deeper into this pool of contemporary interest in the subject of 'citizens' and 'citizenship', it was apparent that there has been a similar 'spike' in the levels of interest from an Australian perspective.²¹ A significant proportion of work has been produced

¹⁸ Francis Fukuyama, "The Great Disruption; Human Nature And The Reconstitution of Social Order", *The Atlantic Monthly*, Vol. 283, No. 3, May 1999, pp. 55-80. Fukuyama provides an introduction to the types of change that have impacted upon the Western industrialised nations in terms of both their effects upon individuals, and their broader societal impacts. He locates the beginnings of this process of change in the mid- nineteen-sixties, but concentrates on the effects that had manifested themselves in a variety of social indicators during the 1990's. This article also delves into the issues of 'civic' engagement and social interaction.

¹⁹ Kymlicka & Norman, "Return of the Citizen: A Survey of Recent Work on Citizenship Theory", in Beiner, (ed.), *Theorizing Citizenship*, State University of New York Press, Albany, U.S.A, 1995, pp. 291-300.

²⁰ The work of R. D. Putnam provides an incisive introduction to the body of research and opinion that explores the role of 'civic identity' and 'civic interaction', and the implications for democratic political systems. Putnam shares the concerns of those who identify a decline in both the levels of interest, and participation, in public and civic events, in the face of significant change at both the global and social level. For a brief introduction to this field of study and the issues at stake, see, "Democracy in America at Century's End", in H. Hadenius, *Democracy's Victory and Crisis: Nobel Symposium no. 93*, Cambridge University Press, United Kingdom, 1997, pp. 27-70.

²¹ Judith Brett comments on the 'flurry' of attention that citizenship has attracted in contemporary Australia, see, p. 424, "Retrieving the Partisan History of Australian Citizenship, *Australian Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 36, November 3, 2001, pp. 423-437.

from within this country.²² Much of the debate is predicated upon the view that a range of economic, political and social changes are transforming the traditional environment within which the nation of Australia has existed.²³ In response, the majority of the contemporary literature featuring the topic of citizenship in Australia, calls for amendments to the Constitution, as well as alterations to the political processes in contemporary Australia.²⁴

The proliferation of reports and studies commissioned by Commonwealth Governments over the last fifteen years or so epitomises the burgeoning levels of attention directed towards the topics.²⁵ Possibly the most well known instance is the appointment of Professor Stuart Macintyre to the "Civics Experts Group" in 1994. He was charged with "...preparing a plan for encouraging more active and informed citizenship."²⁶ by the then Prime Minister, Paul Keating.²⁷ This shows the value placed on the notion of citizenship by the incumbent Labour administration. Keating's action in commissioning the "Civic Experts Group" indicated that the Government of the day believed it was a sufficiently

²² In the introduction to Chesterman & Galligan's, *Defining Australian Citizenship: Selected Documents*, which was published in 1991, the authors remarked that, "...little has been written on Australian citizenship...", p. 1, although they acknowledged in the footnotes which accompanied this quote that this situation had, "begun to change in recent times", and cited as examples the following works, Davidson, *From Subject to Citizen: Australian Citizenship in the Twentieth Century*, John Goldlust, *Understanding Citizenship in Australia*, Kim Rubenstein, "Citizenship in Australia: Unscrambling its Meaning", in *Melbourne University Law Review*, V. 20, 1995-1996, pp. 503-527. Since the publication of Chesterman & Galligan's text several other significant works have been produced. For example, Rubenstein, (ed.), *Individual, Community, Nation: Fifty Years of Australian Citizenship*, also, W. Hudson & J. Kane, *Rethinking Australian Citizenship*, as well as, David Dutton, *One of us? A Century of Australian Citizenship*. There is also an abundance of shorter works and articles which have been produced on the topic. Several of these are discussed in this thesis and are included in the bibliography.

²³ See Michael Salvaris for a brief overview of the types of change commonly cited in reference to changes in Australian society, pp. 145-146, "A Just Republic or Just A Republic? Citizenship, Democracy And Constitutional Reform" in Davis, (ed.), *Citizenship in Australia: Democracy, Law and Society*, Constitutional Centenary Foundation, Victoria, 1996, pp. 143-170.

²⁴ For a collection of articles providing a comprehensive exposition of arguments in favour of Constitutional change, see, Glenn Patmore, (ed.), *The Big Makeover; A New Australian Constitution: Labor Essays 2002*, Pluto Press, Australia Ltd., N.S.W., 2001.

²⁵ J. Brett, "Retrieving the Partisan History of Australian Citizenship", p. 424, *Australian Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 36, November 3, 2001, pp. 423-437.

²⁶ "Whereas the People...; Civics And Citizenship Education", Report of the Civics Expert Group, Australian Government Publishing Service, 1994.

²⁷ S. Macintyre, p. 27, "Citizenship and Education", in S. Rufus Davis, (ed.), *Citizenship in Australia: Democracy, Law and Society*, pp. 225-240.

worthy project to promote and fund. The involvement of a Commonwealth government²⁸ in the promotion of citizenship is of course, not in itself particularly unusual. It indicates the nexus between the interests of governments, and the types of issues that freely intermingle with notions of citizenship. There is a considerable history of 'civics education' featuring in the curriculum of school programs, enthusiastically encouraged by government bodies that have striven to impart information believed necessary for the cultivation of 'good citizens'.²⁹

The domestic intellectual milieu reflects levels of interest similar to the international concern about 'citizens' and 'citizenship'. A brief overview of the academic sphere demonstrates that the opinion of one writer, who expressed the conviction that they are topics of such significance that they are, "...likely to shape the terrain of tomorrow's politics."³⁰, is in many senses emblematic. Citizenship is considered by many to represent an indispensable focal point for contemporary Australian history and politics. In the introduction to John Chesterman & Brian Galligan's text was the statement that, "CITIZENSHIP IS AT THE HEART of Australian politics".³¹ Sir Ninian Stephen has written, "But for Australians, citizenship expresses much more than a mere benign relationship to our country of Australia and to our fellow Australians. It is the key to so much that is at the heart of being Australian."³²

²⁸ Alison Holland, "The Common Bond? Australian Citizenship", in Martyn Lyons, and Penny Russell, *Australia's History: Themes and Debates*, University of New South Wales Press, Sydney, 2005, pp. 152-158.

²⁹ J. Thomas, "Citizenship and Historical Sensibility", in *Australian Historical Studies*, Vol. 25, April, 1993, No. 100, pp. 383-397. In particular, see between pages 390-392 for the specific example of the emphasis placed upon 'training for citizenship' in Victoria in 1934. Also, Stuart Macintyre offers a more general summary of the place of 'civics education' in Australian teaching curriculum's, pp. 229-231, "Citizenship and Education", pp. 225-240, in Davis, (ed.), *Citizenship in Australia: Democracy, Law and Society*. Davidson also refers to the importance attached to instruction in citizenship matters, within the education system in Commonwealth Australia, *From Subject to Citizen: Australian Citizenship in the Twentieth Century*, pp. 184-188. Davison, *The Use and Abuse of Australian History*, pp. 272-274.

³⁰ Smyth, p. 4, "The Republic, Citizenship and Social Policy", in, *An Australian Republic: Participation and Citizenship, Discussion Papers*, No. 7, Uniya Publications, Kings Cross, New South Wales, 1995, pp. 4-10.

³¹ Chesterman & Galligan, *Defining Australian Citizenship: Selected Documents*, (eds), Melbourne University Press, Victoria, 1999, p. 1.

³² Sir Ninian Stephen, p. 4, "The First half-century of Australian Citizenship", pp. 3-8, in, Rubenstein, (ed.), *Individual, Community, Nation: Fifty Years of Australian Citizenship*.

Background Historiography

As the preceding paragraphs attest, 'citizens' and 'citizenship' are topics which have attracted the attention of a vast collection of writers and commentators, generating a ground swell of interest in these terms within Australia today. Indeed, it is rare these days to read a work of Australian history or politics that does not discuss 'citizens', or citizenship'. Comparatively, if one randomly leafs through a general collection of 'past' works, it is apparent that there are fewer direct references to the topics. And typically, many of the texts that broach the topics do so in a manner that identifies citizenship as being an issue subordinate to other matters. Unlike contemporary practices, the topics of 'citizens' and 'citizenship' have only garnered comparatively slight, and seldom undivided attention from writers and commentators in Australia in the past.³³

MAJOR CHALLENGES, QUESTIONS AND PRIMARY OBJECTIVES

Citizenship and Australian History and Politics: Contemporary Academic Views and Divergent Opinions.

As can be gleaned from the preceding summary, it is symptomatic of the current popularity of the terms 'citizens' and 'citizenship' that they appear in a varied range of publications in present-day Australia.³⁴ In these forums the terms are frequently discussed with a sense of portentous urgency, often arising in debates canvassing the most topical issues and questions that have arisen over the course of recent Australian political history.³⁵ They touch on such vital historical issues as national identity, and the conduct of national affairs, as well as proffering suggestions for the overhaul of political institutions and legislative rights, and by implication, the structure and composition of the polity itself. As such they potentially hold profound implications for the way that our society might function, and its members live.

³³ The 'recent' upsurge in attention directed towards the topic of citizenship in Australia was also noted by Davidson, *From Subject to Citizen: Australian Citizenship in the Twentieth Century*, p. 2. Chesterman and Galligan noted similar developments, in the introduction to their text, *Defining Australian Citizenship: Selected Documents*, see p. 1.

³⁴ A detailed summary of the various sources is provided in Chapter Two.

³⁵ The inclusion of this chapter contributed by Alison Holland titled, "The Common Bond? Australian Citizenship", in a recent collection of essays representing pre-eminent matters in contemporary Australian history demonstrates this continuing trend, see Lyons & Russell, *Australia's History: Themes and Debates*.

In light of this focus of attention upon the topics within the context of contemporary Australia, the pangs of curiosity that had originally led me to delve into the topic and pursue the relevant works upon the subject, now lead my attention to a place where I was confronted with more complex challenges. The further I waded in to this topic, and the more I read, it seemed that the subject matter became increasingly problematic. For every answer pursued, a further retinue of questions would arise. Amidst this tumult of interest surrounding 'citizens' and 'citizenship' within Australian circles today, there exists an equally deep pool of questions.

At the forefront of these are the conflicting ideas surrounding the importance of 'citizenship' within contemporary academic circles. In the views expressed by writers such as John Chesterman & Brian Galligan, as well as Sir Ninian Stephen, there are unmistakeable indications that 'citizenship' is believed to constitute some particular and intrinsic portion of Australian politics. For instance, when one reads the statements, "CITIZENSHIP IS AT THE HEART of Australian politics"³⁶, or, "CITIZENSHIP HAS BEEN at the core of Australian politics since the founding of the nation as the Commonwealth of Australia in 1901, and even prior to it."³⁷, it is apparent that the authors believe 'citizenship' is inextricably entwined within the dimensions of Australian politics. If we wrestle with these authors convictions further, it is clear that they consider 'citizenship' to be an integral part of Australian political history. On their own account these convictions are sufficiently provocative to stimulate further investigation.

These views are given further impetus by this statement made by Sir Ninian Stephen, "But for Australians, citizenship expresses much more than a mere benign relationship to our country of Australia and to our fellow Australians. It is the key to so much that is at the heart of being Australian."³⁸ While John Chesterman & Brian Galligan and Brian Galligan & Winsome Roberts identify 'citizenship' as residing at the core of Australian politics, Sir Ninian Stephen's statement advances the primacy of the issues involving citizenship a little further, and in an even more portentous direction. He nominates

³⁶ Chesterman & Galligan, (eds), *Defining Australian Citizenship: Selected Documents*, p. 1.

³⁷ Galligan & Roberts, *Australian Citizenship*, p. 19.

³⁸ Sir Ninian Stephen, p. 4, "The First half-century of Australian Citizenship", in Rubenstein, (ed.), *Individual, Community, Nation: Fifty Years of Australian Citizenship*, pp. 3-8.

citizenship as being of special significance to Australians, citing its role in shaping such esoteric features as the nature of the relationships that exist between them, their neighbours, and the national community. This statement reinforces these assertions that 'citizenship' is of quintessential importance to Australian affairs, deeply implicating its place not only at the centre of national politics, but also the heartbeat of national life. Together, these authors' ideas powerfully reinforce the impression that citizenship forms an essential element in the makeup of the national community of Australia, and in a broader context, the more abstract sense of 'what it means to be an Australian'.

The broad sweep of ideas proffered by Sir Ninian Stephen, as well as Chesterman & Galligan and Galligan & Roberts offer tantalising challenges. For if we accept the crux of their statements then we must also accept their convictions that 'citizenship' constitutes some vital and elemental piece in the mosaic of Australian political and social history. The unsubtle implication this raises is that if one wishes to really understand Australian history and its politics, and to get a firm grip on these elusive subjects, it is essential to understand what citizenship 'is' or means in this country. The magnitude of the questions raised by this proposition represents an entry point into the maelstrom of debate involving the issues of 'citizens', and 'citizenship' in Australia.

The full scale of these becomes clearer when we consider that the challenges of chasing down an understanding of citizenship in Australia, offer sufficient material on their own to provoke the attention of anyone interested in Australian history and politics. However, as challenging as these assertions are, if we compare these ideas which are imbued with the conviction that 'citizenship' represents an intrinsic feature of Australian political and social life, with the ideas of writers with more sceptical perceptions, then it is clear that the issues at hand are replete with even more potential for controversy. Consider the ideas expressed within these quotations:

Citizenship has been one of those 'democratic truths' taken for granted by Australians without full knowledge or public debate on what it means - its rights and obligations. From the point of view of citizenship, then, it might be argued that Australian civilisation did not begin until 1949 or 1967 or 1993. Perhaps

Australian civilisation will not be properly constituted until Australia has become a Republic.³⁹

Upon reading this statement one may wonder if it is possible to reconcile these ideas, with those expressed by either Chesterman & Galligan, or those of Sir Ninian Stephen. The implicit questions posed by the quotations fairly ring with contradiction. One of the major areas of contention involves Laksiri Jayasuriya's reference to Australian civilisation beginning in 1949, a reference to the *Australian Citizenship Act 1948*⁴⁰ which formally addressed Australians as 'citizens' rather than as 'subjects' for the first time. It is this official reference to the categories of 'subjects' and 'citizens' within the Constitution that has served as an emblematic point in the citizen debates, and represents the basis upon which most commentators have initiated their entry into these debates.

Jayasuriya's quotation also queries whether Australians even understand what citizenship is. He claims the lack of knowledge in relation to the subject, and the paucity of debate involving its issues within Australian society, demonstrates that Australians do not fully comprehend 'citizenship'. It is even suggested that the nation we know in its present form may not be worthy of the title of a 'civilisation'. In this context, one may wonder whether it is possible to debate the topics of 'citizens' and 'citizenship', when they seem to inspire opinions that appear to be so diametrically opposed. How can some commentators proclaim that citizenship is an integral and quintessential feature of Australian political and social life, whilst others question the very existence of this 'Australian citizenship'?

Furthermore, in reading Jayasuriya's ideas, it seems that the more one looks into this debate which involves these notions of 'citizenship', and by implication 'citizens' also, then the more vexatious and problematic the search for understanding becomes. For if one considers some of the issues that Jayasuriya raises, it is apparent that the issues of

³⁹ Laksiri Jayasuriya, p. 93, "Citizens", in Richard Nile, (ed.), *Australian Civilisation*, Oxford University Press Australia, South Melbourne, Australia, 1994, pp. 93-109.

⁴⁰ The "*Nationality and Citizenship Act of 1948 (Cth)*" came into force on Australia Day, 26 January 1949, and was later known as the "*Australian Citizenship Act 1948*", see, Galligan & Roberts, *Australian Citizenship*, p. 32. See also T. Batrouney & J. Goldlust, *Unravelling Identity: Immigrants, Identity and Citizenship in Australia*, Common Ground Publishing, Pty Ltd., Australia, 2005, p. 28-29.

'citizens' and 'citizenship' in Australia contain the capacity to extend across such controversial issues as the very nature of 'civilisation' itself, including the respective rights of national communities such as Australia, to measure their claims to this type of description.

PRIMARY QUESTIONS AND ISSUES

Introducing- 'Vernacular Citizenship'

The primary questions which are raised by these conflicting statements introduce several of the major areas of debate that reflect the controversial role of ideas about citizenship in academic today. At the forefront of these is the concentration on the 'formal', 'legal' and 'substantive' aspects of citizenship⁴¹ as defined within Commonwealth Constitutional legislation and by Federal and State government policies.⁴² A more comprehensive analysis of this occurs in Chapter Two which analyses the debates which they stimulate. For this section it suffices to summarise the primary arguments contained in the quotations from Sir Ninian Stephen and Laksiri Jayasuriya. In the former, is a line of thought which considers that citizenship has played a constructive and positive role in the development of the Australian nation. To support this proposition it is frequently suggested that the various pieces of legislation constituting 'social policy', or, 'substantive matters', associated with the foundation of the Commonwealth and its Constitution, were formulated with the intent of fostering the development of citizenship in Australia.

In the latter, there is an expansive collection of material which uses similar sources of evidence provided within the Constitution and attendant government legislation, to critically assess the condition of citizenship in this country. By examining Constitutional and legislative material which refers to citizenship, an array of authors have critically scrutinised the foundations upon which citizenship has been claimed to have influenced both political and social matters over the course of Australian history. A key platform of the majority of these approaches refers to the point made within Jayasuriya's reference to the use of the term 'subject' rather than 'citizen' in the Constitution prior to 1949. In

⁴¹ Chesterman & Galligan, *Defining Australian Citizenship: Selected Documents*, pp. 8-9.

⁴² Galligan & Roberts, *Australian Citizenship*, p. 3.

several instances these analyses have concluded that these ‘official versions’ represent a type of citizenship that has produced negative and even malign effects upon the polity and its citizens. Some have drawn upon this same intellectual terrain and this perceived ‘paucity’ of Australian citizenship, to dispute the very existence of citizenship in Australian history.

One of the most puzzling areas of enquiry that develops in light of these discursions involves the contradictions underlying them. For whilst they represent a hefty body of work predicated upon the importance of citizenship in the context of Australian politics and the life of the national community, there remains considerable debate over what citizenship actually constitutes, and whether or not it can even be considered to be a legitimate entity. The dimensions of this conundrum sitting at the centre of these academic deliberations are most apparent when one reads of the conflicting opinions regarding the composition of citizenship in Australia. A large contingent of commentators draw upon the evidence found within the formal and legal definitions produced by the various levels of government in Australia to deliberate upon the existence of citizenship in our national history. Whilst another vigorous discussion has developed around the question of whether or not the varieties of citizenship outlined by the formal and legislative output, constitute a ‘genuine’ form of citizenship.

AIMS OF THE THESIS

This thesis addresses the major questions raised by the literature reviewed in Chapter Two, and its focus on official and formal versions of citizenship⁴³. It seeks reasons than can account for these primary areas of disputation that run on contradictory paths from these contemporary sources. It will begin by arguing that it is probable that several 'layers' of understanding exist in relation to the beliefs of the 'general community' and their understanding of 'citizenship'. It suggests that one of the most influential and pervasive layers of understanding in relation to the issues of 'citizenship', has involved the development of a 'popular' and ‘informal’ conceptualisation of Australian citizenship, or what might be labelled as ‘vernacular citizenship’. In order to address these issues,

⁴³ This point of view which considers there are more dimensions to citizenship in Australia than legal and institutional matters is also expressed by Galligan & Roberts see, *Australian Citizenship*, p. 3.

this thesis explores and analyses the stream of ideas that comprise ‘vernacular citizenship’.

It is the contention of this thesis that ‘vernacular citizenship’ developed in Australia in the 60 years before Federation. It will be argued that the thematic stream of ideas that constitute ‘vernacular citizenship’ can be traced to at least the period from the mid to late 1840s onward. During this time a wide array of references to citizenship appeared throughout a broad range of freely available discourse. Examples of these ‘informal citizenship’ ideas and ideals may be observed in the forum of the contemporary press of the time, including the *Sydney Morning Herald*, as well as the *Citizen* and the *People’s Advocate*.⁴⁴

This contributed to a rich assortment of largely implicit and informal ideas involving citizenship and other political matters which were freely available to be read and discussed within the mainstream of the colonial community. Some of these sources reflected the ideas and beliefs of ‘ordinary’ Australians, and it is this ‘popular’ nature of these ideas that most aptly represents the reasons why they have been labelled as constituting ‘vernacular citizenship’. As this thesis will show, the topic of citizenship was sufficiently important to occupy the thinking and writing of a significant cross-section of its population. Citizenship figured prominently within the discourse of colonial history, most commonly within the guise of informal and implicit ideas and principles. It will be argued that the widespread appearance of ‘common’ or ‘popular’ ideas pertaining to citizenship, indicated the manner in which they assumed a prominent place in the imagining of political matters within the Australian community.

In texts produced in the last decades of the nineteenth century, there is further evidence that this thematic stream of ideas expressed within both the public and the political spheres was further embellished by a range of sources including fictional works, and

⁴⁴ Greg Picker, “ ‘A Nation is governed by all that has tongue in the nation’: Newspapers and Political Expression in Colonial Sydney, 1852”, *Journal of Australian Studies*, No. 62, 1999, pp. 184-189. Anne Coote, “Imagining a Colonial Nation: The Development of Popular Concepts of Sovereignty and Nation in New South Wales with particular Reference to the Period between 1856 and 1860”, *The Journal of Australian Colonial History*, Vol. 1, No. 1, April, 1999, pp. 1-37.

other printed materials.⁴⁵ The significance of these is that they demonstrate the ways and manner in which this common bundle of informal ideas associated with ‘vernacular citizenship’ were widely distributed within the colonial society of pre-federation Australia. Because these ideas were expressed through a broad range of material across the various layers of the mainstream population, they came to assume an increasingly ‘native quality’. Some texts, most noticeably Joseph Furphy’s *Such is Life*, personified the ways that the ideas of ‘vernacular citizenship’ were presented within a distinctly national setting. Augmenting the growing understanding that such matters were appropriate for ‘ordinary’ Australians to entertain. As the references to citizenship proliferated within printed materials, the more likely it was that they were being discussed within colonial society, and woven into the fabric of everyday discourse. This process ensured that these ideas would increasingly reflect the ideas and opinions which shaped the local milieu. A corollary of this involved the way that the burgeoning popularity of ‘vernacular citizenship’ entwined with a growing sense of national identity against the backdrop of broader political matters in Australian history, most notably the Federation of the Australian Commonwealth.

The full dimensions of ‘vernacular citizenship’ include some of the formal dimensions set down in official government business including policies and statutory legislation. These included the ‘conventional’ delivery of political ideas and discussion as entertained and promoted by political figures and thinkers in Australia. This reflected the pervasive influence of the ideas of ‘vernacular citizenship’ in two ways. If we trace these ideas within the speeches and thoughts of prominent politicians such as Daniel Deniehy in the 1850s and then William Spence in the later years, it is possible to discern their vitality within the reasoning of two of the more influential figures in early Australian politics. While this further suggests the existence of a rich pool of ideas within colonial society, it also indicates that their influence extended beyond narrow class or occupational

⁴⁵ Alan Atkinson has discussed the influence of reading and its role in shaping the way that the colonial community began to think and ‘imagine’ matters, see *The Europeans in Australia: A History. Volume Two: Democracy*, Oxford University Press, Victoria Australia, 2004, pp. 24-30 and pp. 212-219. Winsome Roberts explores the role of literacy and the distribution of ideas through reading and the publication of newspapers and books, in shaping the ways people lived, see pp. 99-103, “Reading the People’s Stories: Tales of Trial and Toil, and Australia’s Federal Republic”, *Journal of Australian Studies*, no. 79, 2003, pp. 95-103.

divisions. The ideas themselves were sufficiently attractive to flourish not only amongst the middle and working classes but also the political classes. The full extent to which these ideas permeated official political matters is reflected in the discussions involving citizenship at the Constitutional Convention's of the 1890s, which frequently encapsulated ideas bearing the hallmarks of 'vernacular citizenship', that had been frequently advanced in preceding years.

Such was the enduring popularity of 'vernacular citizenship', that if one delves back into the print sources of the mid to late 1840s, the shape and form of the predominant ideas relating to citizenship share an unmistakeable thematic compatibility with some of the major ideas raised during the Constitutional Conventions of the 1890s. The significance of this extends beyond the popular longevity of these ideas and their capacity to retain their relevance across this span of time. Their appearances within the informal domains of the free press, and then amidst the formal surrounds of official government matters, illustrates their pervasive appeal. Thereby reinforcing the robust nature of 'vernacular citizenship', as these very same qualities demonstrate the propensity for these ideas to strengthen their place within the imaginings of the mainstream population.

Such has been the 'popularity' of the predominant ideas and themes which make up 'vernacular citizenship', they have proved overwhelmingly attractive to a major proportion of the national community. Over time, 'vernacular citizenship' or the 'popular and informal conceptualisation' of Australian citizenship has continued to evolve in the consciousness of the mainstream of the Australian population. In making this claim I share the caution of those who are suspicious of the usage of 'consciousness' and 'national culture' within academic circles.⁴⁶ It is important to explain that the use of these terms throughout this thesis is predicated on their providing a frame of reference which represents the prevalence of a bundle of common ideas sharing thematic similarity within the national community. This thesis uses these terms because they represent the way these ideas have played an instrumental role in moulding what David Malouf has labelled the "habit of mind"⁴⁷ which has evolved within the Australian nation. George Nadel used

⁴⁶ Galligan & Roberts, *Australian Citizenship*, pp. 16-17.

⁴⁷ David Malouf, "Made in England: Australia's British Inheritance", *Quarterly Essay*, Issue 12, 2003, p. 43. Malouf discusses the notions of consciousness and culture more explicitly, and in greater depth in his

the phrase, “Colonial Culture”⁴⁸ in his examination of “intellectual and moral improvement” in colonial Australia. Whilst this thesis explores a similar era, it focuses on the formation of popular ideas relating to citizenship and their influence on the ways that political matters have been imagined. They are not used to claim a comprehensive understanding of the minds of the entire Australian population, nor to argue that the community shared the exact understanding of these ideas. It will be argued that the prevalence of these ideas across the Australian population bear witness to their wide dissemination and enduring popularity during this period of time.

‘Vernacular Citizenship’- Informal Ideas

In arguing that informal ideas associated with citizenship have played influential roles in the development of the Australian polity, it is important to acknowledge the recent work which has touched upon similar themes. For example Brian Galligan and Winsome Roberts have written that, “Citizenship consists of much more than legal and political institutions. The viability of a polity depends on a deeper unity of national culture and heritage and the nurturing of loyalty and patriotism.”⁴⁹ Graeme Davison has also expressed ideas of a similar vein, stating that citizenship is made up of, "...a fabric of laws, customs and institutions..." that are essential for any person who lives within the Australian community.⁵⁰ Helen Irving has also alluded to similar ideas, writing that, "For Australians, citizenship has been more of a social construction than a political or legal category, and their approach has changed little over the last one hundred years."⁵¹

These approaches all query the extent to which the analysis and understanding of citizenship can be based solely upon the evidence of ‘formal’ and ‘legal’ definitions, as well as ‘substantive’ legislation. Each suggests that there are other issues within the body politic which require examination. This thesis shares these broad points of view, and

1998 Boyer Lectures entitled, *A Spirit of Play: The Making of the Australian Consciousness*. He uses these words as tools which he applies in search of the defining qualities which have moulded the European settlement of Australia, in particular see pp. 34-35, *A Spirit of Play: The Making of the Australian Consciousness*, 1998 Boyer Lectures, ABC Books, Australian Broadcasting Corporation, Sydney, 2001.

⁴⁸ George Nadel, *Australia's Colonial Culture: Ideas, Men and Institutions in Mid-Nineteenth Century Eastern Australia*, F.W Cheshire, Melbourne, 1957, p. 1.

⁴⁹ Galligan & Roberts, *Australian Citizenship*, p. 3.

⁵⁰ Graeme Davison, *The Use and Abuse of Australian History*, pp. 272-274.

⁵¹ Irving, p. 9. "Citizenship before 1949", pp. 9-20.

looks beyond the isolated evidence of official legislation and government policies. It searches for details which might provide fuller explanations for the more abstruse issues involved with the ways citizenship has been imagined in this nation's history, as well as its role in the complicated processes of nation building.⁵²

In pursuing these lines of enquiry this thesis finds itself drawn to arguments which have sought a more nuanced approach to the topics of citizenship and citizens in Australia. A more rounded understanding of citizenship requires a broader faceted approach to the topics.⁵³ In adopting this approach it is pertinent to consider what Wayne Hudson has described as 'differential citizenship'. He writes:

The perspective of differential citizenship also questions the basic grid upon which histories of Australian citizenship have been projected, including the attempt to construe these histories in terms of a movement from 'subject' to 'citizen', where these are taken to be opposite and exclusive terms. A differential approach to citizenship qualifies the standard literature on Australian citizenship in so far as this assumes a single exclusionary citizenship and a slow teleological transition from 'subject' to 'citizen'. It reveals that the standard accounts underestimate the multiple identities and *personae* available to Australians, and the ways in which they exercised positive agency in deploying them for their own ends.⁵⁴

The most appealing aspects of Hudson's ideas are an understanding of citizenship which belies the accepted accounts of the history of citizenship in Australia. The approach of this thesis is to understand the idea of citizenship in the psyche of the mainstream populace. This challenges several aspects of contemporary studies. Whilst this thesis has drawn upon similar themes in regard to the significance of informal notions of citizenship,⁵⁵ 'vernacular citizenship' also acknowledges the influence that

⁵² Roberts, pp. 96-97, "Reading the People's Stories: Tales of Trial and Toil, and Australia's Federal Republic", *Journal of Australian Studies*, no.79, 2003, pp. 95-103.

⁵³ Galligan and Roberts speak 'of the need to confront the idea that Australian citizenship has only existed since 1949', a perception they label as 'truncated', in Galligan & Roberts, *Australian Citizenship*.

⁵⁴ Wayne Hudson, pp. 18-19, "Differential Citizenship", in Hudson & Kane, *Rethinking Australian Citizenship*, pp. 15-25.

⁵⁵ Roberts, "Reading the People's Stories: Tales of Trial and Toil, and Australia's Federal Republic", pp. 95-103.

‘formal’ and ‘substantive’ versions of citizenship have exerted in the way that political matters have been imagined.

In keeping with this spirit of enquiry which Hudson outlines, the focus of this thesis involves the challenge of explaining what ‘vernacular citizenship’ consists of, and how its influence shaped the ways that citizenship, democracy and the wider political landscape have been imagined in this country.⁵⁶ It will argue that there exists a thematic stream of ideas largely issuing from these informal and public sources that is bolstered in important ways by ideas emanating from the political sphere. These have included the ‘conventional’ delivery of political ideas and discussion as entertained and promoted by political figures and thinkers in Australia. Many of these ideas involving citizenship were issued through the speeches of politicians and were frequently expressed via the mediums of the local newspaper press, thereby releasing these ideas into the public sphere. These offerings were often littered with references to citizenship and the place of the citizen in Australian society. The implicit outlines of ‘citizenship’ characteristics generally grew outside and beyond the direct control of formal political organisations, and tended to defy the strictures of political dogma. Typically they incorporated ideas and notions that appealed to a broad cross-section of the Australian populace. In this sense they may be termed as examples of ‘popular’ citizenship ideals.

Another key characteristic of ‘vernacular citizenship’ involves its sometimes ‘shadowy’ nature. These aspects relate mainly to the character of its contents which include a collection of ideas, notions and principles which tend to be implicitly represented within the relevant source material. It is this frequently inexact and largely undefined character of ‘vernacular citizenship’ that makes it difficult to grasp at times. Because it constitutes a body of ideas that have shaped a layer of understanding in regard to political matters, proof of its existence can be elusive and controversial. As evidenced by the consideration that proof of its presence may be found in sources other than the official record of government affairs.

It is this spirit of enquiry that leads this thesis to the reports of civic and social events

⁵⁶ The role that these various sources of ideas played in generating a ‘social movement’ that actively paved the way for Federation is discussed by Galligan & Roberts, in, “The People’s Constitution?”, *The New Federalist: The Journal of Australian Federation History*, No. 5, June 2000, pp. 87-90.

that traverse issues pertinent to discussions pertaining to 'vernacular citizenship'. One major example of this approach involves the recapitulation of the reporting of the civic and public celebrations of Federation. The manner and style in which this event was celebrated in Sydney, as well as the form in which it was documented within the contemporary press, can be argued to represent significant modes of conduct and behaviour which indicated the influence of some of the predominant ideas involving 'vernacular citizenship' at his time. These particular matters and the issues they raise form the basis of Chapter Six.

This thesis will also explore the thematic nature of 'vernacular citizenship'. It will be argued that many of the most popular ideas associated with citizenship in Australia have insinuated themselves into Australian politics and the consciousness of the Australian population in forms which have often concealed their full identity, as well as their origins. In this way, influential ideas which were in some part shaped from 'classical traditions' of citizenship became incorporated into Australian political history, although their origins were not always apparent, and as a consequence were frequently overlooked. By examining this proposition it will illustrate the fullness of the argument which contends that the concepts of citizenship and citizens have exerted considerable influence over the course of Australian political history, but often in a manner in which these categories have either not been fully recognisable, nor clearly acknowledged. In this same way, the categories of citizens and citizenship have constituted vital and important elements in the development of Australian political thought and history, but have rarely received close appraisal or full recognition.

This accumulated evidence reinforces the presence of ideas and notions relating to 'vernacular citizenship', and the way they permeated the fabric of Australian political culture. This section will show how these informal values and intellectual influences, derived from this stream of ideas, happened to merge with similar notions expressed within the content as well as the spirit of formal substantive legislation and their statutory deliberations. The key ingredients of these popular conceptualisations have consisted of ideas and ideals, largely inspired by political philosophies and social policies, that have been moulded into a melange of 'informal' and 'popular' 'citizenship' values that were of significant importance in the foundation of the Australian nation. This source of formal

legislation, as well as the various popular mainstream versions of citizenship, bled into a stream of ideas and sentiments that has come to represent a substantial element in the understanding of citizenship and broader issues of democratic political development in this country.

In making this proposition, it is important to consider that whilst 'citizenship' has indeed been a real feature of Australian political and social development, the form of 'vernacular citizenship' has never really conformed 'tightly' to the contours laid down by thinkers, theorists or politicians. Instead, its content has included material gathered from an eclectic range of sources. With this context in mind it is possible to elucidate the reasons why 'vernacular citizenship' can be argued to be pervasive and yet on many levels deeply problematic as well. As this thesis progresses, it will become apparent that 'vernacular citizenship' is replete with challenges and contradictions. And from this perspective it is possible to comprehend some of the issues raised by Jayasuriya's comments, as well as those other accounts and conclusions which have been based primarily upon the similar evidence offered by formal government legislation and official policies.

Exploring this theme of 'vernacular citizenship' will provide explanations that address the broad questions raised by the apparently contrary arguments of Stephen and Jayasuriya. This thesis will argue that the form and content of 'vernacular citizenship' represents an enduring collection of ideas that have resonated deeply within the consciousness of the mainstream population of European Australia since the mid 19th century. On this basis they support the general issues raised in Stephen's quotation. In the course of presenting this proposition it will provide substantial material to explore in deeper detail the resonance of these ideas and ideals which make up 'vernacular citizenship' and their place in the mainstream population.

It is probable that these ideas in the mind of the mainstream populace have moulded a pervasive understanding of what 'citizenship' means or represents in this country. To illustrate how inadequate it is to concentrate upon official versions at the expense of any other, 'vernacular citizenship' will be used to depict the manner in which the ideas shaping formal, as well as informal versions of citizenship were fundamental elements within a broader intellectual process. 'Vernacular citizenship' emerged as a vessel which

gathered progressive ideas and disseminated them widely amongst the colonial population. 'Vernacular citizenship' played a pervasive role in shaping the way that matters of democratic political development were imagined within European Australia.

METHODS

Originally this thesis intended to examine the general questions raised within academic circles in regard to the 'citizenship' debates in contemporary Australia. Over the course of reading from the vast array of material generated by the topics, the focus shifted from this 'wide angle lens' perspective to the more specific purpose of addressing the primary questions discussed in the introduction. These questions arise from the subject matter that forms the basis of the thesis's seven Chapters.

Chapter One outlines the aims of this thesis, starting with the necessity of establishing the historical framework of ideas and traditions from which contemporary understandings of citizenship have been derived. This Chapter introduces the ways in which contemporary understandings of citizenship have been heavily influenced by the historical development of ideas and notions that constitute the "classical traditions of Western thought". This category of 'classical traditions', in the context of theories and ideas of citizenship, is appropriately referenced by J.G.A. Pocock who describes them in these terms, "...classical in the sense that they are supposed to have for us the kind of authority that comes of having expressed an "ideal" in durable and canonical form..."⁵⁷

Chapter One provides a brief historical background of 'citizenship' practices and ideas, against which the focus of this thesis and its discussion of the intellectual debate involving issues of 'citizenship' in contemporary Australia, may be contrasted. It is vitally important to acknowledge the place of 'citizenship', as well as the 'citizen', in the 'Western tradition of intellectual ideas'. As well as the impetus provided by the Enlightenment in these later developments. The terms, 'citizen' and 'citizenship' have denoted a rich array of practices and traditions over the course of human history. The development of these classical ideas and their place within the 'Western intellectual tradition' is of particular pertinence to this study. These debates involving 'citizenship'

⁵⁷ J.G.A. Pocock, p. 29, "The Ideal of the Citizen Since Classical Times", in R. Beiner, (ed.), *Theorizing Citizenship*, State University of New York Press, Albany, U.S.A, 1995, pp. 29-52.

have been both lengthy and fertile, and they form a vital part of an enduring discussion. In the realm of deliberations concerning political philosophies and social policies in the Western intellectual tradition, the subjects of 'citizenship', and 'citizens' have represented irrepressible features in a continuum of ideas that have profoundly shaped the ways in which we think about politics, as well as influencing the ways in which we live.

This Chapter discusses the ways that intellectual traditions associated with citizenship, have fed off an evolving selection of ideas and theories and continued to expand over the course of Western civilisation. Part of this growth has consisted of the development of approaches that have in some part been inspired by, or moulded from the classical traditions themselves. This process has in turn, also contributed to the ongoing expansion of this package of ideas, which in their collective form constitute an evolving intellectual entity. And in a similar manner, this tradition has managed to propagate itself within a wide range of environments.

This situation shows how notions that were derived in some part from these 'classical traditions', and their various legacies of political thought, were then merged into the pool of ideas from which Australian political thought has been sustained. While it is of interest to trace the heritage of some of the conceptualisations that emerged in the historiography of Australian political ideas in this period of time, this proposition is also significant for another reason. It exhibits the manner, as well as the processes whereby ideas which were in some part the progeny of the classical tradition, were able to exert their influence on Australian politics and history from at least as early as the mid to late 1840s.

This supports the claim that citizenship in Australia was real well before the *Australian Citizenship Act 1948*⁵⁸, and exerted a demonstrable influence on the shape of Australian politics and history in the period before Federation.⁵⁹ For, as will be detailed in more depth over the course of Chapters Three, Four, Five and Six, it can be argued that the understanding of Australian citizenship has developed around an eclectic range of ideas

⁵⁸ The "*Nationality and Citizenship Act of 1948 (Cth)*" came into force on Australia Day, 26 January 1949, and was later known as the "*Australian Citizenship Act 1948*", see Galligan & Roberts, p. 32.

⁵⁹ Galligan & Roberts, *Australian Citizenship*, pp. 8-9.

and philosophies, the majority of which predate Federation. And importantly from the point of view of this reasoning, many of these have been drawn from the contents of the classical tradition, which alone comfortably predates the “*Australian Citizenship Act 1948*”, and well before Federation.

One of the most incisive outcomes of analysing the ‘classical traditions of citizenship’, is the manner in which they exhibit the importance of ‘context’ in these discussions. This issue requires more explanation. One of the main hypotheses of this thesis is that a range of factors have influenced the development of ‘citizenship’ ideas and practices, in this country. The prevailing intellectual and political influences of the time have shaped the dimensions of these perceptions, playing vital roles in moulding ‘citizenship’ ideas and practices. In order to closely analyse such elements, it is necessary to examine these and the social context in which they have been shaped. It is essential to consider these issues of context when examining ‘citizens’ and ‘citizenship’.

In fact, over the course of this thesis, there will emerge an implicit argument contending that over the course of Australia history there have been a variety of ‘citizenship’ concepts, ideas and notions. And in equal measure, these have been assembled from a range of theories, ideas and ideals. As such it is this thesis’ belief that it is very difficult to commit to an unequivocal statement regarding ‘citizenship’ without carefully examining in close detail the intellectual context in which it has been delivered. Thus, while I support the beliefs of the authors who have spoken of the importance and influence of citizenship in Australia, I am wary of not explaining my own position in more detail.

Chapter Two will focus on the scholarly debates inspired by the subjects of citizens and citizenship that have appeared in contemporary Australia. It will show how the main areas of focus for research and speculation in the citizenship domain has developed around the official definitions and legal categories, as well as the collection of ‘substantive’ legislation gazetted at the Federal and State levels of government. Chapter Two will illustrate how the major arguments about citizenship in Australia in contemporary academic circles have been predominantly related to these questions of

'formal', 'legal', and 'substantive' definitions of 'citizenship'.⁶⁰ This body of formal decrees has attracted a large proportion of the literature, and inspired the majority of opinions that have been raised in recent times. From this pool of conjecture have arisen critiques of the various oversights and exclusions inherent within executive legislation equating them with an impoverished citizenship, and an overwhelmingly negative understanding of citizenship in this country. From this same body of statutory output, others have sought evidence to support their belief that this legislation has equated to a healthy and positive approach in the national community towards citizenship.

In Chapter Three the basis of these arguments summarised in Chapter Two will be explicitly challenged by the introduction of the concept of 'vernacular citizenship' which is primarily comprised of 'popular' and 'informal' conceptions of citizenship. One of the central themes of Chapter Three explores the ways this band of ideas, opinions and beliefs that constituted 'vernacular citizenship' circulated in the public domain during the years that led to Federation, as well as after that event. This stream of ideas circulated amongst the general public, and shaped an array of notions and perceptions that came to represent a 'popular' 'imagined citizenship' in early Federation Australia. Over time, the key ingredients of this 'popular' conceptualisation were moulded into a melange of informal citizenship values that were of significant importance in the foundation of the Australian nation. Chapter Three outlines the ways in which these ideas and perceptions of an 'imagined' and 'popular', 'citizenship' developed. Presenting some of the most influential and 'popular' ideas, their character, and origins.

Chapter Three introduces the Sydney publications, the *Citizen* and the *People's Advocate*, and examines their influence in distributing ideas and notions concerning informal conceptualisations of citizenship in the colonial community from the mid to late 1840s. This chapter also utilises the material offered by the speeches of Daniel Deniehy to illustrate the broad popularity of these ideas and their capacity to extend beyond particular segments of the local population. Whilst these sources share a common background, featuring within the historiography of Sydney and New South Wales, their

⁶⁰ As previously mentioned, this point of view which considers there are more dimensions to citizenship in Australia than legal and institutional matters is also made by Galligan & Roberts, *Australian Citizenship*, see p. 3.

relevance to the broader domain of national politics can be argued to extend beyond regional boundaries.

The ideas espoused within the popular press enjoyed a popularity reaching beyond their immediate point of dissemination. Newspapers and periodicals were widely distributed beyond metropolitan centres⁶¹, whilst the growth of institutions such as the 'Mechanic's Institutes' abetted the longevity of the ideas⁶² carried within printed publications, further encouraging the spread of ideas via word of mouth. It will be argued that these 'popular' ideas involving conceptions of citizenship resonated beyond the immediate margins of time and place to seep into the broader Australian community.

Their existence challenges some of the fundamental points of the main arguments which are based upon 'formal' and 'legal' definitions of 'citizenship' in Australia. One major area of contention involves the primary role accorded to 'formal' and 'legal' definitions of citizenship within the opinions of a vast number of contemporary writers. Chapter Three tackles this position on the basis that 'popular citizenship' can be argued to have developed in a way contrary to the widely perceived in-hospitality of the Commonwealth Constitution. As well as the closely related contentions that this drained the vitality of the polity, diluting the constituent's enthusiasm for engagement in political affairs, and thereby diminished any 'real' sense of 'citizenship' in the Australian nation.

Chapter Three addresses the dominant themes that emerge from the academic material that features in Chapter Two and confronts some fundamental issues that emerge from contemporary debates. The conclusions of this thesis on the influence of 'popular citizenship' are not however unequivocal endorsements of the propositions forwarded by the 'Birrell' school of thought referred to in Chapter Two. As Chapter Three illustrates, 'popular' and 'informal' notions of 'citizenship' are replete with their own contradictions.

Over the course of Chapter Four the basis of the argument introduced in Chapter Three

⁶¹ Anne Coote, p. 8 & p. 12, "Imagining a Colonial Nation: The Development of Popular Concepts of Sovereignty and Nation in New South Wales with particular Reference to the Period between 1856 and 1860", *The Journal of Australian Colonial History*, Vol. 1, No. 1, April 1999, pp. 1-37

⁶² Roberts also examines the ways that important ideas were circulated within the colonial community via these types of institutions, see pp.15-20, "The Politics of Federation", *Melbourne Journal of Politics*, Vo.27, 200-2001, pp. 8-25.

will be further developed by drawing upon the literature of colonial Australia. A selection of texts will be referred to on the basis that they reinforce several of the themes pertaining to 'vernacular citizenship'. The works of W.G. Spence, and the popular novels of Joseph Furphy and Rolfe Boldrewood represent important aspects of the processes by which popular and informal citizenship ideas were shaped, and then distributed amongst the local mainstream community.

The case for the development of an informal brand of 'popular citizenship' in Australia, fundamentally challenges the hypotheses based on the evidence of legislative and formal versions. This thesis acknowledges this, but stresses that the importance of this body of legislation should not be dismissed. For, as Chapter Five discusses, in both the content of the Constitution and the output of formal legislation, there is ample evidence to support the large influence of these ideas upon Australian political history.

Chapter Six examines the advent of Federation, to analyse the ways and manner in which 'vernacular citizenship' exerted influence at this time. One of the central themes of Chapter Six is the exploration of the way in which public opinion articulated perceptions of 'imagined citizenship'. This includes the proposition that the style of the Federation celebrations in Sydney exhibited the continuing influence of 'vernacular citizenship' during this pivotal time in 'modern' Australian history.

The predominant themes expressed through this discourse bear close resemblance to the ideas on citizenship which appeared in the mid to late 1840s. One of the aims of this Chapter is to outline the ways in which these ideas represent a lineage of thought that continued to evolve up to Federation. It will also be argued that they represented the opinions of significant portions of the Australian population, and played an integral part in the process whereby a popular, mainstream brand of Australian citizenship was imagined. This collage of ideas and opinions has come to represent a type of 'popular' Australian citizenship. The element of 'popular citizenship' that has been shaped by the political formation of Federation has been an integral alloy in the development of a political consciousness. It is arguable that its traces may be observed in the popular fervour that welcomed Federation, as well as its basic formal outline of democratic rights which were embraced by a broad and influential cross section of the community.

To fully understand the complex nature of 'vernacular citizenship' it is necessary to refer to some of the less sanguine responses to Federation. It is arguable that the exuberant public responses to Federation presented in Chapter Six, form a 'flip-side' to reactions that can be observed post Federation. The great excitement and optimism which arose during Federation, can be contrasted with the disappointment expressed when there was recognition that these hopes may not be fully satisfied by the political systems and structures that were in place. This argument is bolstered by the fact that the aspirations of the utopian strands of political thought⁶³ which were widely prevalent prior to Federation, and were symbolically enacted during the excitement of Federation, became incorporated into the mainstream of political consciousness.

Another dimension to these responses may be located within the reactions to Federation recorded by the local press, and also expressed within other texts. Some were either manifestly critical of Federation and the political circumstances which it delivered, or contained an air of ambivalence or uncertainty in regard to the same matters. These aspects also reflected primary elements of 'vernacular citizenship' based as they were on either the energetic scrutiny of the prevailing social and political circumstances or some more reserved and circumscribed mode of appraisal.

OBSTACLES

As one sets off to resolve these various questions it quickly becomes apparent that one of the primary challenges of analysing the topics of citizenship and citizens in contemporary Australia lies in their current popularity. The very volume of work produced on the topics is daunting for anyone attempting to analyse the issues. Especially trying to sift through what Alastair Davidson calls, "...the Heinz' fifty-seven varieties of citizenship".⁶⁴ The breadth and diversity of opinions which the topics have generated, have guaranteed a rich variety of approaches to the issues related to citizens and citizenship.

One of the potential difficulties arising from this involves the close proximity of debates

⁶³ See Hudson, "Republicanism and Utopianism", in Hudson, W. & Carter, D. , (eds), *The Republicanism Debate*, New South Wales University Press, Australia, 1993, pp. 158-176.

⁶⁴ Davidson, *From Subject to Citizen: Australian Citizenship in the Twentieth Century*, p. 2.

dealing with 'citizens' and 'citizenship', to issues that have become specialist areas of study in their own right. It has been noted that one of the characteristic features of 'citizenship' debates in contemporary forums is their appeal to a wide cross-section of commentators. Purveyors of "the new social movements"⁶⁵, encompassing a vast range of topic areas, have drawn upon the traditions and ideas of 'citizenship' to advance their research and opinions. As has been summarised previously, "...socialists, social democrats, feminists, radical environmentalists and social liberals have drawn on the language of citizenship, civic life and civil society..."⁶⁶ It can be said that each of these sectors have pursued studies and analysis germane to their own particular areas of interest.

One of the primary challenges of dealing with citizenship discourse in the academic sphere is that many involve a specific focus on either, particular segments of study, or the applications of specialised forms of methodology, specific to particular interests. In these instances the subject matter, as well as the focus of enquiry, may appear sufficiently complex to dissuade 'non specialists'. Occasionally subject matter from one of these areas may intersect with the work accrued in one of the other specialised areas of interest. To untangle some of the general issues that arise from this pool of discussion is not only challenging, it also risks overlooking specific details that are held to be of acute significance to authors working in particular disciplines.

It is important to acknowledge that 'vernacular citizenship' is comprised of mainstream political ideas and sentiments. This thesis is not designed to address particular issues regarding gender, class, or racial notions pertaining to citizenship in Australian history. This is not to say that these areas of study are un-important or unacknowledged. In fact over the course of the thesis, these issues are indirectly touched upon from the perspective that the 'mainstream' nature of 'vernacular citizenship' ideas is replete with shortcomings. Most noticeably 'popular citizenship' ideas have often embodied 'negative' features, including short-sightedness and prejudices that have reflected

⁶⁵ J. M. Barbalet, p. 63, "Developments In Citizenship Theory And Issues In Australian Citizenship", in, *Australian Journal Of Social Issues*, Vol. 31, No. 1, February 1996, pp. 55-72.

⁶⁶ I. Barns, J. Dudley, P. Harris, and A. Petersen, "Introduction: themes, context and perspectives", p. 16. in A. Petersen, et al, *Poststructuralism, Citizenship and Social Policy*, pp. 1-24.

prevailing mainstream attitudes and behaviour. These have included the exclusion,⁶⁷ or even persecution of individuals or groups within communities on the basis that they do not meet the criteria articulated by the political community.⁶⁸ In Australian history the most vivid picture of negative examples of citizenship involve the experiences of the Australian Aborigines.⁶⁹ At its most basic level, the tale of this complex and on occasion tragic history is notable for the official exclusion of Aborigines from the legislative rights of other Australian citizens, including the most basic benchmark of citizenship, the right to vote.⁷⁰

Closely related is Jill Roe's warning that citizenship can be used as a 'prism' through

⁶⁷ For an introduction to some of the issues regarding citizenship and women in Australian history see, M. Lake, "Personality, Individuality, Nationality: Feminist Conceptions of Citizenship 1902-1940", in *Australian Feminist Review*, No. 19, Autumn, 1994. Helen Irving's collection of essays also provides a concise range of opinions, see Irving, (ed.), *A Woman's Constitution?: Gender & History in the Australian Commonwealth*, Hale & Ironmonger, Sydney, 2001.

⁶⁸ Patricia Grimshaw argues that the denial of human and civil rights for Aboriginal Australians in the Constitution has ensured that the issues of equality and democracy in the nation remain a charged area of historical conjecture, see, "Federation as a Turning Point in Australian History", in *Australian Historical Studies*, no. 118, 2002, pp. 25-41.

⁶⁹ Bain Attwood and Andrew Markus have discussed the attention that sections of the Constitution have attracted from historians, academics and writers. They have also questioned the significance of these sections in regard to their implication in excluding Australian Aborigines from citizenship entitlements. In support of their hypothesis, they suggest that the 1967 referendum, which is popularly considered to represent the conferral of citizenship rights to Australian Aborigines, signalled symbolic, rather than actual changes to their citizenship status, see p.9, "Representation Matters: The 1967 Referendum and Citizenship", in P. Peterson & W. Saunders, (eds), *Citizenship and Indigenous Australian: changing conceptions and possibilities*, Cambridge University Press, 1998, pp. 118-140. Pat Stretton and Christine Finnimore refer also to the popular acceptance whereby many Aborigines believe that the 1967 referendum granted them the right to vote, see, "Black Fellow Citizens: Aborigines And The Commonwealth Franchise", in *Australian Historical Studies*, Vol.25, October, 1993, No. 101, pp. 521-535.

⁷⁰ For a concise summary of the forms of exclusion experienced by Australian Aborigines, see the introduction to, (and in particular pp. 6-17), P. Peterson & W. Saunders (eds), *Citizenship and indigenous Australian: changing conceptions and possibilities*, pp. 1-34. Davidson also discusses the ways in which Australian Aborigines were formally denied the vote in Australia, see for instance p. 190, *From Subject to Citizen: Australian Citizenship in the Twentieth Century*, pp. 188-191. Ann-Mari Jordens briefly summarises the legislative exclusion of Australian Aborigines from the legislation of the Commonwealth government, pp. 10-13, in, *Redefining Australians: Immigration, Citizenship and National Identity*. Also important is Clarke and Galligan's article, which examines the legislation of the Commonwealth between 1901-20 and 1926-48, which excluded Australian Aborigines and other racially defined groups from participating in citizenship rights enjoyed by the mainstream community, " 'Aboriginal Native' and the institutional construction of the Australian citizen 1901-48", *Australian Historical Studies*, vol. 26, October, 1995, no. 105, pp. 523-543. Dodson also examines the implications of the exclusion of Aboriginal Torres Straits people from the constitution between pages, pp. 194-197 in his article, "First Fleets and Citizenships", pp. 189-223, in Davis, (ed.), *Citizenship in Australia: Democracy, Law and Society*.

which every aspect of Australian history is viewed.⁷¹ One can apply the lens of any number of academic disciplines and view the issues involving citizenship and Australian history with a particular intent. The danger is that in focussing upon specific features of Australian history it is possible to overlook other issues of equivalent importance. In narrowing the focus of attention in this manner, a sense of historical perspective may be imperilled. While these issues are not the sole focus of this paper, they need to be acknowledged so as to allow an appreciation of the complexities at hand, as well as providing a perspective which might allow for a thorough analysis of the issues at stake. Another benefit that they provide is in serving as a context to the background of these debates.

OVERVIEW

The overarching purpose of this thesis is to illuminate several key points of interest to the current debates over 'citizenship' in Australia. In committing to this direction of enquiry it is necessary to recognise the problematic nature of topics such as 'citizens' and 'citizenship', and the subsequent difficulties that arise when one attempts to discuss and debate them. The basic problem concerns the challenges involved when one seeks to identify and define 'citizenship'. Rather than being organic entities, it can be said that the categories of 'citizens' and 'citizenship' are terms that represent a range of political ideas, ideals, beliefs and practices. In turn they represent an ever changing and evolving mix of political ideas that hold various implications, both explicit and implicit, for the conduct of political, social, civic, and national life generally. In examining the topics of 'citizens' and 'citizenship' in Australia it is evident that the words signify a variety of concepts and notions, and the most enduring characteristics of these would seem to be the fluidity of the forms they have taken, and the chameleon like capacity of these to alter their hue. It would seem that there have been, and continue to be many types of 'citizenship' that operate within Australian society at various levels.

In the pursuit of exploring the varieties of citizenship in Australia, it is necessary to acknowledge that these various incarnations have been comprised of a range of ideas and

⁷¹ Jill Roe, pp. 1-2, "Chivalry and Social Policy in the Antipodes", in, White & Russell, (eds), *Memories & Dreams: Reflections on Twentieth Century Australia*, pp. 1-19.

philosophies, and these have in turn been shaped by social and cultural influences prevailing in the society. This thesis will explore some of these intellectual, political and social dynamics that have shaped the form of citizenship in the era that begins in the mid to late 1840s up until the early years of Federation. One of the secondary aims of this thesis is to analyse the complexities that have accompanied the formulation of traditions of 'citizenship' ideals and notions, as well as the identity of 'citizens' in this nation's history. In analysing the impact of these forces during the early Federation years it may also be possible to gauge their implications in regard to the 'popular' understanding of Australian life.

While this thesis has expressed an acknowledgment of the innate difficulties related to the issue of 'citizenship', and in particular its place in Australian history and politics, it is important to point out that these challenges do not equate to a denial of the existence, nor an attempt to diminish the importance, of 'citizenship' ideals and concepts. While they may be characterised by their capacity to generate speculation and debate, they do boast an undeniable heritage. In fact, the more difficult and 'problematic' aspects related to notions of 'citizenship' may actually suggest that the issue is more important than it might seem. While there are a plethora of challenging issues that may be held to question the basis, as well as the significance, of 'citizenship' notions, and the place of citizens in Australian history, they each boast an undeniable and influential existence. In the course of exploring 'vernacular citizenship' this thesis will present some of the historical subtleties as well as shortcomings related to the issues of 'citizens' and 'citizenship', and explore their place in the broader picture of political life and national identity in Australia.

These aspects are of particular relevance when one examines the contemporary literature involving the concept of 'citizenship' in Australia. When one recapitulates the prescriptive weight placed on notions of citizenship in the majority of the current literature, it is important to reconsider just how complicated and challenging the terms and their various histories have been. In this sense, one can argue that in order to fully understand the complex nature of the various guises of 'citizenship' in this country, it is essential to examine their historical back-ground and settings, in order to comprehend their faults and strengths.

'Vernacular citizenship' provides a perspective which allows for an 'overall' assessment of some of the major themes raised within the debates. One of the major questions hovering in the background of these discussions involves the fact that whilst citizenship has become associated with a myriad of intellectual movements predicated on the benefits of altering political institutions, the shortcomings of citizenship remain largely unacknowledged. To borrow an image, 'citizenship' might be compared with Simpson's donkey. They both in their own ways have become important historical and political symbols. And 'citizenship', like the Donkey, continues to carry an extraordinarily heavy workload, not only as a historical icon representing a variety of ideals and political aspirations, but also in the weight of expectations that it bears.

It is symptomatic of the ambiguities of 'citizenship' that it is a word likely to provoke a multitude of contrasting and sometimes extreme responses. On the one hand, 'citizenship' regularly appears 'hand in glove' with high emotion and controversy. It seems to be invariably invoked whenever a discussion concerning the 'rights' and 'responsibilities' of individuals living in a democratic political system begins to heat up. Most often it is brandished as either a basis for individuals or groups demanding 'rights', or conversely, on the behalf of groups or individuals demanding particular standards of behaviour, or 'responsibility' from other community members. While it is a word that most people are sufficiently familiar with to freely use, its meanings can vary significantly from person to person. Proof of this ambiguity is that for other people the word 'citizenship' may elicit little response at all.

This thesis will examine the history of 'citizenship' in Australia and tackle these general questions. Some people might respond to this statement with an indignant question of, 'What citizenship?' Others may well shrug, and wonder whether it is worth even bothering to think about what it may mean. This thesis will answer both of these broad questions. It will explore and analyse what 'citizenship' means in Australia, and unravel the reasons why it inspires such contrasts in response. In the process, it will implicitly present this recent expansion of interest as part of a historical progression of opinions, ideas, ideals, customs and actions. It will draw upon the historic background and practices of citizenship in order to throw some light upon the reasons why citizenship is considered to be so important by so many.

In stating this it is important not to overlook the more enigmatic tangents of these discussions. One of these pertains to the situation whereby such strongly contrasting opinions can be held in regard to issues attached to these debates. How is it possible that such passionate debates querying the very existence of citizenship in the history of the Australian nation, are appearing at a time when there is wide conjecture over what actually constitutes citizenship in this country anyway? At a time where so much ink has been used in speculating upon the issues of citizenship in Australia, and in particular its often cited capacities for rejuvenating and reshaping elements of the national polity, there are several fundamental questions still engaging pundits. Within these broad dichotomies the legitimacy of the debates themselves would appear to be assembled on uneven ground.

This thesis will address these complex issues. In the process of engaging with these subjects, it will offer insight into what can seem to be the perplexing nature of the Australian polity itself. It is one in which the opinions and prescriptions of a range of writers can seem to be continually confounded. In short it is part of the peculiarity of an Australian political culture that expresses hostility, and occasionally even a hatred of politics and its practitioners, yet also protectively embraces an image of Australia, and in particular its historical past in which the place of political institutions occupy a central position. Perhaps it represents another level of that perennial conundrum of Australian politics. Amidst the occasional flashpoints and odd moments of controversy that flare into relatively small-scale conflicts, there has been a history of stability in the political structures of Australia. And the citizenship debates themselves do seem to carry many of these types of characteristics that personify the fractious relationship between the Australian polity and its observers.

In many respects this thesis pursues the topic of citizenship with an awareness of the apparently baffling and contrary nature of the political history of this nation in mind. It may well be true that the particular variety of citizenship that this paper examines, shares many of the traits of the wider system of politics from whence it has sprung. Within this context it may throw some light on political consciousness in Australian society. Providing a perspective that encompasses the intellectual fissures and paradoxes that characterise these discussions, whilst also acknowledging the common ground they share.

In doing so it may illuminate the discussion involving citizenship in Australia in a manner that bridges the gap between the predominantly formal versions and definitions of citizenship, which have typically attracted the attention of the academic sphere, and the more popular mainstream conceptions that resonate within the public domain.

CHAPTER ONE

What Is 'Citizenship'? And Who Are 'Citizens'?

Chapter One will launch the aims of this thesis, by establishing the historical framework of ideas and traditions from which contemporary understandings of citizenship have been derived. Written in the form of a bibliographic essay, it will present the fundamental definitions and traditions of 'citizenship' that have been derived from the 'classical tradition'. Introducing the ways thinkers and their works have expanded the discourse of citizenship, and broadened the dimensions of the 'classical traditions' of citizenship, as well as political thought itself, over the centuries. This approach will chart a basic outline of the progress of 'citizenship' theories and practices, and their place in the 'Western intellectual tradition'.

One of the objectives of this Chapter is to introduce the way contemporary understandings of citizenship have been heavily influenced by the historical development of ideas and notions that constitute the "classical traditions of Western thought". This category of 'classical traditions', is appropriately referenced by J.G.A. Pocock who describes them in these terms, "...classical in the sense that they are supposed to have for us the kind of authority that comes of having expressed an "ideal" in durable and canonical form..." His reference to the terms of their temporal origins and influence is also insightful, "In the second place, by "classical" times, we always refer to the ancient civilizations of the Mediterranean, in particular to Athens in the fifth and fourth centuries B.C. and to Rome from the third century B.C. to the first A.D."¹

This Chapter provides a brief historical background of 'citizenship' practices and ideas, against which the contemporary focus of this thesis and its discussion of the intellectual debate involving issues of 'citizenship' in contemporary Australia, may be contrasted. In endeavouring to facilitate this, it is vitally important to acknowledge the place of 'citizenship', as well as the 'citizen', in the Western tradition of intellectual ideas. The

¹ J.G.A. Pocock, p. 29, "The Ideal of the Citizen Since Classical Times", in, R. Beiner, (ed.), *Theorizing Citizenship*, 1995, pp. 29-52.

terms, 'citizen' and 'citizenship' have denoted a rich array of practices and traditions over the course of human history. One of the most salient issues involves acknowledging that the debates involving 'citizenship' form a vital part of an enduring discussion. Amidst the deliberations of political philosophies and social policies in the 'Western intellectual tradition', the subjects of 'citizenship' and 'citizens' have represented perennial features in a continuum of ideas. They have profoundly shaped the ways in which we, as members of the Western world, think about politics, as well as the ways we live.

By exploring this situation it is possible to understand how 'classical traditions', and their legacies of political thought and social theory, were then merged into the pool of ideas from which Australian political thought and ideas has been sustained. A speech delivered by Doctor Cosby Morgan in 1887 to an audience in Newcastle, New South Wales, will be used to illuminate the way these 'classical ideas' shaped 'vernacular' citizenship' during the course of pre-Federation Australia. While it is of interest to trace the heritage of some of the conceptualisations that emerged in the historiography of Australian political ideas in this period, this proposition is significant for another reason. It exhibits the manner in which ideas and notions were altered or embellished within the historiography of ideas pertaining to citizenship. This highlights the processes whereby ideas that were in some part the progeny of the classical tradition, were able to exert their influence upon Australian politics² and history from at least as early as the mid to late 1840s.

ORIGINS OF "CLASSICAL CITIZENSHIP"

A rudimentary historical background to this debate involving 'citizens' and 'citizenship', must include definitions of who 'citizens' are, or have been, and what 'citizenship' has 'signified', or represented, throughout Western history. In the most fundamental and general sense, 'citizenship' is a term that has historically signified the membership of individuals, or 'citizen's', within a political community. The ancestry of the words may

² As Greg Melleuish and Geoff Stokes have discussed, political thinking in Australia has been influenced by a variety of sources, including the practices of ancient Greece and Rome, see pp. 118-120, in "Australian Political Thought", Hudson & Bolton (eds), *Creating Australia*, pp. 106-121.

be traced back to the Greek *polites*, and the Latin *civis*.³ In these respective examples, 'citizen' was the term applied to the members of the Athenian *polis*, or the Roman *res publica*⁴, and they signified their bearer's political identities and status as participants in the political communities of these civilisations. The writings of Aristotle in the fourth century B.C. form one of the most influential works on the concepts of 'citizens' and 'citizenship'. In the Aristotelian world, the ideal form of political system was centred on the city assembly, in which the cities' members would actively co-operate to ensure the functioning of a democratic political system to run the affairs of the community.⁵

The historical antecedents of the notions of citizenship and citizens have been chiefly derived from the practices of the Greek city states⁶ and the Roman Republic. The esteemed chroniclers of the Australian Constitution, John Quick and Robert Garran, pointed out that in the former, the city state formed the focus of the citizen's obligations and energies with their city state constituting the heart of their political ideal. In the latter, membership of the local community was not concentrated solely upon the city state but extended into a far more complex membership shared with other communities which formed the Roman Republic. Owing to the larger scale of these arrangements, and the ensuing complexities, citizenship within the Republic required more expansive and tightly defined rules. For instance, within the,

“...Roman Republic the term “*civitas*” expressed the bundle of rights and obligations connoted by citizenship. The rights of citizens fell into two branches, political and civil. Political rights were those relating to the electoral and legislative powers (*jus suffragii*) and capacity for office (*jus honorum*); civil rights related to property (*commercium*) or to

³ Michael Walzer, p. 211, "Citizenship", in T. Ball, J. Farr & R. L. Hanson, (eds), *Political Innovation And Conceptual Change*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1989, pp. 211-219.

⁴ Pocock, p. 29, "The Ideal of the Citizen Since Classical Times", in R. Beiner, (ed.), *Theorizing Citizenship*, 1995, pp. 29-52. Castles and Davidson, *Citizenship and Migration: Globalization and the Politics of Belonging*, Macmillan Press Ltd., London, 2000, pp. 28-33.

⁵ It is interesting that Quick, & Garran discuss the origins of the terms, quoting from *Freeman's Greater Greece*, see, p. 955, *The Annotated History Of The Australian Commonwealth*, Angus & Robertson, Sydney, 1901. Goldlust also provides a potted history of the origins and traditions associated with citizenship, see pp. 2-3, *Understanding Citizenship in Australia*.

⁶ Batrouney & Goldlust, *Unravelling Identity: Immigrants, Identity and Citizenship in Australia*, Australia, 2005, p. 25.

marriage (*connubium*).⁷

Pocock has further explored the influence of these 'classical traditions' of the Roman Republic, introducing to his arguments the influence of the Roman jurist, Gaius, by which the "...universe as defined by jurisprudence is divisible into 'persons, actions, and things...'"⁸ Pocock describes the implications of this as marking the, "...move from the ideal to the real...and we move from the citizen as a political being to the citizen as a legal being, existing in a world of persons, actions, and things regulated by law."⁹ This marked the shift from the ideal citizen of Aristotle, the '*zoon politikon*' who was defined by their membership of their city state and their status as a participant in the political life of their community, to the '*legalis homo*' who carried legal rights and protections predicated on their membership of the Republic. From these 'classical traditions' it is possible to perceive the predominant characteristics attributed to citizens in contemporary theoretical expositions. This is most notable in the ideals of political activism and civic involvement, as well as the notions of legal and social rights. It is from these essential sources that one may comprehend the relation between 'classical traditions' and their influence upon our present day understanding of citizenship.

Another example involves Pocock's discussion of the influence of 'civic humanism' upon contemporary perceptions of citizenship. The basis of this collection of ideas, which Pocock suggests arrived via Renaissance Florence, is driven by the notion that the individual can only reach self-fulfilment when they act as a citizen, "...that is as a conscious and autonomous participant in an autonomous decision-taking political community, the polis or republic."¹⁰ The key features that characterised the involvement of the individual in this system of 'civic humanism' were, "...the highest form of active life was that of the citizen who, having entered the political process in pursuit of his particular good, now found himself joining with others to direct the actions of all in

⁷ Quick & Garran, *The Annotated History Of The Australian Commonwealth*, p. 955.

⁸ Pocock, p. 34, "The Ideal of the Citizen Since Classical Times", in Beiner, (ed.), *Theorizing Citizenship*, pp. 29-52.

⁹ *ibid*, p. 34.

¹⁰ Pocock, p. 85, "Civic Humanism and Its Role in Anglo-American Thought", in *Politics, Language and Time: Essays on Political Thought And History*, Methuen & Co. Ltd., London, 1972, pp. 80-103.

pursuit of the good of all..."¹¹ These notions involving the conceptualisation of the citizen as an 'active' contributor to the community remain as arguably one of the key characteristics of citizenship discussions.

Pocock identifies another vital feature of this system of civic humanism as viewed through the lens of the Aristotelian republic. This was the concept that the defining element of virtue consisted of the prevailing balance in authority. If there was any imbalance in power and authority the system would be imperilled. "The republic could persist only if all its citizens were so far autonomous that they could be equally and immediately participant in the pursuit of the universal good."¹² As Pocock's writings indicate, it was essential that the citizen possessed the rights of liberty and freedom so as to maintain the balance between those who ruled and those being ruled. The great importance of this principle was that it would promote the activities of individuals acting in pursuit of the 'common good', or the good of the greater community. A goal that has proved to be one of the most enduring ideals of political society, as well increased gravitas in the 'modern era'.

Pocock has reasoned that these 'classical' Aristotelian and Republican ideas and traditions have formed the basis of the 'classical ideas' which have exerted the most lasting influence upon contemporary thinking. However it has been the merging of these ideas with 'classical liberal' ideas that reached its apogee in the 1700s, that has moulded the basis of what we today consider to be 'classic citizenship traditions'.¹³ These 'classical' concepts of citizenship may be most readily recognised in their contemporary incarnations as the 'enlightened' forms of 'modern western democracy'. Peter Riesenberg has provided a brief history of the 'classical' concepts of citizenship¹⁴ and the influence of authors such as Plato, Aristotle, and Cicero. In doing so he illustrates the manner in which ideas involving the citizens and citizenship have been promulgated during the

¹¹ *ibid*, p. 87.

¹² *ibid*, p. 87.

¹³ Pocock, pp. 36-45, "The Ideal of the Citizen Since Classical Times", in Beiner, (ed.), *Theorizing Citizenship*, pp. 29-52.

¹⁴ Melleuish examines the intellectual history of republicanism, as well as the influence of these ideas in shaping modern political conceptions, see "Republicanism Before Nationalism", in Hudson & Carter, (eds), *The Republicanism Debate*, pp. 77-87.

course of Western European civilisation. In J.G.A. Pocock's magisterial, *The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition*, these themes are examined in greater depth, with a discussion of the crucial role of Aristotle's 'Politics' in shaping conceptions of Western models of citizenship, and its pivotal relation to the progress of concepts of 'civic humanism' and citizenship.¹⁵ Michael Walzer agrees that the 'classic texts' produced by Aristotle, as well as Plutarch and Tacitus, have played pivotal roles as sources of inspiration for the 'ideology' of citizenship, that is in essence a "...neo-classical interpretation of Greek and Roman republicanism."¹⁶ However, Walzer also cites the crucial influence of later theorists such as Machiavelli, Harrington, Montesquieu, and Mably, and more importantly Rousseau and Kant, for their part in connecting the classical theories to the 'modern' philosophical back-ground.¹⁷

From these historical antecedents may be traced the 'classical humanist' tradition of Western Europe.¹⁸ Within this movement, the influence of the Enlightenment clearly emerges as one of the most profound drivers of these later developments. The seminal ideas which make up 'classical citizenship' have continued to exert a lively influence on the ways citizenship has been imagined over the centuries. One of the most salient examples of this is the contemporary popularity of such notions as 'participatory democracy'.¹⁹ Within these the participation of persons in political affairs are extolled as the means whereby people will be exposed to a range of concerns and responsibilities which might enrich their character. Such considerations reflect the ideas of

¹⁵ Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition*, Princeton University Press, Princeton and London, 1975, pp. 66-80.

¹⁶ Walzer, p. 211, "Citizenship", in T. Ball, J. Farr & R.L. Hanson, (eds), *Political Innovation And Conceptual Change*, pp. 211-219. Lolle Nauta also addresses the influence of these theorists, see p.25, "Changing Conceptions of Citizenship", *Praxis International*, vol.12, No.1, April 1992, pp. 20-49. As do Castles & Davidson, *Citizenship and Migration: Globalization and the Politics of Belonging*, Macmillan Press Ltd., London, 2000, pp. 33-35.

¹⁷ Walzer, pp. 211-219.

¹⁸ Peter Riesenbergs provides a brief history of the 'classical' concepts of citizenship and their authors between pp. 205-206, in, *Citizenship in the Western Tradition: Plato To Rousseau*, The University of North Carolina Press, U.S.A., 1992. In Pocock's masterpiece, *The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition*, there is a discussion of the crucial role of Aristotle's *Politics* and its pivotal relation to the progress of 'civic humanism' and citizenship, pp. 51-80.

¹⁹ Kymlicka and Norman, "Return of the Citizen" in, Beiner, (ed.), *Theorizing Citizenship*, pp. 292-293.

Enlightenment figures such as Rousseau, Mill and to some extent also Machiavelli. Within this context it is possible to discern the place of such 'modern' principles as 'one vote, one value', as well as the concept and practice of the universal franchise and its wider impacts.

As has been described, these practices have been largely the domain of Western development. This ideal form of the compact political association of members and their interaction with their state remained particular to the societies of the West. They are not considered to have been evident in the developments of other major civilisations such as Egypt or China²⁰, nor India or the Islamic world.²¹ Although the traditions of citizenship have not been identified as being significant outside of the Western tradition, Riesenberg makes the observation that whilst the traditions of citizenship are commonly, and correctly, traced back to Greece and Rome, societies have always, "...developed institutions by which it recognised and characterised its members and made new members."²² It is significant that 'citizenship' has also been the means whereby societies excluded certain peoples from their nations as well as particular aspects of living.²³

From these ancestral or 'classical' roots are derived a great majority of the contemporary applications of the words applied to issues concerning both the interaction of individuals as political actors, as well as their civic identities. 'Citizenship' consists of the practices and customs by which the members of these communities, the 'citizens', participate in and interact with the wider community. These include the processes by which 'rights' accorded to 'citizens' who meet the 'obligations' that are prescribed by the political community, are both defined and bestowed.²⁴ Traditionally, these 'codes of practice' articulate the ways in which the members of communities are expected to serve

²⁰ Pocock, p. 30, "The Ideal of the Citizen Since Classical Times", in, Beiner, (ed.), *Theorizing Citizenship*, pp. 29-52.

²¹ Goldlust, *Understanding Citizenship in Australia*, p. 2.

²² Riesenberg, makes the point that whilst the traditions of citizenship are commonly traced back to Rome and Greece, societies have always, "...developed institutions by which it recognised and characterised its members and made new members.", p. xxii, in the introduction to, *Citizenship in the Western Tradition: Plato To Rousseau*.

²³ R. Brubaker, *Citizenship and Nationhood in Germany and France*, pp. 21-34.

²⁴ G. Davison, *The Use and Abuse of Australian History*, p. 272.

their societies, and how that community reciprocates their contributions.

This Chapter also introduces one of the keystones upon which the arguments of this thesis have been assembled. These involve the proposition that the intellectual traditions associated with citizenship have fed off an evolving selection of ideas and theories and continued to expand over the course of Western civilisation. Part of this growth has consisted of the development of approaches that have in some part been originally inspired by, or moulded from the classical traditions themselves. This process has in turn, also contributed to the ongoing expansion of this package of ideas, which in their collective form constitute an evolving intellectual entity. In a similar manner this tradition has managed to propagate itself within a wide range of environments.

THE CHANGING PARAMETERS OF CITIZENSHIP DISCOURSE

It is important to acknowledge that in the last 15-20 years, significant shifts have occurred in the theoretical debates over citizenship issues. In what can be categorised as 'the contemporary Western literature dealing with issues of citizenship', there are signs that the 'traditional parameters' of the 'citizenship debates' have undergone distinct alterations, and that they have continued to change. These traditional models of citizenship based upon the relationship between the community member, or 'citizen', and the community they resided within, were chiefly characterised by the notion of political participation and public service. These views of citizenship were formally expanded by the theoretical work of T.H. Marshall in the 1950s. In his seminal work, "*Citizenship and Social Class: and other essays*", Marshall enlarged the contemporary theoretical boundaries of citizenship. In this work he discussed three 'parts', or 'elements', of citizenship. These consisted of '*civil*', '*political*' and '*social rights*' that were available to citizens.

Marshall's theories have been immensely influential in shaping a broader theoretical conception of what citizenship entails.²⁵ An example of such influence is observable in J.M. Barbalet's, *Citizenship: Rights, Struggle and Class Inequality*. This text provides a potted history of traditional citizenship practices, whilst also discussing the political, as

²⁵ T. H. Marshall, *Citizenship And Social Class: and other essays*, Cambridge At The University Press, 1950, pp. 10-27.

well as social and civil dimensions of citizenship.²⁶ Kim Rubenstein has acknowledged the influence of the Marshall analysis and applied its theoretical framework to the Australian conception of citizenship. The author suggests that this type of approach is essential if one is to attempt to understand the full implications of what citizenship in Australia entails.²⁷

In the context of analysing the topics of citizens and citizenship from the perspective of their place and role in a continuum of ideas, these developments are extremely significant. This is best explained by the reference T.H. Marshall made to the 'dynamic nature' of 'citizenship'. One of the most apparent changes in the contemporary discourse is the trend towards introducing a broader and more diverse range of issues beneath the category of 'citizenship' than have traditionally existed in scholarly and legal discourse. It is worthwhile quickly summarising some of these major trends that have featured in the 'contemporary' theoretical discourse. This will encourage a deeper comparative understanding of similar directions in theoretical debate that are occurring in contemporary discussions involving 'citizenship' in Australia.

Perhaps the most influential forerunner of this expansion of citizenship rubric, was Brian Turner, who introduced the following ideas, "Citizenship is not simply about class, and capitalism but also involves debates about the social rights of women, children, the elderly, and even animals. The traditional margins of debate are considered too narrow and require elaboration and extension."²⁸ Accordingly, issues regarding world peace, gender, ethnicity and the natural environment have increasingly been discussed beneath the banner of citizenship in the last twenty years or so.²⁹ These "New Social Movements" have claimed the mantle of traditional notions of 'citizenship' and carried them in new

²⁶ See "Theories of Citizenship", pp. 1-14 of Barbalet's, for a potted history of citizenship practices, as well as a discussion about the social dimension of citizenship, that includes the issue of political factors, *Citizenship: Rights, Struggle and Class Inequality*, Open University Press, England, 1988.

²⁷ K. Rubenstein, see, pp. 517-518, "Citizenship in Australia: Unscrambling its Meaning", *Melbourne University Law Review*, V. 20, 1995-1996, pp. 503-527.

²⁸ B. S. Turner in, *Citizenship and Capitalism: The Debate Over Reformism*, Allen & Unwin, London, 1986, p. 11.

²⁹ Charles Tilley, p. 1, "Citizenship, Identity and Social History", in, *International Review of Social History*, 40, supplement 3 (1995), pp. 1-17.

directions.³⁰

One topical example of ideas and work that embrace this ethic involves the issue of 'green politics'. These issues of environmental awareness have become an increasingly significant part of the political lexicon over the last 20-30 years. 'Green politics' have come to be included in some of the recent discussions of citizenship. Beneath this banner may be found references to ideas that in essence, extend beyond the traditional notions of citizenship. For example, the term 'global citizenship' has become increasingly used to denote a new definition of 'ideal' citizenship characteristics. Within this model the responsibilities of the citizen have been extended beyond localised and civic matters, to include an awareness and concern for the larger natural environment.

One of the most significant features of this recent political movement is that it alters the traditional locus point of theoretical citizenship models.³¹ The focal point is moved from issues concerning the operation and membership of the political community, to incorporate the wider concerns of global and ecological dimensions. In the case of 'green politics', or 'green citizenship', the importance of the environment supersedes notions that traditionally have lain at the heart of citizenship matters, such as the rights of individuals within communities, as well as the operation and conduct of those communities. In the context of 'green awareness' the concentration of a single community's actions and concerns must ideally extend to also consider the concerns of other communities, as well as their impact on their ecological environment. A hypothetical example would be where the members of one city, in considering whether or not to establish an industrial plant that, whilst generating employment and commercial activity in that area, may pollute the surrounding suburbs air, sound, or water quality.

Another example which illustrates the direction of contemporary thought in these areas is provided by the 'Bruntland Report' entitled, "Our Common Future", (*World Commission on Environment and Development*) which emphasises the importance of economic sustainability from the perspective of the rights of 'as yet unborn human

³⁰ Barbalet, p. 63, "Developments In Citizenship Theory And Issues In Australian Citizenship", *Australian Journal Of Social Issues*, Vol. 31, No. 1, February 1996, pp. 55-72.

³¹ F. Steward, p. 65, "Citizens of Planet Earth", G. Andrews, (ed.), *Citizenship*, Lawrence & Wishart, London, 1991, pp. 65-75.

beings'.³² In this report, the significance of ecological issues such as the Chernobyl nuclear plant breakdown, ozone layer depletion, as well as the clearing of tropical rainforests are placed within the gambit of citizenship issues. In the second tier of this argument, these issues are discussed within the parameters of citizenship rights from the perspective of unborn human beings. One interpretation of this approach from a citizenship perspective, is that it represents the intentions of the present generation to take responsibility for the perceived interests of future generations. These debates serve as provocative examples of the directions in which theoretical discourse involving citizenship has been expanded, most noticeably since the seminal work of Marshall.

Summary

The Chapter has provided an overview of how the terms have figured in a variety of historical settings and intellectual contexts. This approach will assist in developing an understanding of the issues at stake whenever the words 'citizen' and 'citizenship' are discussed. Behind the application of the terms in a variety of respective settings, there has existed a historical network of intellectual ideas and traditions. Our contemporary understanding of 'citizenship' practices and traditions are in significant portion, the products of the ideas, studies and interpretations of intellectuals and public thinkers. Within this context, it is important to locate the sources of these discussions, and analyse the origins and influences that have often either been shaped by theorists, or discerned by scholars.

This thesis will draw from this perspective to analyse some of the variety of definitions and characteristics that have been associated with 'citizenship', over the course of Australian history. It will explore the influence of the intellectual and political environments in which the terms have developed. In examining these, a more rounded and fuller understanding of the terms and the contexts they are used in will be achieved. This approach holds the potential to illuminate both the complexity of the issues involved, including the arguments and conjecture provoked by them, as well as the related issues of the intellectual, political and social context in which the respective

³² B. Van Steenberg, p. 144, "Towards a Global Ecological Citizen", in, B. Van Steenberg, (ed.), *The Condition of Citizenship*, Sage Publications, London, 1996, pp. 141-152.

traditions have been shaped.

Doctor Cosby Morgan's 'Citizenship speech'. 'Classical definitions' of citizenship evolving within colonial Australia.

This Chapter has presented an analysis of the manner in which definitions and conceptualisations of citizenship have continued to evolve over the course of western civilisation. Within this process 'classical definitions of citizenship' have proven to be essential building blocks upon which later intellectual ideas have been built. In order to examine how these processes operated within colonial Australia, it is worth recalling a speech delivered by the President of the Newcastle Medical Society, Cosby W. Morgan MD, to the members of the Newcastle Literary Society at the School of Arts in Newcastle, New South Wales on June 14, 1887, upon the topic of 'citizenship'.³³ It introduces several of the key points outlined in this Chapter, including the manner in which intellectual discussions have continued to drive an evolutionary process which has exerted an enduring influence upon conceptualisations of citizenship. One of the most influential of these was the Enlightenment, providing some of the most influential ideas in the 'Western intellectual tradition'.³⁴ Doctor Morgan's speech is especially instructive as it illustrates these points within the context of Australian history.

Doctor Morgan introduced his speech on the topic of 'Citizenship' to his audience with the following ideas:

A citizen may be defined as the inhabitant of a city who enjoys its freedom and privileges, or in a broader acceptation, the word may mean a freeman, native or naturalized, who has the privilege of exercising the elective franchise, and purchasing and holding real estate; but I go further still, and arrive at the derivation of the word "citizenship". It is taken from the Latin *civilis* which refers not only to he (sic) political right of the citizen, but also to his bearing; it means courteous, polite, affable; in fact, a man who understands what is due to

³³ "*Citizenship: An Address*". Delivered to the members of the Newcastle Literary Society at the School of Arts, June 14, 1887, by Cosby W. Morgan MD, President of the Newcastle Medical Society, and of the Newcastle Sanitary Association, Newcastle, printed at the Herald Office, Bolton Street, 1887, 172.1 M, Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales.

³⁴ This nascent influence is discussed in, Gascoigne, J., *The Enlightenment and the Origins of European Australia*, and, Nadel, G., *Australia's Colonial Culture: Ideas, Men and Institutions in Mid-Nineteenth Century Eastern Australia*, p. 257.

himself, and as a natural consequence, what is due to his fellow citizens, hence “civility”. The Latin word means the art of Government. It also (sic) means self-control, and by an easy transition, “politeness”, “civility”, and “affability”.³⁵

The definitions of citizenship expressed within Morgan’s opening stanza are a practical introduction to the primary theme of this chapter regarding the influence of ‘classical citizenship’ and its instrumental role in moulding conceptualisations of citizenship within the contemporary society of colonial Australia.³⁶ Within his introduction Doctor Cosby Morgan referred to citizenship in terms that clearly reflected some of the principal ideas derived from the dimensions of ‘classical citizenship’ specified in the opening discussions of this Chapter. For instance he nominated such characteristic rights as the ‘privilege of exercising the elective franchise’, and ‘purchasing and holding real estate’ as representing features compatible with his own ideas of what constituted the defining elements of citizenship in Australia. Such characteristics clearly matched some of the primary features that have come to be included within the category of ‘classical citizenship’ over the course of western history.

Morgan’s speech also provides an example of the ways in which this platform of classical ideas was bolstered by supplementary ideas and reasoning. The later parts of his opening stanza, reveal that his views on citizenship extended beyond strictly classical connotations. He referred to ‘self-control, “politeness”, “civility”, and “affability” and commented that these were derived from ‘Latin’.³⁷ The relevance of Morgan’s extended package of ideas is that they form vital adjunct qualities representing aspects of citizenship which he considered to be of primary importance within the context of colonial Australia. It is important to note how heavily Morgan weighted these qualities of behaviour, stressing the primacy of manners, civil conduct, and individual

³⁵ “*Citizenship: An Address*”.

³⁶ Cosby’s speech also serves as an example of the importance of such public forums and their role in spreading ideas and generating debate in colonial society. Roberts also addresses these points, see in particular, pp.15-20, “The Politics of Federation”, *Melbourne Journal of Politics*, Vo.27, 200-2001, pp. 8-25.

³⁷ *ibid*, p. 3.

responsibility³⁸ within his paradigm of citizenship. The manner in which he merged these largely 'domestic' ideas within the context of references to 'classical citizenship' serves as a vivid example introducing some of the key ingredients of 'vernacular citizenship'.

One of the great benefits in analysing Morgan's speech is that it provides an example of the way classical ideas of citizenship were embellished with a range of ideas and ideals generated from the contemporary societies in which they were being discussed. This shows how the predominantly legal and political definitions which formed the hub of 'classical citizenship' were supplemented with additional ideas and opinions which served to sketch an outline of citizenship that reflected the characteristics of the contemporary society. Morgan's speech reveals that the types of ideas and ideals which embellished and 'filled out' the dimensions of citizenship within colonial society shared complementary characteristics that sat comfortably within the category of 'vernacular citizenship'. These ideas became incorporated into the paradigm of respectable definitions of citizenship.

Over the course of this thesis the full range of this argument and the thematic stream of characteristics themselves will be examined in more depth. However, Morgan's speech provides an ideal starting point for examining both the character of these ideas and ideals associated with vernacular citizenship, as well as their influence upon the imagining of political matters in colonial Australia. To garner a fuller comprehension of the significance of these characteristics, as well as the manner in which they were disseminated, the following passage is helpful. Morgan began by saying:

I wish to speak to- night of citizenship in its broadest acceptance. Each man here is an integral portion of the whole population, his individual power to select the elements of legislation is equal with the mightiest in the land; he has equal responsibility with respect to the welfare of the state, and helps to make or mar the future of the land he lives in. Whether, as regards our immediate community or the colony at large, everyone of us is a power for good or evil, inasmuch as

³⁸ The importance of civilised modes of conduct in colonial public affairs is also raised by Roberts see pp.18-19, "The Politics of Federation", *Melbourne Journal of Politics*, Vo.27, 200-2001, pp. 8-25.

the laws that govern us are made by the representatives of the people elect; but it appears to me we do not take the trouble to realise how much depends on us as individuals, and by our apathy we are laying up for ourselves a future of bitter repentance.³⁹

Within these sentences Morgan extrapolated further the types of qualities which he considered to ‘round out’ the dimensions of his ideal citizenship. Following on from his exploration of the qualities of individual responsibility and civil conduct, the Doctor spelled out a wider range of criteria involving his expectations of citizen’s behaviour and their involvement within their community. This point represents some of the major issues connected with ‘vernacular citizenship’ and its role in moulding the way that political matters were imagined in colonial Australia. Morgan’s address introduces one of the primary ways that vernacular citizenship influenced these conceptions by implicitly encouraging attitudes and outlooks, and promoting respectable modes of conduct and standards of behaviour considered to represent norms desirable for the community.

For instance, within the context of Morgan’s speech it is evident that his ideas on the topic of citizenship stressed the important function of citizenship in moulding an environment which nurtured the reciprocal relationship that the citizen should share with their community. It did so by reinforcing the necessity for individual citizens to contribute positively to their society and emphasising the benefits that this participation would provide in strengthening and enriching the whole community.

One of the strongest features of this paradigm of citizenship involved the way in which it implicitly empowered individuals by emphasising their capacity to contribute positively to their community. It championed the ideal of equality, proclaiming that the contribution of each citizen was as important as the other, and that the health of the community was dependent upon the input of each and every citizen without exception. As Morgan’s views indicate, citizenship was considered to be a potential vehicle by which all citizens could find a common purpose. In striving for unifying purposes they could fulfil their responsibilities as indispensable portions of the whole community. One

³⁹ “*Citizenship: An Address*”, p. 3.

of the most pervasive themes that ties the major ideas of ‘vernacular citizenship’ together, involves the virtues of equality, unity, co-operation and community.

Within Morgan’s paradigm, one of the key mediums through which citizens might contribute to their community was through their involvement in the selection of their elected political representatives. This responsibility emphasised the necessity for the individual citizen to actively involve themselves in political matters, so that they might be adequately prepared to make informed decisions in shaping the political landscape. Within this entreaty, Morgan once more reiterated the potential role of the individual to shape the wider world of the community in which they lived. This stance stressed the ideals of equality and the belief that all men possessed equal means to shape their society, a point made clear in this statement, “Each man here is an integral portion of the whole population, his individual power to select the elements of legislation is equal with the mightiest in the land...”

Another indicator of the degree of importance attached to these ideas may be found in Morgan’s summation of the historical circumstances of the infant colony in these terms:

Australia has yet to write its record on the pages of history and many years must elapse before we can aspire to be regarded as a nation. We are in our extreme infancy, and have to form and foster our distinctive national character, therefore, the sooner we are alive to our responsibilities, the better for posterity.⁴⁰

From this exposition it is possible to gauge the vital load that citizenship carried. Morgan reinforced the important role that each citizen potentially played in nurturing the wellbeing of their country. It was invested with the weight of shaping a national character that might fit the dimensions of expectation placed upon the fledgling society. One can conclude that the parameters of citizenship as identified by Morgan were considered to represent key aspects of nation building.

Morgan’s speech also shows how these ideas were being disseminated within the colonial community, indicating that they were being entertained and discussed amongst a potentially considerable audience. The setting for this address and the professional

⁴⁰ “*Citizenship: An Address*”, p. 3.

stature of Doctor Morgan suggests how important these ideas were considered to be, and also illuminates the manner in which they were likely to have been discussed and distributed amongst the broader society. In his capacity as a doctor of medicine, Morgan was President of the Newcastle Medical Society, as well as the Newcastle Sanitary Association. These positions which Morgan occupied reveal his service to his community. It is intriguing that a man in Morgan's professional position with a senior role in the community should feel it necessary to discuss citizenship in the setting which he chose. The fact that a busy man such as Morgan bearing such a range of responsibilities, elected to speak on these subjects of citizenship, strongly suggests just how pertinent these topics were considered to be at this time in colonial history.

The place in which Morgan spoke also reinforces the importance of citizenship, and the proclivity for these ideas to be widely distributed at this time. For instance, the Newcastle Literary Society organised the address within the 'School of Arts'. The situation in which a doctor of medicine was presenting an address on citizenship beneath the auspices of the Newcastle Literary Society demonstrates its popularity. Citizenship interested not only a professional such as Morgan, but the fact that he delivered his address within the public domain of the 'Newcastle School of the Arts' represents the accessibility of his ideas to the broader mainstream population of Newcastle. This suggests that the topic of citizenship was able to transcend the boundaries of professional, occupational and class status. The popularity of these ideas is further supported when one takes into account that the full extent of this address's circulation extended beyond the crowd assembled at the 'School of Arts' in Newcastle in 1887. The contents of his speech were reprinted as a pamphlet within the offices of the *Newcastle Herald* ready for wider distribution, an occurrence which indicates that these ideas were considered sufficiently attractive to appeal to a broader audience.

This is not to claim that the ideas of Doctor Cosby Morgan represented a stream of ideas either unequivocally accepted or universally celebrated by every person within colonial society. One might claim that Morgan and his ideas reflected the thinking of a particular section of colonial society, and conclude that his views reflected his socio-economic circumstances more truthfully than his potential audience's interest in his ideas. In this regard he may be considered to be an archetypal exemplar of the type of person

Judith Brett has identified as being the founders and guardians of citizenship within Australia. When one reads Morgan's ideas it is not difficult to observe how they match up with the key ideas which Brett raises. For instance when she states that the, "Australian Liberal conception of citizenship, with its stress on independence of judgement, on loyalty, and on the subordination of self-interest to the national good, was based on Protestant conceptions of virtues..."⁴¹, they appear perfectly compatible with the figure of Doctor Cosby Morgan. A conclusion bolstered by the fact that many of his ideas carry the hallmarks which Brett denotes as being key elements within the paradigm of citizenship outlined in her work.

At the base of her reasoning lies the specification that, "The good citizen was not just someone who fulfilled their political rights and obligation, the good citizen was also a good person and their fulfilment of their citizenship obligations was but an aspect of this goodness."⁴² The connection between these ideas and Morgan's are only strengthened by further reading of Morgan's address in which he stressed the necessity for individuals in his colonial society to selflessly devote themselves to improving their community:

"...if we are to attain natural greatness we must learn to be individually very different to what we are at present. We cannot shut our eyes to the fact that the character of a large proportion of our rising generation is weak and purposeless, their morals lax and debased; and that, as an embryo nation, we are deteriorating from the grand old standard of British excellence that it should be our pride to plant in a new country."⁴³

There can be little doubt of the merit of Brett's insightful studies and the types of citizenship which she explores. However, this thesis does challenge one of the central points in Brett's arguments in regard to the role that 'Protestant Liberal's' played in shaping citizenship within Australian society.⁴⁴ This is not to deny the influence of community leaders such as Doctor Morgan, nor the currency of the ideas they

⁴¹ J. Brett, *Australian Liberals and the Moral Middle Class; From Alfred Deakin to John Howard*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, United Kingdom, 2003, p. 57.

⁴² *ibid*, p. 58.

⁴³ "Citizenship: An Address", p. 4,

⁴⁴ Brett, *Australian Liberals and the Moral Middle Class; From Alfred Deakin to John Howard*, p. 57.

championed. However, it is vital to explore the capacity for these types of citizenship ideas which she analyses, to resonate beyond the strict margins of class, cultural background and religious denomination in colonial Australia. The point which this thesis pursues is that Morgan's ideas and ideals were sufficiently fluid to flow between broad reaches of the colonial population, and find particular resonance amidst the mainstream of that society. Many of these held sufficient attraction to transcend class and religious differences. They contained elements which were to become sufficiently popular to cement some of these common values into a package representing mainstream Australian conceptions of citizenship. In short, there was a convergence between many of the predominant ideas and ideals of citizenship, which proved more important than their shades of difference.

One of the major claims for supporting these propositions is that the ideas and values which persons like Doctor Cosby Morgan espoused, (and personified through their service to the community), were widely distributed and entertained amongst the broader colonial community. As an example of the popularity of these ideas and their broad circulation throughout the mainstream of Australian society it is worthwhile revisiting the pages of the Sydney newspaper *Truth*. The following story published within the popular *Truth*⁴⁵ in 1900, support these propositions. The *Truth's* account of an outbreak of bubonic plague in Sydney, allows a fuller exposition of the reasons why this article is considered relevant. The story was announced with these headlines:

PLAGUE FUNK

COWARDLY CITIZENS

Not the least repulsive development in connection with the outbreak of bubonic plague in Sydney, is the cowardice shown by many of the richer class of citizens.

⁴⁵ M. Cannon, *That Damned Democrat: John Norton, an Australian Populist, 1858-1916*, Melbourne University Press, Carlton, Victoria, 1981, pp. 11-15. Also see, R. B. Walker, *The Newspaper Press in New South Wales, 1803-1920*, Sydney University Press, Sydney, Australia, 1976, pp. 119-125.

Many hundreds who owe their all to Sydney, who have fattened on its prosperity for the whole of their lives...are fast scurrying away from the city, seeking plague free spots, and quite regardless of any duty of civic patriotism.

Yet, if it is the soldiers duty in a campaign against the country's enemy to stand bravely to his post and risk death itself for the sake of patriotism, it is equally the citizen's duty to meet with courage the danger facing his city. In the good old days...civic patriotism was counted to be the most commendable of all forms of public spirit. The citizens of Athens, or of Corinth; later of Rome, and in the middle ages of Venice, of Florence, thought of his city before all. How glorious was the result of that civic pride. In Athens it produced men who, as orators, writers, poets, sculptors, philosophers, soldiers and administrators, still stand as the head of the worlds great men.⁴⁶

The first issue that this passage raises involves the references to, "The citizens of Athens, or of Corinth; later of Rome, and in the middle ages of Venice, of Florence...". This displayed both an awareness of the historical antecedents of 'classical citizenship' within the pages of the *Truth* as well as a celebration of their positive representation. It did so in a manner which reflected the texture of Morgan's speech, and in particular his convictions that, "In the best days of her Commonwealth, no nobler specimen of humanity could be found than the Roman citizen...".⁴⁷ The references to 'classical citizenship' within these passages from the *Truth* reflected the influence of ideas bearing an unmistakeably similar cadence to those expressed by Morgan in regard to the iconography and historical resonance of 'classical citizenship'.

These points of thematic similarity evident in Morgan's speech, as well as in the *Truth*, are strengthened by the comments of the *Truth* when discussing the responsibility of the citizens of Sydney to respond to the 'plague in their city'. These references to 'civic citizenship' include the notions of 'duty of civic patriotism', 'citizen's duty', and are concluded with the comment that 'civic patriotism was counted to be the most

⁴⁶ *Truth*, April 22, 1900, p. 1.

⁴⁷ "*Citizenship: An Address*", p. 5.

commendable of all forms of public spirit.⁴⁸ They reinforce the potency of the iconography of ‘classical citizenship’. More importantly they stand as further testimony to the manner in which these references were frequently applied within the particular circumstances of the contemporary colonial society in pre and early Federation Australia. These factors emerge more clearly when we further analyse the contents of these paragraphs. Most noticeably, the *Truth* stressed the responsibility of the citizen to respond to the needs of their community at a time of peril. This emphasis on the requirements of the citizen to act dutifully in response to the needs of the community reflected the similar ideas expressed in Morgan’s speech. He too, had identified the ideal of the individual acting on the behalf of their community as representing the key ideals of citizenship as well as one of the primary responsibilities of the individual citizen.

Another familiar characteristic which these two examples shared was the veneration of the virtues of citizenship as articulated in these lines, “In Athens it produced men who, as orators, writers, poets, sculptors, philosophers, soldiers and administrators, still stand as the head of the worlds great men.” This eulogy was representative of the propensity for associating qualities of a utopian nature with citizenship. A trait that can also be observed in Morgan’s conviction that, “In the best days of her Commonwealth, no nobler specimen of humanity could be found than the Roman citizen...”⁴⁹ As these lines attest, citizenship was frequently equated with a range of idyllic qualities that represented iconic standards of conduct and behaviour, that were also suffused with romantic ambitions. The colour of these examples exhibits the extent to which citizenship was imbued with aspirations that marked the highest and most noble ambitions of mankind, ranging from poetry, philosophy and the arts, to soldiers and administrators.

These concerns touch upon another of the defining features of ‘vernacular citizenship’. Amidst the panegyric devoted to the virtuous traits of citizenship, it is notable that ‘soldiers’ shared the same sentence as ‘orators, writers, poets, sculptors, philosophers and administrators’. Within the lines of ‘vernacular citizenship’ the place of the warrior was far less prominent than in ‘classical’ models where it formed one of the central tenets. As

⁴⁸ *Truth*, April 22, 1900, p. 1.

⁴⁹ “*Citizenship: An Address*”, p.5.

these examples show, 'vernacular citizenship' placed a far greater emphasis upon more 'domestic' responsibilities. Martial activities were considered to constitute one particular category of responsibility within a range of complementary vocations devoted to the wellbeing of the community. When the issues pertaining to armed conflict did arise the accent was placed upon the duty of the citizen to serve their community in ways that engendered peaceful and constructive outcomes.

Taking into account that the *Truth* appealed to a far broader potential mass audience than Morgan's speech, and the fact that the *Truth* article appeared some 13 years later, one can argue that the similarity between these ideas, and their bridging of time and societal position, supports the conclusion that they were sufficiently popular to have been widely aired within colonial Australia. This point is strengthened by contrasting their publication within the pages of the notorious Sydney newspaper the *Truth*, and the fact that they were, in many respects, worlds away from the speeches and reputation of Doctor Cosby Morgan. His professional status contrasted markedly with the frequently scandalous days of the *Truth* and in particular its one time proprietor, John Norton.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the ideas pertaining to 'classical citizenship' proved to be essential in underpinning conceptions of 'popular' citizenship within colonial Australia. From this basic bedrock of classical ideas, a range of attributes and modes of conduct and behaviour were drawn, forming a popular collection of ideas which comprised 'vernacular citizenship'. These ideas were sufficiently popular to extend beyond the strictest parameters of class, religion or cultural background that existed within the colonial community. This process also exhibited the manner in which these notions of citizenship were developed and promulgated within Australian colonial society. Within this context these ideas were not only 'popular', but their continued presence within colonial Australia represented the ways in which 'vernacular citizenship' was able to thrive.

CHAPTER TWO

Australian Citizenship Since Federation: The Focus of Contemporary Academic Interest.

Chapter Two will examine the 'state of citizenship' in contemporary Australia, as presented in academic texts. By analysing the major issues raised by this discourse, some of the predominant themes of the thesis will emerge. These include the tension that exists between 'formal' and 'informal' understandings of citizenship. It also presents a record of the changing ideas and understanding of citizenship, and their involvement at the heart of discussions involving the history of the Commonwealth.

In contemporary Australia, the issues involving citizenship have attracted an unprecedented level of attention from the intellectual sphere, and in particular the academic domains of history and politics. The focus has been overwhelmingly drawn to the proliferation of policies and legislation created by the various levels of State and Commonwealth administration, that have been pivotal to the assembling of 'formal' and legalistic definitions of citizens, as well as highly influential in shaping conceptualisations of citizenship in Australia. In concentrating upon these formal and statutory sources, as well as the contents of the Australian Commonwealth Constitution, an influential collection of work has been produced. From this discourse it is possible to delineate two broad arguments that have been sketched out by various authors regarding the role of 'citizenship' in the history of post-Federation Australia.

CRITICAL ASSESSMENTS

The first is that these 'formal', and 'legalistic' notions of citizenship have been of little constructive importance in the history of Australia, particularly in the time leading up to and including the early years of the Federation era. Many who share this point of view base their reasoning on the meagre offerings of formal references to 'citizenship', or

'citizens', in the original form of the Australian Constitution.¹ The single reference to 'citizen' that is made is contained in Section. 44 (I), and pertains to, 'a citizen of a foreign power'.² It is a point frequently mentioned, that until the advent of the *Nationality and Citizenship Act of 1948 (Cth)*³, and its later version, the *Australian Citizenship Act 1948*⁴, there was no legal reference to 'citizens' or 'citizenship' in Australian Commonwealth legislation. Rather, the people, as members of a Federal Commonwealth under the crown,⁵ were referred to as 'subjects'.

It is primarily because of this situation that many critics and commentators have questioned whether citizenship existed prior to the *Nationality and Citizenship Act of 1948* being gazetted in 1949.⁶ One such example is available within, *Individual, Community, Nation: Fifty Years Of Australian Citizenship*⁷, which discusses citizenship in Australia, and symbolically reinforces this understanding. As the second part of the title powerfully symbolises, and the focus of much of its material suggests, there is an influential undercurrent of ideas that are based upon the understanding that citizenship in Australia is primarily a product of parliamentary and Constitutional legislation. And therefore contends that citizenship cannot be considered to have existed prior to 1949. Kim Rubenstein has suggested that this situation, "...means that citizenship in Australia is

¹ Many of these issues regarding the contents of the Australian constitution in regard to citizenship are summarised in Galligan & Roberts, *Australian Citizenship*, pp. 21-27.

² For a discussion regarding the sole overt reference in the Constitution, see, M. Thornton, "Legal Citizenship", pp. 111-120, in Hudson & Kane, (eds), *Rethinking Australian Citizenship*.

³ The *Nationality and Citizenship Act of 1948 (Cth)* came into force on Australia Day, 26 January 1949, and was later known as the "*Australian Citizenship Act 1948*", see, p. 32, Galligan & Roberts, *Australian Citizenship*.

⁴ This point is made by Rubenstein, see p. 188, "Citizenship and the Republican Debate", in Glenn Patmore, (ed.), *The Big Makeover: A New Australian Constitution: Labor Essays 2002*, pp. 187-195.

⁵ For a concise account of the discussion and debates that accompanied the assignation of titles to the Commonwealth's constituents in the constitution, see Quick & Garran, *The Annotated History Of The Australian Commonwealth*, pp. 954-959. It is a point more recently addressed in Batrouney & Goldlust, *Unravelling Identity: Immigrants, Identity and Citizenship in Australia*, pp. 26-30.

⁶ Jayasuriya, p. 93, "Citizens", in Nile, (ed.), *Australian Civilisation*, pp. 93-109.

⁷ Rubenstein, (ed.), *Individual, Community, Nation: Fifty Years of Australian Citizenship*. While the content of this book does indeed focus on the 'fifty years' of Australian citizenship that have transpired since the, "*Nationality and Citizenship Act of 1948 (Cth)*", Irving does challenge and discuss the question of whether or not 'citizenship' existed prior to 1949, in her article, "Citizenship before 1949", pp. 9-20.

not a constitutional subject.”⁸

Possibly the most compelling proponent of this position is Alastair Davidson, who argues in, *From Subject to Citizen: Australian Citizenship in the Twentieth Century*, that the absence of formal codes of citizenship within the constitution has represented the lack of political interest in the concepts in Australia. In a broad sense Davidson bases his argument on the legal status of citizenship in Australia. In support of this contention he cites the wording, and content, of the Constitution, which addresses the legal rights of individuals, or citizens, in an ‘implicit’ manner only. There is only what he regards as scant reference to the explicit rights of citizens. He reasons that citizenship in Australia is constrained by this lack of legislative muscle.⁹ Davidson’s thesis includes the summation that these forms of omission have shaped a milieu in which informal discourses of citizenship have developed and operated in an insular and exclusive fashion.¹⁰ He also links this condition of underdeveloped individual rights to what he perceives as the heavy hand of law, in establishing and defining Australian political institutions and customs. He explores this theme in greater deal in, *The Invisible State: The Formation of the Australian State, 1788-1991*.¹¹

Davidson’s hypothesis is that a ‘passive’ variety of citizenship has been encouraged by the formal wording of the Constitution that does not effectively invest the people with sovereign powers.¹² In support of this, Davidson argues that the Constitution only refers

⁸ Rubenstein, p. 505, “Citizenship in Australia: Unscrambling its Meaning”, in *Melbourne University Law Review*, V. 20, 1995-1996, pp. 503-527.

⁹ Davidson, *From Subject to Citizen: Australian Citizenship in the Twentieth Century*.

¹⁰ Davidson discusses his opinion of how legislation such as the 1902-1903 ‘Naturalisation Bill’ confused notions of nationality and citizenship, and acted to reinforce an informal and racially based concept of ‘belonging’ in the Australian nation, see, pp. 66-68 in, *From Subject to Citizen: Australian Citizenship in the Twentieth Century*.

¹¹ Davidson, *The Invisible State: The Formation of the Australian State, 1788-1991*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge University, U.K., 1991. David Dutton is also critical of what he describes as the excessive demands of the state in Australia upon its people in regard to their allegiance and obedience to the Commonwealth, see, *One of us? A Century of Australian Citizenship*, University of New South Wales Press, Sydney, Australia, 2001, p. 90.

¹² Davidson sketches the outline of his argument concerning the formal status of Australian citizens in the Constitution, in, *From Subject to Citizen: Australian Citizenship in the Twentieth Century*, pp. 51-59. Davidson also uses the term ‘passive concept of citizenship’, in his article, “Republicanism and Democratic Reform” on p. 103, in W. Hudson & D. Carter, (eds), *The Republicanism Debate*, University of New South Wales Press, Kensington, Australia, 1993.

to fundamental political rights in sections, 96, 116, 117, 51(xxxi) and 80, in regard to guaranteeing franchise rights.¹³ In comparison to the 1791 Constitution of the French Republic, for example, Davidson suggests it spells out a weak sense of the democratic principle of 'one vote of equal value'. This concern with the limitations of the Constitution's safeguarding of democratic principles is supported by Hugh Emy, who contends that the Constitution does not formally affirm the principle of one vote, one value. Emy indicates that the Constitution delegates this responsibility to the Commonwealth Electoral Act, and the powers of the Electoral Commission. He also points out that the Constitution does not actually affirm the right for those over 18 years of age to vote, but leaves this power to the Federal Government in sections 8 & 30.¹⁴ Emy also cites the situation, where before 1982, the right to free speech in the political forum was not formally protected.

The basis of what may be termed the 'Davidson thesis' is also pursued by Peter Botsman who has critiqued what he sees as an irreconcilable and damaging gap between the Australian people and their government. In contending that, "...Australians lost touch with their foundation laws and structures of government.", he cites the perceived weaknesses in the Constitution as being both responsible for, and indicative of, a profound flaw in the Australian polity. He asserts that these fault lines originate from the foundation of the Commonwealth and have created an unstable and imperfect political structure. In support of this proposition he has concluded that, "...the division between the people and the constitutional process was there from the beginning."¹⁵ Therefore he argues that the foundation process which delivered the Australian Commonwealth and the Constitution was responsible for creating an environment in which, "For the most part, Australians seem inured to politics and indifferent about their inclusion in political decisions."¹⁶

David Dutton has expressed similar concerns, and has in particular singled out the

¹³ Davidson, *From Subject to Citizen: Australian Citizenship in the Twentieth Century*, p. 51.

¹⁴ Hugh Emy, see pp. 24-25, "Citizenship, Democracy and the Constitution", in, Davis, (ed.), *Citizenship in Australia: Democracy, Law and Society*, pp. 15-35.

¹⁵ Peter Botsman, *The Great Constitutional Swindle: A Citizen's view of the Australian Constitution*, p. xii.

¹⁶ *ibid*, p. 8.

malign influence that the Constitution has exerted on constituents. He concludes that these produced a negative political environment which has alienated Australian citizens from the political processes, and constricted their interest in political matters. He nominates the overbearing influence of the state in seeking to secure the allegiance of its constituents, at the expense of more liberal concerns, which he considers to have been at “...the core of citizenship.”¹⁷ Furthermore, he states:

The creation of a distinct Australian citizenry was an object of the Commonwealth from the moment of its foundation, and the policies by which it sought to do this were based in the intention to establish a citizenry which was bound by common identity, cohesive and free of internal conflict, obedient and structured around the state.

The other major concern expressed by critics, and which pursues some of the primary themes of Davidson's hypothesis, involves the lack of an explicit definition, or positive outline of citizen rights and responsibilities. Galligan & Chesterman, are two authors who have closely examined the absence of definitions of citizenship in the Constitution. In their article, “Australia’s Citizenship Void”¹⁸, they argue that the absence of a legal reference to citizenship has left a chasm in the political consciousness of Australian society, and has encouraged 'negative' forms of citizenship, based mainly on the exclusionary policies of government legislation, to flourish. Their position diverges from Davidson’s, in that while they would all agree on the negative impact of the Constitution’s muted stance on citizenship, Galligan and Chesterman believe that citizenship has remained an important feature of Australian politics.

Their position is more fully explained in their article, “Citizenship And Its Denial In Our Federal State”,¹⁹ where Galligan & Chesterman suggest that this lack of formal detail, is indicative of the fragmented nature of Australian citizenship rather than its

¹⁷ Dutton, *One of us? A Century of Australian Citizenship*, p. 90.

¹⁸ Galligan & Chesterman, “Australia’s Citizenship Void”, in A. Davidson & K. Weekley, (eds), *Globalisation and Citizenship in the Asia-Pacific*, Macmillan Press Ltd., Great Britain, 1999, pp. 73-86.

¹⁹ Galligan & Chesterman, pp. 173-174, “Citizenship And Its Denial In Our Federal State”, in, S. Rufus, Davis, (ed.), *Citizenship in Australia: Democracy, Law, & Society*.

absence.²⁰ In a later text, *Defining Australian Citizenship*, they flesh out this perspective in more detail.²¹ In this work they state that, "Australian citizenship has been defined and developed through legislation, administrative practice and public policy by both Commonwealth and state governments in key political, civil, social and economic areas."²² They conclude that it is the somewhat discordant nature of these various uncoordinated arrangements that have produced the disparate products that have characterised Australian citizenship.²³

Kim Rubenstein provides another perspective that analyses the influence of legal aspects of citizenship in Australia, which echoes key points raised by Galligan & Chesterman, but also diverges in part from their conclusions. Rubenstein discusses the 'confused' ideas that surround the topic of citizenship in Australia.²⁴ The author suggests that the basic cause of this misapprehension is due to the fact that there are a variety of citizenship concepts that operate at any one time. Rubenstein names three: 1. The legal, which is a topic already examined to some extent by the work of Davidson as well as Galligan & Chesterman in the Australian context. 2. Citizenship as participation and membership within a democratic community. 3. Citizenship as desirable-activity, or, the civic virtues concept of citizenship.²⁵

It is Rubenstein's view that the legal aspects of Australian citizenship may possess questionable 'logic and consistency'.²⁶ As evidence, the author examines the limitations of constitutional and legislative references to citizenship. Rubenstein cites the

²⁰ Galligan & Chesterman, pp. 173-174, "Citizenship And Its Denial In Our Federal State". See also, Galligan & Chesterman, (eds), *Defining Australian Citizenship: Selected Documents*, pp. 4 -5. Kim Rubenstein also discusses the 'fragmented' nature of Australian citizenship. In particular, Rubenstein refers "...to the disparate pieces of legislation", that indicate the shape of citizenship rights, in the absence of any direct wording in either the constitution, or the Citizenship Act 1948 (Cth), p. 527, in "Citizenship in Australia: Unscrambling its Meaning", pp. 503-527.

²¹ Galligan & Chesterman, (eds), *Defining Australian Citizenship: Selected Documents*.

²² Galligan & Chesterman, (eds), *Defining Australian Citizenship: Selected Documents*, p. 4.

²³ This point is also raised by Galligan & Roberts, *Australian Citizenship*, pp. 20-21.

²⁴ Rubenstein, p. 503, "Citizenship in Australia: Unscrambling its Meaning". Mick Dodson also discusses the 'confusion' surrounding the concept of citizenship in Australia, p. 193, "First Fleets and Citizenships", in, Davis, (ed.), *Citizenship in Australia: Democracy, Law and Society*, pp. 189-223.

²⁵ Rubenstein, pp. 505-506, "Citizenship in Australia: Unscrambling its Meaning", pp. 503-527.

²⁶ *ibid*, p. 504.

inconsistencies of legislation, such as the contrasting regulations applying at state levels to jury duty, and public service employment.²⁷ Therefore, the author concludes that the legal concept of citizenship may not be sufficiently robust to enable a full and comprehensive understanding of issues regarding membership of the Australian community.

Several critics have called for a “Bill of Rights”, or some similar document attached to the Constitution, listing the rights and responsibilities of citizens, to redress the lack of positive reference to citizenship in the Australian Constitution.²⁸ To support this argument, the paucity of references within the Australian Constitution is contrasted with such examples as the French Republican Constitution, or the American Bill of Rights. Helen Irving’s reference to J. A. La Nauze’s²⁹ description of the “anaemic wording” of section 117 of the Constitution is emblematic of the opinions of many of those with a preference for a bolder expression of the rights of citizens.³⁰ One of the advantages presented by a ‘bill of rights’ or similar document, is its capacity to clarify current citizenship practices. A document overriding the existing collection of disparate pieces of legislation might provide a more consistent understanding of citizen practices in Australia.

POSITIVE ASSESSMENTS-POLITICAL MODELS

Several commentators have rebutted particular aspects of this analysis of citizenship in Australian history that has been predicated largely upon the basis of the perceived flaws in the Australian Constitution and related tranches of government legislation. John Hirst for example, has positively supported the general contention that ‘citizenship’ has played an instrumental and positive role in Australian history, presenting his argument in an

²⁷ *ibid*, see pp. 508-513, for an extensive examination of the various types of legislation that present contradictory implications for citizenship concepts.

²⁸ One example is found in, Robert McClelland, “Is the Time Right for a Bill of Rights?”, in Patmore, (ed.), *The Big Makeover; A New Australian Constitution: Labor Essays 2002*, pp. 137-150.

²⁹ J. A. La Nauze, *The Making of the Australian Constitution*, Melbourne University Press, 1972, p. 231.

³⁰ Irving refers to J. A. La Nauze’s description of the “anaemic wording” of section 17 of the Constitution see, p. 162, *To Constitute a Nation: A Cultural History of Australia’s Constitution*, Cambridge University Press, U.K., 1997. Irving has expounded her reasons for opposing any type of “Bill of Rights” document being added to the Australian Constitution, see p. 210, “Australia’s Constitutional Identity”, in Irving, (ed.), *Unity and Diversity: A National Conversation*, A.B.C., Books, Sydney, Australia, 2001, pp. 194-220.

article entitled, "Can subjects be citizens?". He draws upon a political model of citizenship to support his position, arguing that the people of Australia were able to play a significant role in the delivery of a Federated nation and its Constitution, as a direct by-product of their status as 'citizens'. He points out the pivotal role that the 'popular movement', of 'everyday Australians' played in driving the Federation process.³¹ This would not have occurred, he believes, were it not for the people's belief that they themselves carried the rights and responsibilities of 'citizenship', which invested them with the obligation to participate in the political process. As an example, Hirst identifies Sir Edmund Barton, and his determination that the 'people' should play an integral role in the Federation process. While Hirst admits that the people did not make a point of overtly declaring themselves to be citizens, they nonetheless acted in such ways that could not be misunderstood. He concludes that they quite clearly acted as 'citizens'.³² He also considers that the form and content of the Constitution is a testimony to these principles.³³ In support of his argument, he offers the evidence of the legal requirement of the voting public to agree to changes to the Constitution via the referendum process, as an example of its democratic origins and form.³⁴

Sir Zelman Cowen is another who agrees with the substance of Hirst's view's and its challenge to the essence of Davidson's argument. He contends that the structure of the Constitution positively represents the rights of 'citizens' in the Australian Commonwealth. In support of this he cites the example whereby the Constitution specifies that both houses of parliament are to be "...directly chosen by the people", in sections 7 & 24."

³¹ John Hirst, "Can subjects be citizens?" in, *Crown or Country: Traditions of Australian Republicanism*, Allen & Unwin, St. Leonards, Australia, 1994.

³² Hirst, pp. 118-119.

³³ Irving has written in support of this contention that has the democratic principles represented by the delivery of the Australian Commonwealth Constitution equated to a 'unique' partnership between the Australian people and its Parliament, see, p. 197, "Australia's Constitutional Identity", in, Irving, (ed.), *Unity and Diversity: A National Conversation*, pp. 194-220. It is also well worth reading, Irving, "Democratic Experiments with Constitution-making, see p. 115, in, Marian Sawer, (ed.), *Elections: Full, Free, and Fair*, The Federation Press, Leichhardt, N.S.W., Australia, 2001, pp. 115-128.

³⁴ For a further discussion of the place of referendums, and other democratic provisions set down in 1901, which represented the major role that the voting public might play in Australian politics, see Irving, p. 196., in, "Australia's Constitutional Identity", in, Irving, (ed.), *Unity and Diversity: A National Conversation*, pp. 194-220. Also see, Irving, "Democratic Experiments with Constitution-making", p. 128, in Sawer, (ed.), *Elections: Full, Free, and Fair*, pp. 115-128.

This, he explains is a more democratic system than was presented in either the British or American examples.³⁵ Cowen also notes that the High Court has derived from the words of sections 7 & 24, the notion of implied rights of citizens, even though they are not explicitly set down.³⁶ Helen Irving has suggested these features of the Australian political system, including such innovations as the referendum serving as a vehicle for constitutional change, are representative of the existence of a "...degree of trust in popular participation and in the voter's choice..."³⁷, that is indicative of the strength of the democratic relationship between the voters and the parliament.

CITIZENSHIP AS A PART OF 'NATION BUILDING'

On the opposite side of those who have critically assessed the absence of specific definitions and explicit details of citizenship in official annals, are those who believe that citizenship ideals and 'substantive' policy measures have been influential in shaping the nation state of Australia. In support of their contentions these authors have referred to the Australian Constitution and a range of legislative policies, in particular those pertaining to 'social policies' or 'substantive' matters to support their propositions.

This has been advanced in detail by Robert Birrell, who suggests that notions of citizenship have been an essential component in the development of the 'Australian settlement'. In, *A Nation of our own*, Birrell contends that notions of citizenship rights were instrumental in the building of a national community.³⁸ He argues that whilst citizenship ideals may not have been explicitly defined or promoted within official tomes, they none the less have been heavily influential as implicit forces in the process of building a new nation. Birrell contends that the social policy innovations of the early Federation era were based on notions of citizenship, and acted to advance the rights of

³⁵ Irving also suggests that the Australian Constitution represented one of the most democratic examples of parliamentary and constitutional systems of its time, see, p. 196, "Australia's Constitutional Identity", in, Irving, (ed.), *Unity and Diversity: A National Conversation*, pp. 194-220.

³⁶ Sir Zelman Cowen, "More Active and Informed: Australian Citizenship For the 20th Century", p. 5, in Davis, (ed.), *Citizenship in Australia: Democracy, Law and Society*, pp. 1-13.

³⁷ Irving, "Democratic Experiments with Constitution-making", p. 115, in M. Sawyer, (ed.), *Elections: Full, Free, and Fair*, pp. 115-128.

³⁸ Robert Birrell, *A Nation of our own: Citizenship and Nation-building in Federation Australia*, Longman, Melbourne, 1995, pp. 12-20. Birrell argues that notions of citizenship rights were instrumental to the building of a national community.

Australians. Thus, for Birrell, social policy was driven by the objective of creating a 'national citizenship', and its aims were to deliver standards of material well being which accorded with notions of citizen's rights.³⁹

In some aspects Birrell's work covers some of the most closely observed and contested areas of intellectual terrain in Australian history. The social policies of early Federation, also known as the 'social laboratory' era, have evoked spirited analysis and not a little jousting over the years. Many have argued that the social policy innovations of the early years of Federation granted Australians political and social rights that surpassed those of other nations⁴⁰. The major supporters of this position may be categorised as the 'traditionalists of the left'. Robin Gollan's, *Radical and Working Class Politics*, and Brian Fitzpatrick's, *A Short History of the Labor Movement*, are archetypal texts of this persuasion.⁴¹ To these works may be added the influence of Ian Turner and Russell Ward who produced works constituting the 'radical nationalist school of thought'. As this thematic discourse once more reveals, discussions involving the subjects of citizenship and citizens have the capacity to extend across some of the major areas of debate in Australian history and politics. In this particular instance the subject matter has focussed scrutiny upon the Federation era, and its implications for the political status of the Australian people. This debate holds the potential to cut across some of the 'big' questions of Australian history since Federation.

Within the margins of the debate outlined above, there is another question that is crucial in any discussion about the course of Australian history since Federation. This involves the way in which a critical perspective of the political processes and institutions that

³⁹ It is instructive to read Sir William Hancock's opinions regarding the White Australia policy, for there is a significant thread of opinion that connects with Birrell's ideas. See *Australia*, The Jacaranda Press, NSW, Australia, 1966, pp. 59-63.

⁴⁰ Several writers have of course questioned the findings of those who have supported the 'social laboratory' thesis, for one such opinion it is worth reading Beilharz, Considine and Wells, who question the role that the 'social laboratory' era played in creating a 'positive' form of citizenship. On p. 20, the authors go as far as suggesting that, "Neither civic rights nor social rights were part of the Federation project.", in, "Welfare for Citizenship: The Emergence of Ideals", in, Beilharz, M. Considine & R. Watts, (eds), *Arguing About The Welfare State: The Australian Experience*, Allen & Unwin, Australia, 1992, pp. 13-32.

⁴¹ For a brief outline of the direction of labourist interpretations of the 'social laboratory' era, see Hearn & Knowles, *One Big Union: A History of the Australian Workers Union 1886-1994*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, U.K., 1996, pp. 12-17.

produced Federation entails a negative assessment of one segment of Australia's past. Birrell is one writer who has warned of the possible dangers of this approach.⁴² His concern is that by focussing upon the negative elements of the Australian past, at the expense of others, important and constructive features of this epoch may be ignored.⁴³ While these views reflect concerns about the historical approach of writers to Federation⁴⁴, there is another important issue that runs from this debate. To put it simply, the Federation debate as outlined above contains the seeds of a much bigger argument as to the place of the Federation years in the Australian story. For as Birrell is at pains to elucidate, the Federation era witnessed the expression of ideals that celebrated notions such as equality and egalitarianism. In summarily dismissing the achievements of the era, critics run the risk of also losing sight of important features of national development. This 'blinkered' approach runs the risk of producing an unbalanced and potentially incomplete historical perspective.

These issues raised in Birrell's work are further examined in relation to the role of citizenship ideals in building the Australian nation. He argues that these ideals were fundamentally collectivist in nature, and predicated upon the ambition of delivering a unified nation built upon shared values and beliefs. His acknowledgment of these collectivist ideals taps into another issue. This involves the potential for historical assessments to emphasise the perspective of either collectivist or individualist approaches to nation building. This point is also discussed by Archer who argues that it is important to recognise the positive and constructive features of nation building, and to acknowledge that these might incorporate some of the vital dynamics that bond communities together.⁴⁵

⁴² See in particular, Bob Birrell, *Federation: The Secret Story*, Duffy & Snellgrove, New South Wales, 2001. The content of chapter one is of specific significance, see, pp. 1-23. This book contains many of the ideas that Birrell first discussed in his earlier work, *A Nation of our own: Citizenship and Nation-building in Federation Australia*. I believe his opinions in regard to the role of citizenship ideals in the formation of Federation Australia are more fully developed in the later text.

⁴³ Birrell, *Federation: The Secret Story*, pp. 6-11.

⁴⁴ Ged Martin has written a lively introduction to some recent texts written on the subject of Federation, presenting their place in the historiography of Australian history, and the principle issues they raise, see, "Review Article; "Explaining The Sentimental Utopia: Historians and The Centenary of Australian Federation", *Australian Studies*, Vol. 18, No. 1, Summer 2003, pp. 211-230.

⁴⁵ J. Archer, "Situating Australian National Identity in Theory and Practice", in G. Stokes, (ed.), *The Politics of Identity in Australia*, Cambridge University Press, United Kingdom, 1997, pp. 23-36.

Hirst alludes to a similar dynamic when he states, "The desire for recognition and a secure identity is a prime force in the movement to create nations."⁴⁶

Galligan and Chesterman may be considered to concur with the general thrust of Birrell's contentions. They state that the creation of the Australian Constitution was based on, "...the robust notion of the new Australian citizenship..."⁴⁷, that the framers of the Constitution were attempting to construct. They believe that citizenship has been an important factor in the development of Australian society since Federation. They explore the continuing progress of this influence, by analysing the numerous types of legislation that have been developed by the various spheres of Government since the establishment of the Commonwealth, to form what they judge to constitute the dimensions of Australian citizenship.

CRITICAL ASSESSMENTS OF THE "CITIZENSHIP AND NATION BUILDING" HYPOTHESIS

While Birrell shares Galligan & Chesterman's general belief in the importance of notions of citizenship in Australian nationhood, there are distinct and important discrepancies between aspects of their approaches, as well as the content of some of their conclusions. Most significantly, Galligan and Chesterman are critical of the 'negative' aspects of Australia's history of citizenship.⁴⁸ For instance, they point out the exclusionary practices which treated Aborigines as people without basic citizenship rights. In particular they describe the experiences of Aborigines in Western Australia under the '*West Australian Natives (Citizenship Rights Act) Act 1944*', as an example. Under this regime Aborigines could apply for a certificate of citizenship to a magistrate. If they met the criteria which included: adopting 'the manner and habits of civilised life' for two years prior to application; the capacity to speak, and understand English, as well as being of 'good behaviour and industrious habits', they could be granted a citizenship certificate.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ J. Hirst, *The Sentimental Nation: the making of the Australian Commonwealth*, p. 26.

⁴⁷ Galligan & Chesterman, (eds), *Defining Australian Citizenship: Selected Documents*, p. 5.

⁴⁸ Galligan & Chesterman, (eds), *Defining Australian Citizenship: Selected Documents*, pp. 2-5.

⁴⁹ Galligan & Chesterman, pp. 83-84, "Australia's Citizenship Void", in, A. Davidson & K. Weekley, (eds), *Globalization and Citizenship in the Asia-Pacific*. Galligan & Chesterman, also refer to this Act and

In a similar vein, they point out the manner in which the White Australia Policy⁵⁰ operated to exclude immigrants, on the basis of racial and colour discrimination. The key issue they raise involves the belief that these policies acted to encourage a negative perception of citizenship values. They suggest that because of the implicit characteristics of Australian citizenship, it came to be defined by what it was not. This is to say, legislation spoke more clearly of the definitions of who were not allowed to access rights, than who were.⁵¹ This created a situation whereby Australian citizenship was by formal, and legal definition, quite clearly not available for example, to Aboriginal, nor coloured people, in the same way it was for other persons.⁵²

By way of contrast, Birrell contends that, "...the White Australia doctrine embodied civic ideals in that it asserted that if Australia was to be composed of a community of citizens, all enjoying advanced social rights, it should not include persons thought incapable of living in accord with these rights".⁵³ While Birrell acknowledges that this involved a racist perspective that did demote Aborigines and other non-Caucasians to second class citizens, he would not completely agree with Galligan & Chesterman's concerns.⁵⁴ In fact he argues that these types of policies, examined in his chapter detailing the thrust of social policy in the era of 'Deakenite nation building', acted to strengthen the 'imagined Australian community'.⁵⁵ This would appear to place him at

expound their theory of how such legislation forge negative types of citizenship, in, "Citizenship, and its Denial in Our Federal State", in *Citizenship in Australia: Democracy, Law, & Society*, Davis, (ed.), pp. 171-188.

⁵⁰ For a recent recounting of this aspect of Australia's past see, Keith Windschuttle, *The White Australia Policy: race and shame in the Australian history wars*, Macleay Press, Sydney, 2004, pp. 14-16.

⁵¹ T. Clarke & B. Galligan, p. 524, the author's examine the fundamental role that exclusionary legislation played in defining the parameters of Australian citizenship. They include the ways in which Australian Aborigines were excluded from formal citizenship rights. The authors also examine the ways in which other groups were discriminated against on the basis of racial difference, in, " 'Aboriginal Native' and the Institutional Construction of the Australian Citizen 1901-48", *Australian Historical Studies*, vol. 26, October, 1995, no. 105, pp. 523-543.

⁵² See Jordens for a discussion of the ways in which a national identity was based upon the types of persons it discriminated against, see pp. 1-24, in *Redefining Australians: Immigration, Citizenship and National Identity*.

⁵³ Birrell, *A Nation of our own: Citizenship and Nation-building in Federation Australia*, p. 12. Also see Hancock, in, *Australia*, pp. 61-63, for further examples of ideas similar to Birrell's regarding the White Australia policy, and in particular their interpretation of Deakin's opinions within this context.

⁵⁴ *ibid*, p. 196.

⁵⁵ *ibid*, p. 196.

odds with Galligan and Chesterman in some regards. In some respects Birrell is saying that the exclusion of certain categories and types of people from Australian citizenship policies assisted in defining the Australian nation that was being imagined.

There is also another major site of contention that connects with several of the predominant ideas expressed by Kim Rubenstein, albeit from an oblique angle, in regard to the issue of the identity and composition of citizenship in Australian history. Several of Rubenstein's concerns align with those who have expressed doubts over how significant features which have been proclaimed to characterise and represent citizenship in Australia, have in actuality proven to be. Some scholars question the extent to which the franchise, which is frequently and commonly considered to be the fulcrum of citizenship status, actually accords with a strong connection to citizenship rights. Several authors have argued from a feminist perspective and queried whether the franchise rights of the Australian constitution were as emancipatory as many claim.⁵⁶ Others have pointed out that the right to vote has not dramatically improved the socio-economic position, nor the social status of Australian Aborigines.⁵⁷ In this context Dodson ponders whether the traditional Western concepts of citizenship rights are able to meet the demands of all the groups who comprise the Australian settlement. In light of the demonstrable disproportion of wealth and life opportunities experienced by indigenous Aborigines in comparison with mainstream Australia, there is a basic challenge to the conceptualisation of citizenship ideas within Australia.

One episode which highlights the potential complexities, as well as anomalies, involves the life of the Aboriginal artist, Albert Namatjira.⁵⁸ As an Australian Aboriginal living

⁵⁶ J. Roe, "Chivalry and social policy in the Antipodes", in White & Russell, (eds), *Memories & Dreams: Reflections on 20th Century Australia*, pp. 3-19. Also see M. Lake, "Personality, Individuality, Nationality: Feminist Conceptions of Citizenship 1902-1940", in *Australian Feminist Studies*, No. 19, Autumn, 1994, pp. 25-38. In this article discusses the situation whereby franchise rights alone were not sufficient to ensure that the full range of hopes and needs expressed by women were met.

⁵⁷ Dodson, pp. 215-216, "First Fleets and Citizenships: The Citizenship Status of Indigenous Peoples in Post-Colonial Australia", Davis, (ed.), *Citizenship in Australia: Democracy, Law and Society*, pp. 191-223. Davidson also addresses the problem, whereby the right to vote, did not alleviate the many difficulties facing Aborigines and their attempts to attain full citizen rights, pp. 191-196, *From Subject to Citizen: Australian Citizenship in the Twentieth Century*.

⁵⁸ J. T. Wells, and M. F. Christie, "Namatjira and the Burden of Citizenship", in *Australian Historical Studies*, vol. 31, no. 114, April 2000, pp. 110-130.

during the 1950s, Namatjira's art was providing him with both fame and wealth. He was however, not entitled to basic citizenship rights. This juxtaposition between his burgeoning reputation in the art world, and his denial of basic rights, attracted public and media attention, that led to Namatjira being granted citizenship status in 1957 when he was left off the Register of wards.⁵⁹ This left him free of the restrictions of the laws, which drew from the Welfare Ordinance (NT) of 1953.⁶⁰ One effect of this was that Namatjira was able to purchase and consume alcohol. When he was charged and jailed for breaching the Licensing Ordinance 1957 (NT), after supplying liquor to a fellow artist who was still a ward,⁶¹ the complexities and contradictions that are endemic features of citizenship in Australia were dramatically portrayed.

SUMMARY

As can be seen in these conflicting viewpoints provoked by official definitions and formal legislation, there is considerable room for debate as to what citizenship means or represents in this country. Various discrepancies prevail over a variety of understandings of citizenship. One of the major reasons why this upsurge of interest is important is that the divisions in opinion reflect issues that run from the heart of European settlement, to the present day Australian nation. At the forefront of these are the political development of the nation, and the questions involving citizenship. This thesis will now present a 'vernacular' understanding of citizenship, shaped from informal and popular ideas, that has developed in the imaginings of mainstream Australia.

⁵⁹ *ibid*, p. 120.

⁶⁰ *ibid*, p. 118.

⁶¹ *ibid*, p. 121.

CHAPTER THREE

Introduction-‘Vernacular Citizenship’ and Australian History

In light of the ideas and conjecture summarised in Chapter Two, it is apparent that the topics of 'citizenship', and 'citizens' are of particular pertinence to debates and discussions involving the political and social circumstances within Australia as the twenty first century gathers momentum. While a range of commentators have discussed the parameters of Australian citizenship as defined by the wording, or in some cases the omissions, of the Australian Constitution, as well as Federal and State government legislation, comparatively little has been written about citizenship outside of these legal categories and legislative domains. The summary of academic approaches discussed in Chapter Two clearly illustrates that the focus of the 'citizenship debates' in Australia has concentrated on the 'formal', 'legal' and 'substantive' aspects of government legislation.¹ Chapter Three will present the category of 'vernacular citizenship', and explain why this popular conceptualisation of citizenship ideas explicitly challenges several of the major points of discussion raised within Chapter Two.

‘VERNACULAR CITIZENSHIP’

Chapter Three will establish a basis for discussing the terms 'citizen' and 'citizenship' in Australian history. This task is more problematic than it first appears, as it involves the fundamental question of whether or not the topics of 'citizens' and 'citizenship' in Australia are even valid to begin with. For many commentators the notion of an Australian citizenship existing in the Federation era, or before, is anomalous. The bulk of opinion contends that citizenship did not exist, in any meaningful sense, prior to the *Nationality and Citizenship Act 1948 (Cth)*. This approach is presented in this statement, "Startling as it may seem, Australian citizenship is only fifty years old. For a country approaching its centenary of federation, why is it that we have only been citizens for just

¹ This point of view which considers there are more dimensions to citizenship in Australia than legal and institutional matters is also made by Galligan & Roberts, *Australian Citizenship*, p. 3.

over half of this time?"²

From this position, that holds that there was no such thing as 'citizenship' in Australia before Federation, there is only a short distance to the conclusion that 'citizens' could not have existed either. This is succinctly expressed in this quotation, "Citizens are a central unit of society, but it was not until 1949 that there was any such thing as an Australian citizen. To this time Australians were either British subjects-and subjects and aliens are quite different things-or they were aliens."³

In light of these comments, it would seem anyone arguing that there were 'Australian citizens' prior to the *Nationality and Citizenship Act 1948 (Cth)*., would be flying in the face of common sense.⁴ Quotations such as, "Nor did Federation create the Australian citizen, since the Constitution did not mention citizenship and Australians were to remain British subjects until 1949..."⁵, convey a heavy certitude. These ideas, and the evidence brandished in support of them, form a substantial basis upon which one might very well argue a contrary position. Drawing upon these widely accepted propositions, it is possible to dispute the existence of Australian citizenship, and conclude that the issues involving citizens are of questionable importance at best, in the wider context of Australian history.

The vexatious nature of this rudimentary question concerning the validity of the subjects of 'citizens' and 'citizenship' in Australian history, runs to the heart of the 'citizenship' debates generally, and the contentions of this paper more specifically. For, in confronting these fundamental points of debate, it is apparent that concise answers are not easily discernable, nor readily attained. As this thesis has acknowledged, the definitions and understanding of the words 'citizen' and 'citizenship' are suffused with ideas and opinions, and subject to multiple interpretations. If one searches back into the historical past of Australian history, it swiftly becomes apparent that there are no simple

² Kim Rubenstein & L. Halonkin, p. xiii, Introduction to Rubenstein, (ed.), *Individual, Community, Nation: Fifty Years of Australian Citizenship*, pp. xiii-xxiii.

³ L. Jayasuriya, p. 93, "Citizens", in Nile, (ed.), *Australian Civilisation*, pp. 93-109.

⁴ Galligan & Roberts, state a bold contrary position, see, *Australian Citizenship*, pp. 8-9.

⁵ G. Zappala and S. Castles, "Citizenship and Immigration in Australia", pp. 32-33, in T. A., Aleininkoff & D. Klusmeyer, (eds), *From Migrants To Citizens: Membership in a Changing World*, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Washington DC, 2000, pp. 32-81.

solutions to these areas of conjecture.

To emphasise the vagaries of this situation, if one leafs through the historical records of Australian history, one may spot a range of references to 'citizens' or 'citizenship'.⁶ An archival search launched via conventional indexes, and driven by the key words 'citizen' and 'citizenship' might produce anything from papers on the, "Civic Pride Society of Australia"⁷, an organisation devoted to the task of raising "the civic pride of Australian Citizens". Or, "The Call to the People Of Australia"⁸ newsletters, which aimed to promote sentiments antithetical to socialist doctrines. In many respects these references denote a cursory and random selection of characteristics. The sporadic nature of their appearances, as well as the diversity of material they represent, lends support to those who are sceptical of Australian citizenship.

As a further example, if one reads the literature of late 19th and early 20th century Australia, it is also apparent that the words 'citizen' and 'citizenship', appear in a variety of divergent guises. A useful instance of the various applications of the terms may be found in Joseph Furphy's, *Such Is Life*, where they are used in quite disparate contexts. On one occasion, 'citizen' is used to refer to a character's place of residence, "Cooper was an entire stranger to me, but as he stoutly contended that Hay and Deniliquin were in Port Phillip, I inferred him to be a citizen of the mother colony."⁹ While later on there is a jocular reference by the narrator, Tom Collins, at the expense of another character, 'Mosey'. He says, "Mosey would have our cities resemble ancient Athens, in respect of having more public statues than living citizens."¹⁰

These examples offer reinforcement to those who are sceptical of the existence of

⁶ Irving makes similar points about the 'popular usage' of the words, 'citizens' and 'citizenship', see, pp. 10-13, "Citizenship before 1949", in, Rubenstein, (ed.), *Individual, Community, Nation: Fifty Years of Australian Citizenship*, pp. 9-20. See also, Irving, *To Constitute a Nation: A Cultural History of Australia's Constitution*, p. 58.

⁷ "Civic Pride Society Papers", Civic Pride Society Of Australia, N.S.W. Division, 1st Annual Report, Mitchell Library Archives, State Library of New South Wales, A3978.

⁸ "Call To The People Of Australia", Newsletters, No. 1-12, 1955, Mitchell Library Archives, State Library of New South Wales, A4971.

⁹ John Barnes (ed.), *Joseph Furphy, Such is Life, stories, verse, essays and letters*, University of Queensland Press, Queensland, 1988, p. 3.

¹⁰ *ibid*, p. 28.

citizenship in Australia prior to the arrival of the *Australian Citizenship Act 1948* in 1949. If one peruses the historical record, the words 'citizen' and 'citizenship' are freely scattered through out public discourse in the time that leads to Federation.¹¹ It would seem reasonable from this perspective to contend that the random application of the words, 'citizen' and 'citizenship', while prevalent across historiographical sources, offer little substantial evidence of their influence in Australian society.

In this light, it is understandable that this evidence is used to argue that these references represent the fragmented and misunderstood application of the words in this era. And that this lack of knowledge exemplifies their inconsequential influence on the historical record. These passages expose the problematic nature of 'citizens' and 'citizenship' in Australian history, demonstrating the potential travails associated with the search for clues of both the existence, as well as the nature of, Australian citizenship during this era pre-dating Federation. It might even be interpreted as representing convincing proof of the topic's fatuousness.

SOURCES OF 'VERNACULAR CITIZENSHIP': THEIR PLACE IN THE IMAGINING OF MATTERS POLITICAL IN COLONIAL AUSTRALIA

However, amongst the references to 'citizens' and 'citizenship' in Furphy's novel are other clues supporting arguments for, not just their existence in the historical record, but also their deeper relevance to the history of Australian political and social life. In adopting such an approach it is worthwhile considering these ideas of Alan Atkinson:

Dwelling on the history of imagination makes a difference to the shape of Australian history. It seems as a result that behaviour can have its inspiration in imagery more than in logic, in single words and sentences- in snatches of language-more than in any train of reasoning.¹²

In a similar fashion, this thesis pursues these diverse references located in the various pieces of writing, as well as spoken words, which appear across the historical landscape of Australia between the mid to late 1840s up to Federation. And it is convinced that the

¹¹ Irving discusses the 'popular usage' of the terms citizen and citizenship in Australia during the 1890's, see, pp. 10-13, "Citizenship before 1949", in, Rubenstein, (ed.), *Individual, Community, Nation: Fifty Years of Australian Citizenship*, pp. 9-20.

¹² Atkinson, *The Europeans in Australia: A History. Volume Two: Democracy*, p. xv.

references to citizens and citizenship, both explicit and implicit, share thematic similarities that allow one to label them as examples of ‘vernacular citizenship’. As this name implies, ‘vernacular citizenship’ is comprised of these various ‘common’ and ‘popular’ ideas and ideals that can be spotted amidst the sources of Australian historiography. This thesis pursues the premise that ‘vernacular citizenship’ is highly significant because it tells us something important about the development of this nation, and the manner in which its political identity was imagined.

It will be argued that the multifarious references to citizenship offer evidence of both the manner, and ways, in which a political consciousness was evolving in colonial Australia. Atkinson has written about the way democracy was being ‘imagined’ in colonial Australia in these terms:

It represented a great shift in common imagination and common ties. Democracy was most obviously a phenomenon of the 1850s but by my understanding it had gradually taken root in Australian minds (even including minds for whom the word ‘democracy’ was anathema) during several decades beforehand.¹³

In a similar spirit this thesis will illustrate how the imagining of democracy in this country, was substantially shaped by a collection of informal ideas and values equated with ‘citizenship’ and the identity of ‘citizens’. These various references, which appeared across a varied cross section of the discourse of colonial and pre Federation Australia, demonstrate the manner in which significant portions of the process of ‘imagining’ the contours of the body politic took shape.

To support this hypothesis a divergent selection of sources will be analysed. Textual offerings from the Sydney based publications of the mid 1840s and early 1850s, the *Citizen* and the *People’s Advocate*, as well as the speeches of Daniel Deniehy will be examined. As will texts penned by W.G. Spence, Rolfe Boldrewood and Joseph Furphy which were published between the late 1880’s and the early years of Federation. Each reflects alternative facets of the circumstances and times in which they emerged,

¹³ Atkinson, *The Europeans in Australia: A History. Volume Two: Democracy*, p. xiv.

representing a diverse range of discourse. For instance, the *Citizen* and the *People's Advocate* were produced in metropolitan Sydney during the mid 1850s. Whilst the texts penned by Spence, Boldrewood and Furphy were either inspired by, or reflected images of the goldfields, and settlements of rural and outback Australia that extended beyond the metropolitan capitals, in the years preceding Federation.

To begin with, examples from the press of the mid to late 1840s and early 1850s will be examined, with the focus on the *Citizen* and the *People's Advocate*. These publications offer rich material of the role that informal notions of citizenship played in fomenting understandings of democracy in the incipient Australian nation and shaping a political consciousness. These sources illustrate how the understanding of political matters in this era were characterised by their 'popular' nature. For instance, the distribution of the *Citizen* and the *People's Advocate* amongst the population of colonial Australia demonstrates the ways and means by which ideas were expansively circulated through significant portions of the colonial community.

When the history of these publications is examined more closely later in this chapter, it will become apparent that they aimed to attract the readership of the broader reaches of the population. Both the *Citizen* and the *People's Advocate* sought a readership outside of the upper and middle class domains which traditionally had offered the widest market of potential readers. They directed their attention to the manual labourers and artisans who had not previously gained the educational opportunities, nor the income or leisure time, required to access such sources.

In a similar vein, the *Citizen* and the *People's Advocate* devoted their attention to matters of special relevance to these sections of the population. The informal ideas involving 'citizenship' and 'citizen's rights and responsibilities', were implicitly sketched in a form that reflected the intellectual and social characteristics of the local community. These circumstances fostered an environment fallow for the sowing of the concepts that comprised 'vernacular citizenship'.

To further bolster this proposition that a bundle of influential ideas categorised as 'vernacular citizenship', were sufficiently popular to have permeated throughout colonial society, some examples from different periods and alternative sources will be used. The

first offers selections from the speeches of Daniel Deniehy in the 1850s. As one of the most influential politicians of his age, his speeches contain several informal references to 'citizens' and 'citizenship'. In examining these and the context in which they arise, it is possible to discern an outline of the conceptualisation of citizenship that was developing at this time in colonial Australia. Some of the ideas expressed in Deniehy's speeches reflected the predominant themes woven through the *Citizen* and the *People's Advocate*. These ideas were so 'popular' they were espoused not just in widely available publications, but also by one of the more prominent politicians of the day.

To further explore these contentions, this thesis will refer to the thoughts of another prominent political figure of the pre and early Federation era. Excerpts from W.G. Spence's text *Australia's Awakening: Thirty Years in the Life of an Australian Agitator*, will be analysed. They support the proposition that a collection of ideas derived from various political tracts and social philosophies, augmented with a smattering of values hewn from the local social and intellectual milieu, had developed into an inchoate form of informal ideas which comprised 'vernacular citizenship'.

The discourse of Deniehy and Spence show how this influential continuum of ideas constituting 'vernacular citizenship', continued to develop in the time leading into Federation. The fact that these sources are connected by a thematic similarity of ideas forms one of the predominant themes of this thesis. In drawing upon printed publications, political speeches and popular novels, it is possible to propose that these themes were representative of a considerable movement of 'popular' ideas and thought within colonial and early Federation Australia. In this way, the imagining of 'citizenship' in the incipient Australian nation was shaped as much by 'bottom up' forces as it was by 'top down' imperatives.¹⁴

However, these various textual and oratorical offerings are not intended to represent an exhaustive selection, nor a conclusive compilation of source material. Nor do they comprise a collection of data representing the whole nation's thoughts and beliefs. It is impossible to ascertain the exact distribution of printed matter within the colonial

¹⁴ This issue is examined by Roberts see p. 17, "The Politics of Federation", *Melbourne Journal of Politics*, Vo.27, 200-2001, pp. 8-25.

communities, particularly one as geographically scattered as Australia. In some ways the eclectic nature of the material used in this thesis reflects the characteristics of these various references to citizenship which are dotted over the historical record. The fragments which this thesis draws upon to assert its arguments have been extracted from a rich and diverse array of colonial discourse.

CLASSICAL CONNECTIONS

In introducing the idea of an 'informal Australian citizenship', characterised by its 'vernacular' nature, it is important to outline several important points. Firstly it will be argued that 'citizenship', as it has been understood in its Australian context, is intimately connected with 'classical Western traditions of citizenship' that have been developed over many centuries.¹⁵ In turn it can be argued that these have been derived in large part from the 'classical Western traditions' of thought and learning explored in Chapter One.

These ideas associated with citizenship have been hewn from the same sources that have delivered the major advances in thought and reason that have shaped the 'Western intellectual traditions.' Including of course the impetus provided by the European Enlightenment. As such there exists an important intellectual pathway of ideas and notions that have crossed continents and time. These 'classical traditions' have evolved over time, and stand as an example of how 'vernacular citizenship' has developed in similar ways over the course of Australian history.

On this basis one can argue that some of these classical notions regarding 'citizens' and 'citizenship' have played influential roles in the formation of Australian political life. One can extend this argument to claim that it may not be completely accurate to postulate that 'citizenship' has either been non-existent, or, inconsequential, in the time leading up to the arrival of the *Australian Citizenship Act 1948*. In a similar vein these examples represent the circumstances in which 'citizens' can be argued to have been in existence in the time preceding the formal events of Federation. As a result, there exists a flaw in

¹⁵ Pocock, p. 29, "The Ideal of the Citizen Since Classical Times", in Beiner, (ed.), *Theorizing Citizenship*, pp. 29-52.

those assessments of citizenship in Australia which are based solely or predominantly upon the evidence provided by the Commonwealth Constitution, as well as the legal and substantive issues covered by government legislation and policies. It can be concluded that this validates the conviction that 'citizens' and 'citizenship' were therefore active and influential entities prior to the *Australian Citizenship Act 1948*.

In arguing for the existence of a 'vernacular citizenship' dating back to, and beyond the early Federation period in Australian history, there is an implicit challenge to those who are critical of the lack of explicit definitions, or documentation of, the rights of citizens. This confronts fundamental elements of the 'Davidson thesis', which queries the existence of 'citizens', and the relevance of 'citizenship', in the broader sweep of Australian history. The essence of vernacular citizenship' originates from a body of ideas and values, in existence prior to the writing of the constitution and continuing to develop after Federation. It will be argued that they flourished, in spite of the lack of explicit formal attention paid to them, as well as the comparatively minimal legal weight added to these informal dimensions. Furthermore I would argue that the informal qualities that bear many of the characteristic features of 'vernacular citizenship' have formed an influential strand of the evolving political consciousness of the Australian nation.

EARLY EXAMPLES OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF 'VERNACULAR CITIZENSHIP'

"Ideas And Words" – The *Citizen* And The *People's Advocate*

This section will argue that the basis of 'vernacular citizenship' can be readily identified well before Federation. To support this contention, the Sydney publications, the *Citizen* which was published for the first time in 1846, as well as the *People's Advocate* which emerged in 1848, will be examined. The pool of ideas and values which they espoused represented key features that figured prominently in the development of 'vernacular citizenship'. Many of these were derived from various political philosophies and social theories¹⁶ that were in circulation at the time. This section will examine some of these major ideas, exploring their identities and heritage, as well as gauging their influence. In

¹⁶ As Melleuish and Stokes discuss, the newspaper publications of the 1840s and 1850s provided a public forum for the distribution and discussion of political matters and ideas see, pp. 116-118, in "Australian Political Thought", Hudson & Bolton (eds), *Creating Australia*, pp. 106-121.

assessing their impact, it is necessary to point out that some of these conceptualisations were stretched into particular shapes that fitted the evolving colonial settlement in which they were developing. One aspect of this involved the political dimensions associated with citizenship being supplemented by a range of beliefs and ideals, including social mores and folkloric sentiments, derived from the contemporary milieu.

The reasons for selecting these two publications covering the period of the late 1840s to early 1850s include the recognition that Alan Atkinson gives when he says, “Democracy was most obviously a phenomenon of the 1850s...”¹⁷ This period is commonly connected with seminal political developments¹⁸, as well as democratic advancement in the colonial era.¹⁹ By 1856, New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, and Tasmania would have their own Constitutions. Queensland would have its own by 1859, and Western Australia would be self governing by 1890. The movement of the colonies towards independent parliamentary rule established institutions responsible for addressing the major issues of the time. This reformative drive delivered a range of democratic advances, including adult male suffrage, voting rights for some women, the emergence of Labor parties and the secret ballot. The Enlightenment provided a major intellectual impetus to these developments. Its influence is most apparent in its inherent challenge to existing authority and dogmas, and its championing of the rights of equal representation, which drove political and social reform.²⁰ As such it is insightful to observe the role that these two publications, peppered with various references relating to the informal conceptualisation of citizens and citizenship, played in this pivotal era.

¹⁷ Atkinson, *The Europeans in Australia: A History. Volume Two: Democracy*, Oxford University Press, Victoria Australia, 2004, p. xiv.

¹⁸ A. Coote, p. 2, “Imagining a Colonial Nation: The Development of Popular Concepts of Sovereignty and Nation in New South Wales with particular Reference to the Period between 1856 and 1860”, *The Journal of Australian Colonial History*, Vol. 1, No. 1, April 1999, pp. 1-37. See also Hirst, *The Strange Birth of Colonial Democracy: New South Wales 1848-1884*. Michael Roe has nominated the time between 1835 and 1851 as being a time of seminal time for political activism, see, pp. 88-102, *Quest For Authority In Eastern Australia 1835-1851*.

¹⁹ Atkinson, *The Europeans in Australia: A History. Volume Two: Democracy*, pp. 353-254. Another example of the primacy associated with the period concerns the development of national identity, see C.S. Blackton, “Australian Nationality and Nationalism, 1850-1900”, *Historical Studies Australia and New Zealand*, Vol. 9, November 1959- May 1961, pp. 351-367.

²⁰ John Gascoigne has commented that during the time from 1788 to 1850 the major developments in ‘European Australia’ were taking form, *The Enlightenment and the Origins of European Australia*, The Press Syndicate of the University of Cambridge, United Kingdom, 2002, p. 169.

As well as proving attractive for these reasons alone, the trail of evidence that this era throws up also draws attention on other accounts. I refer to Atkinson again to acknowledge a point he makes in relation to the subject of ‘democracy in this time’. He has written, “...but by my understanding it had gradually taken root in Australian minds (even including minds for whom the word ‘democracy’ was anathema) during several decades beforehand.”²¹

Whilst this era marks a convenient starting spot to begin this pursuit of the topics of citizens and citizenship, it was not chosen with the intention of representing any particular defining moment in Australian political history. As Atkinson suggests, many of these prominent ideas which came to the fore within this epoch were in circulation well before this point in time. By perusing both the *Citizen* and the *People’s Advocate* it is possible to seek out these ideas, and analyse the impact of ‘vernacular citizenship’ on colonial imaginings. One of the benefits of analysing the paper’s²² is that they contain details of the fecund political culture that was developing within the Australian colonies at this time.

Whilst they were printed in Sydney, it is likely that their influence extended beyond the city’s boundaries, with the postal system abetting the distribution of newspapers and periodicals beyond metropolitan centres.²³ The *Advocate* was eager to advertise its reach, stating it was:

“...now found in every quarter of the far interior, as well as in the more populous towns. In the wilds of New England, on the banks of the Murrumbidgee; amid the squatting stations of Moreton Bay and the Burnett district; on the plains of Maneroo, in the golden regions of Turon, the Aralaein and the Ovens...”²⁴

While such enthusiasm might be expected of a journal ‘spruiking’ its circulation figures,

²¹ Atkinson, *The Europeans in Australia: A History. Volume Two: Democracy*, p. xiv.

²² Andrew Messner, p. 64, “Contesting Chartism from afar: Edward Hawksley and the *People’s Advocate*”, *Journal of Australian Colonial History*, Vol. 1, No. 1, April, 1999, pp. 62-94.

²³ Coote, p. 12, “Imagining a Colonial Nation: The Development of Popular Concepts of Sovereignty and Nation in New South Wales with particular Reference to the Period between 1856 and 1860”.

²⁴ *People’s Advocate*, December 24, 1852, p. 8.

it is probable that the *People's Advocate*²⁵ and the *Citizen* were able to reach significant expanses of the colonial population. While it is difficult to table figures which indisputably quantify such reach, it is less contentious to point out the probability that such organs contributed to a broadening of the colonial mind beyond the limitations of their circulation figures. It is probable that the ideas they raised emerged in the conversations of those who may not have read the contents themselves. Newspapers and periodicals could be swapped and borrowed,²⁶ as well as read by multiple readers within the premises of 'Mechanics Institutes and Schools of Arts'.²⁷ One may consider these publications as reservoirs of ideas which distributed political philosophies and ideas advocating advanced social policies throughout the colonial population. These notions contributed to a burgeoning stream of ideas which would, over time, flow through the awareness of the greater mainstream colonial population.²⁸

It is beneficial to refer to Anne Coote to support the contention that the *Citizen* and the *People's Advocate* shaped the political imagination of the wider community outside of Sydney. She addresses the role that newspapers played in the moulding of a shared consciousness within the colonial community,²⁹ referring to Benedict Anderson's exposition of the role that the printed word plays in the development of imagined

²⁵ Paul A. Pickering, " 'The Oak of English Liberty': Popular Constitutionalism in New South Wales 1848-1856", pp. 6-7, *Journal of Australian Colonial History*, Vol.3, No. 1, April, 1999, pp. 1-27.

²⁶ See R. B. Walker, *The Newspaper Press in New South Wales, 1803-1920*, p. 246. Also, Coote, "Imagining a Colonial Nation: The Development of Popular Concepts of Sovereignty and Nation in New South Wales with particular Reference to the Period between 1856 and 1860", pp. 12-13.

²⁷ Coote, "Imagining a Colonial Nation: The Development of Popular Concepts of Sovereignty and Nation in New South Wales with particular Reference to the Period between 1856 and 1860", p.13. Geoffrey Blainey writes of the way that information was exchanged through public meeting houses, through either the sharing of newspapers and other publications, or conversation, *Black Kettle and Full Moon: Daily Life in a Vanished Australia*, Viking an imprint of Penguin Books, Australia, 2003, pp. 336-339. Nadel's account of the 'Founding of the Sydney Mechanics' School of Arts' provides an insight into the role that such institutions played in providing the opportunities for reading and the sharing of information, see pp. 111-142, *Australia's Colonial Culture: Ideas, Men and Institutions in Mid-Nineteenth Century Eastern Australia*. See also Roberts, "The Politics of Federation", *Melbourne Journal of Politics*, Vol.27, 200-2001, pp. 8-25, and Galligan & Roberts, "The People's Constitution?", *The New Federalist: The Journal of Australian Federation History*, No. 5, June 2000, pp. 87-90.

²⁸ Picker has also written of the part that a vibrant local press played in encouraging political expression in the colonial years, see p. 184, " 'A Nation is governed by all that has tongue in the nation': Newspapers and Political Expression in Colonial Sydney, 1852", *Journal of Australian Studies*, No. 62., 1999, pp. 184-189.

²⁹ Atkinson also discusses the role that newspapers played during this era in disseminating information, but also how they engendered and developed layers of understanding within the colonial community, *The Europeans in Australia: A History. Volume Two: Democracy*, pp. 212-219.

communities.³⁰ Coote nominates the growth of the Sydney newspaper market as being significant in generating a sense of community extending beyond, what she describes as the 'localism' characteristic of rural communities between the late 1830s and the late 1850s.³¹

The *Citizen* and the *People's Advocate*, acted as conduits of informal ideas and implicit values related to citizenship. The content of these publications were instrumental in developing 'vernacular citizenship'. 'Vernacular citizenship' can be understood as being a vessel of ideas shaped by ideas emanating from the fundamental traditions of 'classical theories' of citizenship. Upon this bedrock, a range of ideas and notions were layered, representing a popular conceptualisation of citizenship in mainstream Australia. A close analysis of the *Citizen* and the *People's Advocate* shows how 'vernacular citizenship' developed.

THE CITIZEN AND THE PEOPLE'S ADVOCATE

On Saturday the 29th of August 1846, the *Citizen* appeared on the streets of Sydney for the first time. Its mast-head proclaimed it to be, "A Weekly Paper of Politics, Literature, Science and the Arts."³² Beneath its title ran this creed, "Being a CITIZEN OF THE WORLD I BLAME NO MAN FOR HIS ATTACHMENT TO THE PLACE OF HIS BIRTH, HIS POLITICS, OR HIS RELIGION".³³ This motto introduces the predominant themes which link these publications with the development of 'vernacular citizenship'.

The *Citizen* was not afraid to voice its principles. Much of its content consisted of ideas and ideals considered to represent desirable characteristics of citizens and citizenship in this era. It extolled policies conducive to the creation of an environment in which their brand of citizenship would flourish. Much of this discourse was couched in informal references to either the identity and conduct of citizens, or the expression of ideas that implicitly defined the outlines of citizenship in this era. Some of the references were

³⁰ Coote, "Imagining a Colonial Nation: The Development of Popular Concepts of Sovereignty and Nation in New South Wales with particular Reference to the Period between 1856 and 1860", p. 7.

³¹ Coote, p. 6. Winsome Roberts has also explored the development of a nationalist sentiment during this period, "The Politics of Federation", *Melbourne Journal of Politics*, Vo.27, 200-2001, pp. 8-25.

³² *Citizen*, August 29, 1846, No. 1, Vol.1, p. 1.

³³ *ibid*, p. 1.

quite direct, with entreaties for ‘citizens’ to involve themselves in particular campaigns. Others were less explicit, but conveyed substantial information in regard to the development of ‘vernacular citizenship’.

The second major theme carried in its motto concerned the intellectual origins of these major ideas carried by the *Citizen*. As it announced, the *Citizen* intended to speak from a position of ‘Enlightenment’³⁴, or more literally from the perspective of a ‘citizen of the world’. The substance of these ideas had been largely distilled from the ideas of such Enlightenment figures as Mill, Kant, Paine, Rousseau and others, who argued for the advance of intellectual thought and reasoning to overturn historical tyrannies. The authority of traditional powers was to be scrutinised and challenged, as were the theories and dogmas ‘propping up’ the status quo. Optimism pervaded the drive to deliver a better world. To precipitate this, the ‘citizen’ should ideally be sufficiently ‘educated’ and ‘enlightened’³⁵ to allow a perspective untainted by prejudicial hostilities and ‘small-minded’ chauvinism. A ‘citizen of the world’ was required to be sufficiently wise and learned to ensure that the oppression and discrimination of yesteryear would not be repeated.³⁶ This perspective represented the ‘progressive’ and ‘enlightened’ ideas launched by such publications, that both reflected, as well nurtured, the developing intellectual milieu of this time.

The *Citizen* consciously sought to remove itself from the traditional strictures of thought associated with tyranny, violence and historical failures. This stance reflected the movement in Europe towards removing the *ancien regime*. There, Enlightenment values of reason and natural law had sparked the light of liberalism, investing individuals with moral autonomy. It sought to grapple with the issues responsible for the contamination

³⁴ Gascoigne has discerned the more pronounced influence of the English Enlightenment upon colonial Australia, writing, “...the Enlightenment, in its English speaking guise, took a more moderate form than the more adversarial, and therefore more conspicuous, French Enlightenment.” see, *The Enlightenment and the Origins of European Australia*, p. 7. David Malouf has written of similar ideas, citing the example provided by the, “...the language of the English and Scottish Enlightenment: sober, unemphatic, good-humoured; a very sociable and moderate language, modern in a way that even we would recognise, and supremely rational and down to Earth.”, in, “Made in England: Australia’s British Inheritance”, *Quarterly Essay*, p. 46.

³⁵ Atkinson, *The Europeans in Australia: A History. Volume One: The Beginning*, pp. ix-xviii.

³⁶ Atkinson, *The Europeans in Australia: A History. Volume Two: Democracy*, pp. 255-257.

of the freedom of individuals, promoting the rights of free speech and political franchise. With this objective of shaping the future, the *Citizen* sought social and political transformation. These features formed the fundamental intellectual and moral hall marks that would characterise ‘vernacular citizenship’. As we peruse the contents of the *Citizen*, it is possible to understand how these principles were sketched into an outline of implicit characteristics of citizenship within its pages.

Before we visit the key themes which formed ‘vernacular citizenship’, their place in the intellectual milieu of the time is emphasised by their prominence within the *Citizen*. In retrospect, the *Citizen* seems self consciously sophisticated, proudly bearing across its mast-head the determination to focus upon, “politics, literature, science and the arts”. However, the interest in these topics was representative of the progressive intellectual directions of this era, most particularly the advance of these Enlightenment ideas.³⁷ These areas of intellectual investigation were believed to be at the forefront of advanced thought at this time, and were also considered to form compatible pieces of this newspaper’s aims. The prime position of political thought in this paradigm reflects how the ideas of ‘vernacular citizenship’, formed the focal point within this eminent network of ideas. The history of the *Citizen* and the *People’s Advocate*, presents the major reasons why this significant collection of ideas and values, were spread throughout the broad reaches of colonial society. Some of the major reasons can be uncovered by examining the readership, and the aims of these publications.

THE CITIZEN AND THE PEOPLE’S ADVOCATE: READERSHIP AND AIMS

Readership

The *Citizen’s* proprietors hoped that the papers price of two pence, “...a cost so moderate as to be accessible to all- even to the poorest man- in the whole community”³⁸, would help to attract a wide audience. In particular, the numbers of artisans and manual labourers. Its first edition on December 2, 1848, it announced, “This Newspaper, it is intended, shall be devoted principally to advocating the interests of the great masses of the People:- the men by whose Labour and ingenuity the social fabric is upheld, and

³⁷ Roe, *Quest For Authority In Eastern Australia 1835-1851*, pp. 147-150.

³⁸ *Citizen*, August 29, 1846, No.1, Vol. 1, p. 1.

firmly knit together.”³⁹

It is interesting to note that the *People's Advocate*, launched two years later, sought a similar readership to the *Citizen*⁴⁰. Though its publishers, Francis Cunninghame and Edward John Hawksley have drawn much attention because of their support of the “Constitutional Association”⁴¹ and their lobbying for that movement’s Chartist platform⁴², this thesis is interested in the *People's Advocate*⁴³ for a number of other reasons.⁴⁴ Examples from this publication will supplement the argument that these sources played key roles in shaping and disseminating citizenship ideas.⁴⁵ They also allow us to trace the similarities, in both the audience that the *Citizen* and the *People's Advocate* sought, as well as the issues which they pursued.

It is instructive to reflect upon the objectives of the original publishers of the *Citizen*, William Vernon and William Kennedy.⁴⁶ They sought to, ‘improve the moral and social

³⁹ *People's Advocate*, December 2, 1848, Vol. 1, No. 1, p. 12.

⁴⁰ Roe addresses the arrival of the *People's Advocate*, and its appeal to the working class, *Quest For Authority In Eastern Australia 1835-1851*, p. 96.

⁴¹ McKenna, *The Captive Republic: A History of Republicanism in Australia, 1788-1996*, pp. 42-43.

⁴² Walker, *The Newspaper Press in New South Wales, 1803-1920*, p. 41. Also see, Roe, *Quest For Authority In Eastern Australia 1835-1851*, McKenna, *The Captive Republic: A History of Republicanism in Australia, 1788-1996*, pp. 42-43, and Hirst, *The Strange Birth of Colonial Democracy: New South Wales 1848-1884*, pp. 3-4, and A.W. Martin, *Henry Parkes: A Biography*, Melbourne University Press, Victoria, 1980, pp. 50-51, as well as, Robin Gollan, p. 43, “Nationalism and Politics in Australia before 1855”, *The Australian Journal of Politics and History*, Vol. 1, No. 1, November, 1955, pp. 38-48. Messner, “Contesting Chartism from afar: Edward Hawksley and the *People's Advocate*”, pp. 62-94. Pickering also explores the major role that the *People's Advocate* played as a vehicle for Chartist thought, ‘The Oak of English Liberty’: Popular Constitutionalism in New South Wales 1848-1856. Gascoigne also comments on the legacy of Chartist ideas upon the *People's Advocate*, *The Enlightenment and the Origins of European Australia*, p. 48. Nadel, *Australia's Colonial Culture: Ideas, Men and Institutions in Mid-Nineteenth Century Eastern Australia*, p. 102.

⁴³ Gollan, *Radical and Working Class Politics; A Study of Eastern Australia, 1850-1910*, Melbourne University Press in association with The Australian National university, Australia, 1967, p. 9.

⁴⁴ Messner cogently argues for a more ‘mature understanding’ of the work of Hawksley, and in particular the need for a fuller appreciation of the political matters he was immersed in. See, “Contesting Chartism from afar: Edward Hawksley and the *People's Advocate*”, *Journal of Australian Colonial History*. Pickering picks up similar themes, examining the influence of Hawksley’s *People's Advocate* in the development of the milieu of colonial politics, ‘The Oak of English Liberty’: Popular Constitutionalism in New South Wales 1848-1856.

⁴⁵ The popularity of the *People's Advocate* is supported by the claim that its circulation was second only to the *Herald* in 1849, see, Walker, *The Newspaper Press in New South Wales, 1803-1920*, p. 42.

⁴⁶ Walker, *The Newspaper Press in New South Wales, 1803-1920*, pp. 40-41. Coote also refers to circulation figures in this era, see, pp. 12-13, “Imagining a Colonial Nation: The Development of Popular

quality of the ‘humbler classes’, and they hoped to achieve this via the medium of their paper.⁴⁷ The producers of the *Citizen* and the *People’s Advocate* aimed to educate ‘the humbler classes’. This aim reflected their faith in the power of education to ‘enlighten’ the labouring classes.⁴⁸ One gets a genuine sense from reading newspapers such as the *Citizen* and the *People’s Advocate* that their aims and beliefs represented the crucial issues of the era, and that their correspondence could engineer social and political change. This belief in the power of knowledge and reason, and their capacity to educate and initiate change throughout their communities was characteristic of the evolving intellectual milieu of this time. It was one in which the Enlightenment’s optimistic faith in reason and rational thought featured.⁴⁹

MAJOR THEMES

The *Citizen’s* self characterisation reflected the most influential perceptions of the time. The milieu which nurtured these beliefs was shaped by the major intellectual ideas prevailing in Europe, which had developed over the course of the Enlightenment.⁵⁰ These ideas were tightly connected with an awareness of the turbulent social and political conditions in Europe during this time. Their importance had only been heightened by the revolutionary uprisings and unrest across Europe in 1848. If we scan the following text from the *People’s Advocate* it is possible to ascertain the pervasive influence of these ideas in colonial Australia:

We believe then that the time is at hand when the social condition of the greater mass of mankind must undergo a complete amelioration. Old systems are

Concepts of Sovereignty and Nation in New South Wales with particular Reference to the Period between 1856 and 1860”.

⁴⁷ This aim of ‘transforming the people’ through education is discussed in Hirst, *The Strange Birth of Colonial Democracy: New South Wales 1848-1884*, pp. 7-9.

⁴⁸ Roe, *Quest For Authority In Eastern Australia 1835-1851*, pp. 204-206. Nadel also writes about the popularity of the ideas associated with ‘the working man’ educating themselves during this era, see, *Australia’s Colonial Culture: Ideas, Men and Institutions in Mid-Nineteenth Century Eastern Australia*, pp. 171-180.

⁴⁹ Gascoigne, *The Enlightenment and the Origins of European Australia*, see pp. 1-15, pp. 46-50, and pp. 103-108.

⁵⁰ As Andrew Messner has discussed, journalists such as Hawksley at the *People’s Advocate* were avid readers of the world’s press, see p. 68, “Contesting Chartism from afar: Edward Hawksley and the *People’s Advocate*, *Journal Of Australian Colonial History*, Vol. 1, No. 1, April, 1999, pp. 62-94.

breaking up; on every side of us we perceive the up-heaving of the “new birth” of a fresh and more healthy state of civilization; the rights of labour are beginning to be recognised; the rights of industry are already acknowledged. The Democratic principle is making rapid strides; the strong holds of despotism have been assailed by its armed bands; and the eagles of imperial Autocrats have fled, dismayed by its triumphant shouts.⁵¹

One can evaluate the pervasiveness of these beliefs, which held that a time of monumental change, if not revolution, was close at hand, were in this era. The repeated references to newness, personified in the symbolism of a civilisation being born, exemplified the powerful imagery associated with these overtures to change. At the heart of this schema of social reform and political transformation was the rampaging figure of “The Democratic principle”, laying siege to old despotisms. This accent on the power of change and its imminent position at this point in history, informed much of the content of the *Citizen* and the *People’s Advocate*. They promoted the imperative need for a new world to be shaped so that the injustices of the old world would be overturned by the irresistible force of this ‘Democratic principle’. Within this paradigm, the figure of ‘vernacular citizenship’ casts its unmistakeable shadow. The substantial implicit references to citizenship carried in these sources represented integral features of this transformational movement. To some extent the ‘citizen’ who emerges from these reference points is synonymous with these exhortations for political and social change. Within this context, citizenship equated to an essential component of the ‘Democratic Principle’ that represented such an irrepressible and infallible source at that point in time.

Closely allied with this sense of imminent change was the belief in the power of individuals to effect these transformations through their thoughts, as well as by their actions.⁵² The poem “The Present Age and its Wants”, appeared in the *People’s Advocate*, and its contents reflect some of these central intellectual themes that permeated this epoch.

The Present Age and its Wants

⁵¹ *People’s Advocate*, December 2, 1848, Vol. 1, No. 1, p. 1.

⁵² Atkinson addresses the spread of ideas which educated the working classes, see, *The Europeans in Australia: A History. Volume Two: Democracy*, pp. 222-224.

By James Russell Lowell

The times demand new measures and new men;

The Word advances, and in time outgrows

The laws that in our father's days were best.

And, doubtless, after us, some purer scheme

Will be shaped out by wiser men than we,

Made wiser by the steady growth of truth.⁵³

Within this poem, the 'Word', symbolised the means for 'men' to articulate the challenges of their age, and prescribe the remedies required to meet them.⁵⁴ At its core was the faith invested in the progress of 'truth' to continue its harmonious advance alongside the march of time. This was presented in a way that connected the inexorable march of time with the sense that social change and political transformation were inevitable. Reasoning and logic were represented as irrepressible forces that would transform society for the better of all.⁵⁵ The essence of these convictions was reflected in both the tone and the content of the *Citizen* and the *People's Advocate*.

In considering the intellectual background which shaped the content of the *Citizen* and the *People's Advocate* during this period of colonial Australia, it is worth visiting other prominent sources that carried similar ideas. For example, read these thoughts of Thomas Paine⁵⁶ :

So deeply rooted were all the governments of the old world, and so effectively had the tyranny and the antiquity of habit established itself over the mind, that

⁵³ *Peoples Advocate*, Vol. 1, No. 1, December 2, 1848, p. 4.

⁵⁴ Gascoigne has written an illuminating analysis of the influence of Enlightenment thinking upon the development of European Australia. See, *The Enlightenment and the Origins of European Australia*. See also Atkinson, *The Europeans in Australia: A History. Volume One: The Beginning*, 'foreword', pp. ix-xviii.

⁵⁵ Gascoigne, *The Enlightenment and the Origins of European Australia*, pp. 69-71. As Nadel has written, "...the educational thought of the early nineteenth century was characterized by optimistic beliefs about the nature of man...", *Australia's Colonial Culture: Ideas, Men and Institutions in Mid-Nineteenth Century Eastern Australia*, p. 257.

⁵⁶ See Gascoigne for an account of the influence of Thomas Paine upon the intellectual and political milieus of colonial Australia, *The Enlightenment and the Origins of European Australia*, pp. 46-50.

no beginning could be made in Asia, Africa or Europe, to reform the political condition of man. Freedom had been hunted around the globe; reason was considered as rebellion: and the slavery of fear had made men afraid to think.⁵⁷

These words show the compatibility of the thematic concerns equating reason with progress, as well as the urgent sense that political change would inevitably overturn injustice. And more tellingly, these qualities of reason were held to be synonymous with freedom. The expression of ideas derived from this stream of political thought were ‘beyond reproach’, for to deny them was to curtail freedom, and to stymie the advance of ideas and progress.

Another characteristic feature which emerges when matching these ideas expressed within the *Citizen* and the *People’s Advocate*, with Paine’s, is the popularity of these ideas. Political philosophies were able to insinuate themselves into the domains in which the shape and form of political consciousness were being developed in colonial Australia. Paine provides another example of informal ideas becoming associated with notions of informal citizenship. In turn this thematic stream of notions contributed to the development of ‘vernacular citizenship’, which can be argued to have been an active entity in the nascent nation well before the time of Federation, or indeed, the *Australian Citizenship Act 1948*.

The maiden edition of the *People’s Advocate*, showed how these convictions based on the imperative Enlightenment values of reasoning and equality also carried an air of moralistic certitude. With a forthright conviction similar to that exhibited by the *Citizen*, the *People’s Advocate* declared the basic tenets by which its publication would strive:

HONESTY!-TRUTH!! JUSTICE!!!

“...we are entirely free from all influence or control, except that of a clear head and a good conscience. We have no narrow and confined view. We shall regard “measures not men”. We do not belong to that class who think that no good can come out of Nazareth”. We believe that good can sometimes be derived from an enemy, consequently, whenever we may meet with a measure which we in our

⁵⁷ Thomas Paine, “The Rights of Man, Part 2”, p. 263, *The Thomas Paine Reader*, Penguin, Victoria, Australia, 1987, pp. 263-364.

conscience believe calculated to promote the public weal, we shall advocate and support it, no matter from what corner it may have emanated.⁵⁸

The editors were at pains to portray themselves as being 'free from influence'. This reflected their desire to present themselves as receptacles of information solely derived from logic and reasoning, and driven by the altruistic desire to promote "the public weal". In presenting themselves as being sufficiently 'disinterested' to disseminate information free of vested interest, the editors claimed they were appropriately qualified to both analyse information, as well as distribute opinions free of prejudice or self interest.

The contents of the *Citizen* and the *People's Advocate* contained a pervasive mixture of political rhetoric, which often promoted policies attractive to the labouring classes. They formed a source of debate and discussion which carried considerable appeal across this section of the community. There was another side to this potential appeal, for whilst the *Citizen* and the *People's Advocate* set out to explicitly attract the labouring classes, they promoted ideas and notions that had been derived from 'Enlightened minds'. This confluence of ideas delivered by 'Enlightened minds', and their dissemination via popular organs such as contemporary newspapers suggests the manner in which many of the fundamental ideas espoused in this era came to bear a progressive as well as popular identity.

The collection of ideas carried by the paper traced the theoretical outline of citizenship that matched the intellectual and occupational make-up of the colonial community. The full significance of this development is best understood if we consider the circumstances of the local readership. This mainly targeted, 'the humbler classes', who had been more closely identified by the *Citizen* as being, 'the Mechanic and Artisan'. Within traditional models of citizenship, this portion of the populace had not been discussed in any great detail. In fact if we recall Aristotle's discussion concerning whether or not mechanics, might also be called citizens, it is clear that there was a considerable variation between its reasoning and the model implicitly sketched by the *Citizen*. Aristotle concluded that, "The best form of a city will not make the mechanic a citizen."⁵⁹

⁵⁸ *People's Advocate*, December 2, 1848, Vol.1, No. 1, p. 1.

⁵⁹ Aristotle, *Politics*, translated by E., Barker, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1995, p. 95.

The ramifications of these differences in theoretical outlook are reinforced by a quick glance at the make-up of the local labour force. The table of Occupations in New South Wales and Victoria in 1851 reveals that mechanics, artisans and other ‘non-professionals’ formed the major proportion of the population.

Table 1: OCCUPATIONS, NEW SOUTH WALES AND VICTORIA, 1851

Please see print copy for Table 1

To have explicitly excluded such numerous portions of the community from the linguistic framework of any potential political body would have been counter productive to the broad aims which had driven the publishers in the first place. It would also have been unpopular, potentially ostracising significant proportions of the community. The outline of citizenship was being shaped in a form that suited the character of the general public. This personified the nature of ‘vernacular citizenship’, which was imbued with progressive aims based around democratic reforms tailored to match the aspirations of the working classes in colonial Australia.⁶⁰

From this perspective we may read in the appeals of the *Citizen* and the *People’s Advocate* an important point in the historical development of a national political consciousness. Within their pages were numerous referrals to notions of ‘citizenship’ and the rights of the labouring classes to seek political representation. References to political citizenship, whilst derived in part from ‘classical traditions’, were being broadened to incorporate a larger proportion of the colonial population. These examples demonstrate how ‘vernacular citizenship’ developed from such ideas and principles, and also the manner in which it encapsulated many of the sentiments celebrating shared values and notions of community, thereby forming a crucial element in the imagining of the Australian polity.

It also leads into another fundamental issue at the heart of contemporary politics in Australia. "Belonging" has been a word at the base of much of our political discourse. Many of the types of citizenship that have been imagined in Australia have been motivated by the desire to forge a sense of ‘belonging’, or a spirit of unity in the national community. It has thus transpired that the questions of who is a citizen, and what constitutes citizenship have been sketched on a much larger and more inclusive canvas than that ideally envisaged by Aristotle. The content and form of ‘vernacular citizenship’ has proven to be sufficiently malleable to meet these demands.

BROADER AIMS OF THE *CITIZEN*

The overt aims of the *Citizen* were to assist in ‘promoting the cause’ of the swelling

⁶⁰ Pickering, "A Wider field in a new country: Chartism in colonial Australia", p. 28, in, Sawyer, (ed.), *Elections: Full, Free, and Fair*, pp. 28-44.

ranks of artisans and labouring classes. It intended to advance this group in "...the scale of respectability and *utility*, as well as to themselves and families, as to the community at large." To these ends the paper also promoted broader aims and principles which it believed were essential to citizenship. Some of these emerge in the following statement:

"...we shall zealously and fearlessly exert ourselves to the utmost of our humble ability, to assist in raising the Mechanic and Artisan to the respectable position in society which their *usefulness* (when combined with moderate intelligence, knowledge, and an unblemished character) justly entitles them to maintain. The principles upon which it is intended to conduct THE CITIZEN, will be best understood by our motto-"The greatest good to the greatest number."⁶¹

This quote outlines the aim of 'raising' the workers to a 'respectable' position in society. Interestingly, the editors considered this must necessarily consist of the moral and social improvement of this group.⁶² Thus, whilst the *Citizen* complimented this group's intrinsic qualities of 'usefulness' and 'utility', they were at pains to emphasise also, the importance of 'unblemished character'. This aim of improving the material position of the working classes, was supplemented by the belief that the development of 'sound character' was equally importance. 'Sound character' provided a means, "...whereby they must advance in the scale of respectability and *utility*, as well as to themselves and families, as to the community at large."⁶³ These concerns extended beyond the self improvement of the artisan and the material advancement of their families, but also included the wider community. The interests of the individual were only as important as those of the broader population.

The significance of these broad aims becomes clearer when we read the motto of the *Citizen*, -"The greatest good to the greatest number"⁶⁴,. This is one of the most famous quotes from John Stuart Mill and the Benthamites, and represents the archetypal

⁶¹ *Citizen*, August 29, 1846, No. 1, Vol. 1, p. 1.

⁶² Roe has written of the strong influence of ideas which promoted the virtues of education that sought to improve not only the mind but also the soul, *Quest For Authority In Eastern Australia 1835-1851*, see pp. 150-155 and pp. 204-206.

⁶³ *Citizen*, August 29, 1846, No. 1, Vol. 1, p. 1.

⁶⁴ *ibid*, p. 1.

characteristics of utilitarian thought.⁶⁵ The fact that it served as the motto of the *Citizen* is deeply instructive in considering the central themes of this thesis. At face value the body of the motto can be understood as according with the aims of the *Citizen* to target the working classes, who formed the majority of the population.

In this sense, the bare bones of Mill's quotation, and its attendant body⁶⁶ of political thought⁶⁷ closely match the characteristics of the working class in the Australian colonies of this time. However, it is of greater importance that these explicit concerns shared close proximity to the issues of respectability and character. These 'flesh out' more fully the range of issues and values that the *Citizen* identified as being important and meaningful in the promotion of the working class. These goals were based on imperatives that were more rounded and of more depth than they first appear in their austere utilitarian guise. And from this perspective, we can also grasp a fuller understanding of the multifaceted nature of 'vernacular citizenship'.

CONTENTS AND VIEWS – 'THE ISSUES OF THE DAY' IN COLONIAL AUSTRALIA

It is instructive to examine some of the major issues that featured in the pages of the *Citizen*. They provide an insight into the moral and intellectual basis on which 'vernacular citizenship' was built. The *Citizen* had announced, "...we pledge ourselves to expose all political and social evils; and with unsparing severity to administer merited castigation to all, who by a shameless betrayal of public trust, violate the sanctity of political faith."⁶⁸ The reference to political and social evils, as well as public trust and political faith, represented fundamental points of belief in the mind of colonial

⁶⁵ Gascoigne discusses the influence of utilitarianism in colonial Australia, see for example, pp. 171-172. His analysis of the influence of 'Benthamite' utilitarianism' is of particular interest, see, pp. 38-44, *The Enlightenment and the Origins of European Australia*.

⁶⁶ H. Collins, "Political Ideology in Australia: The Distinctiveness of a Benthamite Society", in S. R. Grabauard, (ed.), *Australia: The Daedalus Symposium*, Angus & Robertson Publishers, North Ryde, N.S.W., Australia, 1985, pp. 147-169. Irving discusses these issues involving the concept of utilitarianism and the influence of the ideas of Bentham and Mill on Australian political matters, see, *To Constitute a Nation: A Cultural History of Australia's Constitution*, p. 215.

⁶⁷ John Stuart Mill, "Utilitarianism", in *On Liberty and Other Essays*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, United Kingdom, 1998, pp. 131-201.

⁶⁸ *Citizen*, August 29, 1846, No. 1, Vol. 1, p. 1.

Australia.⁶⁹ They encapsulated the drive to redress political and social injustices. The *Citizen's* reportage of some of the major issues of the day reflected these concerns.

SQUATTERS AND SETTLERS

As settlements expanded deeper into the interior during the second half of the 19th century, the question of land distribution gained greater urgency. As demand pressures increased, land became an increasingly sought after commodity in colonial Australia. Much of the debate involved the question of how land, controlled by the auspices of the Crown, would be administered. It should come as little surprise that the *Citizen* took the side of 'the settlers' over the interests of the 'squatters' in an article from October 10, 1846, in relation to the 'Land Issue'. The *Citizen* was scathing in its attack on the squatters, who it claimed were:

“...for the most part composed of men who, avariciously grasping at wealth and aiming only at self-aggrandisement, endeavour to acquire vast tracts of land, which, in direct opposition to the ostensible purpose of depasteurising their flocks and herds, they turn to the utmost profit by sub-letting to small settlers on terms the most exorbitant and ruinous to the occupier. In this manner the rich capitalist has affected the monopoly of thousands, and, in many instance, millions of acres; and the land which, if properly disposed of, would have afforded an immense revenue to the government, has, in fact, passed at a mere nominal rent into the hands of those greedy monopolists...”⁷⁰

It continued on, stating, “...the Settlers, are the TRULY OPPRESSED class...”⁷¹, and expressed further criticism of this alleged injustice, on the grounds that:

Instead of being able to procure land at a price calculated to remunerate the purchaser, he finds that the wealthy few have already, under the pretext of squatting, possessed themselves of nearly all the available land to an immense

⁶⁹ Roe has made the important point in regard to the many levels of ideas which developed around utilitarianism in Australian history, M. Roe, *Quest For Authority In Eastern Australia 1835-1851*, pp. 148-150.

⁷⁰ *Citizen*, October 10, 1846, No. 7, Vol. 1, p. 1.

⁷¹ *ibid*, p.1.

extent; and that he the poor settler, must direct his energies to some other avocation or submit to the exorbitant rack-rents of the existing monopolists.⁷²

As the inaugural edition of the *Citizen* had announced, it aimed to promote the interests of the 'humbler classes'. It should not come as a shock to find that it sympathised with the 'the settlers'. This matches with the characteristics of 'vernacular citizenship' and its interest in promoting the working class and the disadvantaged, over established interests. However, there is more to this position than just a 'rant' against the interest of 'the squatters'.⁷³ While there may be traces of the former, there is arguably more substance to their concerns. For instance, one of the major grievances articulated in this article involved the loss of potential revenue to government that this 'monopolisation' of land entailed. Implicit in this statement was the preferred notion that government would be a more acceptable owner of the lands, as well as a more suitable collector of revenue than 'greedy monopolists'. It marks the appearance of another major theme which permeates throughout Australian history. This distrust of the wealthy individual⁷⁴ and their motives, and the preference for the auspices of government to intervene in affairs of property and revenue capitalisation, resonate through the years. Just as important, are the related issues of trust and faith that were invested in governmental institutions by the general population. These issues indicate that 'vernacular citizenship' was comprised of ideas that carried considerable 'popular appeal' in this time. More significantly, these ideas have also proven to be perennial features of social and political matters in the history of 'modern' Australia.

LAND

The concerns that the *Citizen* held in relation to the distribution and ownership of land in colonial New South Wales, reflected the influence of 'classical' paradigms of citizenship. Within 'classical' traditions, freehold land played a vital role in insuring the

⁷² *ibid*, p.1.

⁷³ For a concise introduction to some of the fundamental issues surrounding squatters at this time, see Gollan, *Radical and Working Class Politics; A Study of Eastern Australia, 1850-1910*, pp. 15-16.

⁷⁴ Nadel has written about the tension surrounding the balance between material concerns and less worldly pursuits in colonial Australia, see, *Australia's Colonial Culture: Ideas, Men and Institutions in Mid-Nineteenth Century Eastern Australia*, p. 65-68.

balance of interests within the Aristotelian framework of the political republic. Land played a pivotal role as the 'guarantee of virtue'.⁷⁵ If a land owner was independent of feudal or other land owning bodies, they would be free to exercise the requirements of autonomy. Pocock identifies another vital feature of this system, as being the concept that the defining element of virtue consisted of the balance in authority which prevailed. If there was any imbalance in power and authority the system would be imperilled. In Pocock's summation, "The republic could persist only if all its citizens were so far autonomous that they could be equally and immediately participant in the pursuit of the universal good."⁷⁶ The concerns expressed by the *Citizen* recognised that Freehold land and property were essential components within the theoretical underpinning of political systems. In this way the *Citizen* demonstrate its interest in the issues of squatters and the broader issues of land distribution resonated beyond merely issues of ownership and profit.

WEALTH, POWER AND MORAL CONDUCT

These concerns for the interests of the settlers reflected the distrust of the 'monopolist' as well as the disdain for the 'greedy' who sought 'self- aggrandisement'. They reflect a distrust of the 'monopolist' and the disapproval of the 'greedy', and form common themes in Australian history. Closely connected to these beliefs was the faith invested in government to provide a more beneficent approach. These examples show how the elements of Mill's philosophical thought, fit the concerns of mainstream Australia in this period.⁷⁷ Mill and Bentham's dictum of the greatest good for the greatest number perfectly fits this distrust of the wealthy entrepreneur, and the concern that they might effectively monopolise the distribution of 'good' that should ideally be shared by the many.

One of the *Citizen's* objections to the 'Squatters' was that their actions were 'avaricious' and seeking 'self-aggrandisement'. This discourse of morality boasted a

⁷⁵ Pocock, p. 98, "Civic Humanism and Its Role in Anglo-American Thought", in, *Politics, Language and Time: Essays on Political Thought And History*, pp. 80-103. This article discusses the role of freehold land and its relationship with concepts of citizenship and virtue, see in particular, pp. 80-98.

⁷⁶ *ibid*, p. 87.

⁷⁷ Walker, *The Newspaper Press in New South Wales, 1803-1920*, p. 41.

distinctly biblical tone, reflecting the moral mindset of this period, and how moral beliefs merged with issues of political theory. This evidence also shows how this moral perspective closely fitted the ideas formulated within the *Citizen*. These stand as complementary pieces within the collection of ideas and beliefs which formed ‘vernacular citizenship’.

It is also instructive to read the views of the *People’s Advocate* in regard to wealth and power. It decried the situation whereby, “The wealthy have secured all power; the rich are supposed to possess all the intelligence, whilst the poor and hardy sons of labour, the really honest intelligent mechanic, the patient, much enduring, and robust labourer, have been utterly disregarded.”⁷⁸ This distrust of the rich, and the injustice that this visited upon the ‘sons of labour’, is underlined in this quotation:

“...kings, courtiers, oligarchs, and aristocrats, contrived to concentrate all power into their own hands, that whilst they have possessed the substance, the people have been amused only with the shadow. This has been the case in almost every country in the Old World, and the most barefaced tricks have been successfully resorted to, to establish a similar state of things here. They have been looked down upon by our colonial aristocrats as, mere “hewers of wood and drawers of water”, incapable of appreciating or exercising their rights of freemen. Wealth has been made the qualifying test for every honor; whether charitable, civic, or legislative. This wretched state of things must not, however, be permitted to continue, and by God’s help, and your patronage and support, we will do something to crush this many headed monster...”⁷⁹

It is of primary importance to observe the connection that was made between the distrust of the rich and powerful, and the association of these negative features with the examples of the ‘Old World’. It recapitulated several of the dominant themes which permeated these publications, in particular the association of the historical past with intolerable injustices and inequalities.

⁷⁸ *People’s Advocate*, December 2, 1848, Vol.1, No.1, p.1.

⁷⁹ *ibid*, p. 1.

SHARED INTERESTS AND COMMON GOALS

While the opinions voiced by the *Citizen* and the *People's Advocate* were stark in their prescriptions, it is true to say that the approaches they advocated in regard to topical issues of the day were often more nuanced. For example, on the prospect of a looming tradesman's strike, the *Citizen* commented:

It is a pity that the employers do not see the policy of paying more attention to the wants and wishes of their journeymen. Instead of encouraging that mutuality of interests that mutual dependence begets, and contributing to the comforts and respectability of the mechanic, the employer discourages, from unworthy motives of grasping cupidity, every advance in the scale of social enjoyment. His industry and energy are thus paralysed, and he ceases to be the useful member of society that a different course of conduct would make him.⁸⁰

What stands out in this appraisal of an impending strike, was the appeal to the mutuality of interests. Whilst adopting a moralistic stance in condemning the employers, it reiterated its entreaty to the parties to recognise the common ground they shared, and decried the possible damage that the strike might wreak upon the wider society. It lamented the loss of the tradesmen's industry and energy that would occur in the case of an industrial dispute. The approach of the *Citizen* reflected its role as a champion of the working class, but also extended beyond the limitations of a strictly partisan approach. Its accent on the issue of mutual dependence, and the concerns it expressed for the potential harm to the wider society, were indicative of an important theme that weaved its way through much of the discourse of publications such as the *Citizen*. Co-operation between the strata's of society, based on the notion of mutual interdependence, was widely promoted throughout colonial society.

In analysing the *Citizen* it is evident that such values held a broad appeal to the population of that time, and they comprised some of the fundamental themes of 'vernacular citizenship'. These included an idealised egalitarianism, based on the industrial rights of workers, augmented by governing legislation inimical to the venal motivations of monopolists. It also contained such rights as freedom of religious and

⁸⁰ *Citizen*, September, 5, 1846, No. 2, Vol. 1, p. 9.

political expression. This was buttressed by the notions that these individual rights also carried responsibilities within a society bound together by the virtue of mutual interdependence. These notions became moulded into a concoction that perfectly fitted the basic tenants which resonated from Mill's motto. It is in the course of providing an explanation of how this came to be that one might comprehend how some of the predominant themes of political thought in the Australian mind have been spun into a coherent web of values and ideals.

BASIC INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS-EDUCATION AND RELIGIOUS EXPRESSION

As has been argued, whilst the *Citizen* aimed at promoting the interests of the working class, its objectives exceeded the merely material or the narrowest margins of utilitarian thought. This approach personified the complex mix of ideas which comprised 'vernacular citizenship'. The stance of the *Citizen* in relation to freedom of religious choice, represented the more expansive interests of the paper, as well as 'vernacular citizenship' itself. They were indicative of the wider scope of interest that emanated from this class of progressive thinkers, writers and editors during this era. One of the more cogent examples to illustrate these themes appeared under the head-line:

NATIONAL EDUCATION

MR. LOWES MOTION⁸¹

And carried a story related in these terms:

Then let us *here* at least, speak to crush every attempt to render this beauteous land, hitherto 'unpolluted by gore', the arena of sectarian strife and religious animosity. Let us rather hope to behold all sects of Christians united in forwarding to the utmost measure so important as that, whose object is to secure the rising generation the blessings of a sound moral education. And let us fondly trust by its instrumentality the day may not be far distant when the DEMON OF FANATICISM shall shrink before the force of UNIVERSAL

⁸¹ *Citizen*, October, 17, 1846, No. 8, vol. 1, p. 57.

PHILANTHROPY, and the strife of FACTION be forever buried beneath the alter of RELIGIOUS TOLERATION.⁸²

In regard to the plan of 'national education', proposed by Lord Stanley and advocated by Mr. Lowe, the *Citizen* signalled its unequivocal support stating, -"We would hail as a bright omen of future prosperity, the cheering prospect of community of all classes and sects in the important work of education."⁸³ The *Citizen's* advocacy of secular freedom bears further testimony to its more substantial interests than merely the material position of its readers. It reiterated its faith in the power of education to transform society in ways that would universally improve the condition of the community. It commended the directions of Lowe's policy, believing it would encourage the development of a sense of unity in the wider society. This was something achievable in their 'Enlightened world', which they contrasted with the problematic traditions of the 'old world'.

Another example of this optimism in the possibilities of contemporary society is evident in the hope that a united Christianity might prevail over traditional sectarian divisions. In its commitment to rights of religious worship, it identified a great scourge threatening the community, namely the 'DEMON OF FANATICISM'. This abhorrence of extremism represented a predominant theme in the 'Enlightened' discourse of this period. All forms of 'Fanaticism' were opposed, whether they be espoused in theory or expressed in violent political demonstration.

Another closely related theme involved the repeated references to the importance of unity⁸⁴, and the concomitant promotion of the benefits of collective purpose within the colonial community. These two developing themes, of a bond of unity cementing the ties of national community, and the development of an increasingly secularised mind were 'peas from the same pod'. As evidenced by these examples from the *Citizen* and the *People's Advocate*, the desire to encourage and nurture a sense of unity within colonial Australia was intimately connected with the fears that the types of nationalist, political and religious extremism that had blighted other societies would be imported into

⁸² *ibid*, p. 57.

⁸³ *ibid*, p. 57.

⁸⁴ Nadel has written about the importance of 'unity' as a theme permeating colonial Australia, *Australia's Colonial Culture: Ideas, Men and Institutions in Mid-Nineteenth Century Eastern Australia*, pp. 252-255.

Australian society. From these concerns developed the desire to promote common interests, which emphasised the bonds of commonality, with the aim of diluting the national, religious and class differences, which prevailed in the colonial lands.

Paralleling these fears was the hope that these destructive pitfalls which had beset other national communities might reap similar havoc in this new society. So whilst 'vernacular citizenship' was imbued with the imperative of seeking social and political reform to improve the lot of the disadvantaged and the poor, it was steadfastly opposed to political violence and civil disturbance. To oppose these potential dangers, tolerance was venerated as a key value which might prevent the evils of division and conflict from corroding the fabric of the national community. The practical application of these values was reflected in the calls for the freedom of speech and political expression, as well as the rights of individuals to participate in religious worship free from harassment. These key political and religious themes neatly dovetailed, encouraging the incremental development of a secularised mindscape in mainstream Australia.

A practical example of this broad minded approach to religious freedom was expressed by the *Citizen* in its support of the move by the State administration to assist in the building of a Jewish Synagogue in Sydney. The *Citizen* announced its approval that, "...on Friday the 25th ...in the Legislative Council...his Excellency expressed his readiness to place on the Estimates the sum of 100 prayed for towards defraying the expense of building the Jewish Synagogue..."⁸⁵ It also applauded, "...the liberality of principle which is the offspring of a generous and enlightened mind..."⁸⁶

The *Citizen* believed that by fostering religious freedom, they might encourage a tolerant society that eschewed 'fanaticism'. By nurturing this type of environment, it hoped to encourage a sense of inclusion within the wider community. From these broader values of citizenship might spring a spirit of tolerance.⁸⁷ As the article went on to say, "The admission of the Jews to all the rights and privileges of British subjects-their ability to hold legislative and municipal situations...will tend still to improve their moral

⁸⁵ *Citizen*, October 3, 1846, no. 6, vol. 1, p. 41.

⁸⁶ *ibid*, p. 41.

⁸⁷ Nadel discusses the benefits of 'excluding religious disputation' in order to strengthen community bonds in colonial Australia, see *Australia's Colonial Culture: Ideas, Men and Institutions in Mid-Nineteenth Century Eastern Australia*, pp. 252-255.

character, and render them good citizens and loyal subjects of the British Crown.”⁸⁸ The entitlement of the Jewish community to practice their faith was predicated on their incorporation into the realms of the existing wider mainstream community based on their identity as ‘good citizens’.

WORLD AFFAIRS

The *Citizen's* approach to the famine conditions in Ireland at that time raises several further points. It would appear to have been fairly bold in addressing the deprivations in such a forthright manner as evidenced by this article:

FAMINE IN IRELAND

It appears that the pressure of distress upon the poor in Ireland still continues with great severity. It is really provoking to perceive that while such is the unhappy condition of that long suffering and truly patient people, under such an accumulation of trials, attempts should be made by interested and heartless government officials and sundry other correspondents of a hireling London Press, to *deny* the *existence* of such a state of things, as would call for the relief of the poor sufferers.⁸⁹

This issue was highly controversial because of its inflammatory potential in a society bearing a substantial fault line between the divergent territories of religious beliefs and national heritage. Historical tensions between the Irish and the British travelled with those who found their way to Australian shores. Hostilities between Catholics and Protestants were at their most pointed during these early years of colonial society. One interpretation may be that the *Citizen* managed to fulfil its ambition of delivering a clear eyed and objective coverage of events and issues. Thereby, bravely pursuing a line of enquiry driven by the imperatives of objectivity and justice, in the pursuit of promoting a world free from prejudice and injustice.

CONVICT TRANSPORTATION

Some of the central themes of ‘vernacular citizenship’ can also be observed in the

⁸⁸ *Citizen*, October 3, 1846, no. 6, vol. 1, p. 41.

⁸⁹ *Citizen*, October 24, 1846, no. 9, vol. 1, p. 68.

coverage of the controversial issue of transportation⁹⁰ to the colony of New South Wales in 1846. Transportation emerged as a crucial issue at a time when colonies were seeking to manage their affairs autonomously.⁹¹ In N. S.W it attracted the likes of Henry Parkes who rallied opposition to the Colonial Office's proposal to resume transportation. The issues raised in the *Citizen* are of special importance to this thesis, as implicit ideas and principles became pushed to the forefront of pivotal social and political events.

The report of the protest against the planned renewal of transportation was recorded in these terms:

Anti-transportation Meeting took place on the race course on Tuesday.

"...the glorious triumph to the OPERATIVE CLASSES."

Honour and praise the working men of Sydney! they have nobly, peacefully, and we are confident, effectively done their duty.⁹²

The *Citizen* claimed that the protest against transportation was a response to, "...an infringement upon their liberties and rights as citizens."⁹³ And furthermore, in actively protesting against these perceived violations, they had, "...fulfilled as patriot citizens the duty they owe to the land of their adoption."⁹⁴

The references to the rights and privileges of citizens in this report are further examples of the 'people' being referred to as 'citizens' at this time. The passage clearly shows that the 'citizen' was represented in a way that exemplified their crucial importance in political matters. The *Citizen* quoted the first part of the resolution as being a reaction to, "...an infringement upon their liberties and rights as citizens." It concluded that their response had equated to them having, "...fulfilled as patriot citizens the duty they owe to the land of their adoption." The relationship between the citizen and their community had been extended to include the reciprocal sense of duty existing between them. This

⁹⁰ Roe, *Quest For Authority In Eastern Australia 1835-1851*, pp. 3-4 and, pp. 71-72.

⁹¹ For a summary of the issues surrounding the transportation of convicts during this era, and the political reactions to them see, McKenna, *The Captive Republic: A History of Republicanism in Australia, 1788-1996*, pp. 44-47.

⁹² *Citizen*, December, 26, 1846, No. 18, Vol. 1, p. 137.

⁹³ *ibid*, p. 137.

⁹⁴ *ibid*, p. 137.

included the citizen's responsibility to engage in matters of political and civic interest.

The *Citizen* nominated the working class as the stalwarts of this meeting, commenting:

"...none of the (would-be) aristocracy of the land were to be seen there- no their presence was not required. But, in their place stood the hard working man, the honest mechanic and artisan- *they* were the promoters of the meeting, and if they had not the patronage of the *wealthy* and the *great*, they had the full support of their fellow citizens, whos dearest rights and privileges were invaded-they had the sanction of the good and virtuous..."⁹⁵

Those participating in the rally were credited with the active exercise of the rights of citizenship. This was another example of the common theme, which linked the identity of the 'true citizen' with those from the working class.⁹⁶ It was also inferred that a sense of unity bonded this group of 'active citizens' together. This passage also shows how vessels such as the *Citizen* attempted to construct a pretence of popular support for 'active citizenship'. Even those who did not participate, were nominated as having their interests represented by those rallying, with the *Citizen* claiming that the protesters actions had been sanctioned by the 'good and virtuous'. In this fashion the pretence of majority opinion was generated.⁹⁷ This also serves as evidence of the way in which the values promoted within 'vernacular citizenship' were represented as being all pervasive, and as a consequence, widely popular, within the colonial community.

This quotation reinforces these ideas more fully:

⁹⁵ *ibid*, p. 137.

⁹⁶ Gollan also refers to this situation, *Radical and Working Class Politics; A Study of Eastern Australia, 1850- 1910*, pp. 113-115.

⁹⁷ Picker argues a similar line in regard to the role that the local press played in generating interest in particular political matters amongst the local communities, see, pp. 184-186, " 'A Nation is governed by all that has tongue in the nation': Newspapers and Political Expression in Colonial Sydney, 1852", *Journal of Australian Studies*, No.62, 1999, pp. 184-189.

The first resolution of this meeting ...on behalf of the working population of Sydney, to record their dissent to such a measure, believing it to be an infringement upon their liberty and rights, and highly prejudicial to the true interests of the colony in general.⁹⁸

It is enlightening to note that the actions of the protesters were construed to have served the ‘true’ interests of the whole colony. In this way, the interests of the ‘citizens’, and the broader population, were represented as sharing common ground. Another way of comprehending the significance of these ideas relates to the promotion of notions of unity within the colonial community. The reportage of these events emphasised the unification of interest shared by participants. Such acts of public demonstration equated to an active personification of the ideals of community action and civic involvement. In pursuing these issues, a unity of purpose was being actively played out by those persons participating in the rally. And from participation in these assemblies and the pursuit of shared ideals and desired ambitions, a considerable volume of shared experience and community based interaction and co-operation was generated. Organs such as the *Citizen* were eager to promote these aspects of public assembly.

SUMMARY- THE MAJOR THEMES OF ‘VERNACULAR CITIZENSHIP’

It is possible to draw upon one particular editorial from the *Citizen* and demonstrate how the major themes, with which the paper was suffused, were connected to fundamental ideas which formed the basis of ‘vernacular citizenship’. In an editorial penned in 1847, many of the principal issues regarding the paper’s political interests were traversed in a manner that emphasised the significant role which informal notions involving citizens and citizenship were held to play. It began by reiterating the *Citizens* principle aims, namely, “...support of the WORKING CLASSES – the advocacy of CIVIL AND RELIGIOUS LIBERTY- opposition to MONOPOLY and maintenance of the purest principles of MORALITY, will go hand in hand and shoulder to shoulder in the GOOD CAUSE...”⁹⁹

⁹⁸ *Citizen*, February 6, 1847, no. 24, vol. 1, p. 185.

⁹⁹ *Citizen*, February 6, 1847, no. 24, vol. 1, p. 185.

What is fascinating about this copy is that it contains other principles and values, explicitly connected with such ideas as ‘morality’ and the “Good Cause”. These constituted some of the developing themes which ‘filled out’ the dimensions of ‘vernacular citizenship’. Amongst the more predominant of these were the moral dimensions of citizenship, which were defined against the backdrop of notions such as the ‘good cause’. These themes would provide some of the most influential and engrossing streams of thought that would occupy the purveyors of citizenship over the years.

EUROPEAN UPRISINGS AND REVOLUTIONS- RADICAL INVOCATIONS

In supporting these thematic concerns and motivations, the *Citizen* recounted some recent examples from European history:

The heroes of the “three days of July”, the noble citizens of Paris demonstrated to an admiring world the truth of our axiom-for by “UNION” amongst themselves, they

Hurl’d a sinewy tyrant from his throne,

And raised a prostate people up to LIBERTY

The Belgian populace was not a whit behind their Gallic neighbours in heroic devotion to the sacred cause and proved

That country ne’er is lost which hath a son

To wrestle with the tyrants would enslave her.

And Poland, glorious yet oppressed Poland! Though as yet unsuccessful in her efforts to recover independence, will yet, and we trust ere long, make even the despotic autocrat tremble in his gorgeous halls, and teach the tyrants that

Freedom’s battle once begun,

Bequeathed from bleeding sire to son.

Though often lost shall yet be won.¹⁰⁰

¹⁰⁰ *ibid*, pp. 185-186.

This paragraph represents a summary of some of the most important themes of ‘vernacular citizenship’. Within this expansive editorial were a range of issues revealing fundamental elements in the developing political consciousness at this time. One of the most important was the issue of ‘morality’, specifically in the contexts of civil and religious liberty. In pursuit of these aims the paper espoused the necessity for citizens to engage with political matters, and involve themselves in political action. In supporting this ideal of the citizen actively campaigning for social and political change, it then referred to the political foment in Europe at that time, proffering the examples of ‘Paris’, as well as ‘Poland’. These were held up as exemplary instances of citizens actively seeking political reform and social change.

These expressions of radicalism were widely expressed through the *Citizen* and the *People’s Advocate*, and were also evident in the later speeches of Daniel Deniehy. They were rooted in the ideas and fervour from which such groups as the Chartists¹⁰¹ drew sustenance, and were primarily based on the pursuit of universal franchise and other political reforms. Radicalism had a broad appeal for several reasons. It was a ‘progressive movement’ that carried much of the optimism and hope that pervaded the pursuit of democratic and social reform.

Much of the allure of these progressive ideas is explained by the personalities of those spearheading these movements. The proprietors of the *Citizen* and the *People’s Advocate*, as well people like Deniehy, were highly educated in the ideas of political innovation and social reform. They sought to utilise this knowledge in seeking universal democratic reforms. The attractions of this movement were manifold. In an important sense, the ideas matched the times. A point demonstrated by their popularity being spurred by the progress in education and literacy levels in the colonies.¹⁰² Increasing numbers of people were able to read¹⁰³ a growing variety of publications¹⁰⁴, allowing the

¹⁰¹ For an early exposition of the influence of Chartism upon Australian political developments, see pp. 13-16, in Gollan, *Radical and Working Class Politics; A Study of Eastern Australia, 1850-1910*.

¹⁰² See Roberts, p. 99, “Reading the People’s Stories: Tales of Trial and Toil, and Australia’s Federal Republic”, pp. 95-103.

¹⁰³ The growing levels of literacy in colonial society were further bolstered by the education reforms of the 1870’s.

¹⁰⁴ See Walker, *The Newspaper Press in New South Wales, 1803-1920*, p. 274.

circulation of ideas to flourish. The radical appearance of the ideas frequently associated with these movements often belied both the popularity of these ideas, as well as their more conservative foundations.

AMIDST THE CLARION CALLS, MORE TEMPERED SENSIBILITIES PREVAIL

Whilst the heroic poetry of the *Citizen's* editorial advocated political struggle and rebellion, the paragraph which followed adopted a quite different tone. The bellicose strains of the opening stanza were tempered, with the later columns soberly appraising the merits of the colonial peoples' British ancestry and its connection to British institutions.¹⁰⁵

This section began by stating:

But far, oh far be it from us to wish that any portion of the dominions of our beloved Queen should, as in the instances alluded to, become the arena of civil strife. No; - thanks to the sound principles of British Laws, we possess our inalienable birth right, freedom of opinion, and liberty of speech, and our PRESS unfettered by despotic censorship, dares boldly to disseminate the Truth and prove the palladium of the peoples rights. We therefore, possess the happy privilege of attaining redress for our grievances and protection to our interests, by the more glorious system of a bloodless strife- the means of peaceful, legal, and constitutional, but, determined assertion of our rights.¹⁰⁶

There was a dramatic contrast between the bravado of the first paragraphs of the editorial and the rationale of the second.¹⁰⁷ In this later the *Citizen* spoke of the imperative need to avoid the civil strife and public unrest recounted earlier. It praised the role that free speech and a free press played in providing forums allowing people to voice their grievances. Providing a means whereby the calamitous episodes of violence and upheaval experienced elsewhere in the world might be avoided. This also necessitated

¹⁰⁵ Malouf discusses these themes in his essay, "Made in England: Australia's British Inheritance", *Quarterly Essay*.

¹⁰⁶ *Citizen* February 6, 1847, no. 24, vol. 1, p. 185.

¹⁰⁷ McKenna also draws on this passage from the *Citizen* to illustrate his discussion about the way that revolutionary language and symbolism were utilised in support of constitutional change in, *The Captive Republic: A History of Republicanism in Australia, 1788-1996*, pp. 43-44.

acknowledging the indispensable foundation that “British Laws”¹⁰⁸ had provided in establishing these very means which might remove the danger of blood being shed in the course of pursuing democratic reform in colonial Australia.

Within these contrasting approaches it is possible to understand both the verve, as well as the complexity of ‘vernacular citizenship’. The contents of this editorial reveal the fundamental tenets which drove such publications in their quest to promote political advancement in colonial Australia. They were based on the conviction that freedom of expression, guided by a democratic political system, would nurture an environment in which even ‘the poor’ would be able to express their will. Great efforts were invested in presenting democracy as being achievable by peaceful means without the historical legacy of blood and gore with which it had been frequently implicated. Against this background of ideas, it is possible to more fully understand the reasoning behind the pursuing paragraphs:

The POLITICAL UNIONS in Great Britain and Ireland are a proof of the wonderful influence which may be attained by unanimity amongst the People. We have ourselves seen the proud and overbearing aristocrat pouring forth with lavish profusion thousands of pounds to secure a seat in Parliament, and afterwards experience the mortification of beholding the candidate be selected by the People, (that very “rabble” as the magnates love to designate the honest citizens and yeomanry of their country)...”

“...and the “People, the true source of legitimate power”, proved themselves in intelligence equal, and in patriotism far superior to their former oppressors, and for the first time the convention of Runnymede became really effective.”¹⁰⁹

The *Citizen* championed the ideal of parliamentary reform. It campaigned for democratic elections and the principle that persons should be elected on the basis of their accrual of votes, rather than their aggregation of wealth and power. Democratic elections held the potential to encourage greater ‘popular’ support for Parliamentary institutions amongst the populace. Such systems promoted notions of probity and fair play,

¹⁰⁹ *Citizen*, February 6, vol.1, no. 24, 1847, p. 186.

entwining these popular notions with formal institutions. In turn, shaping an ethos of legitimacy that would extend to the wider reaches of colonial society. Democratic reform was presented as a progressive means whereby the injustices and inequalities associated with the historical past, might be countered.

These examples also explain the pervasive influence of the virtues of respect for civil obedience and mannered public conduct have exerted through out Australian history.¹¹⁰ These ideas are expressed in this quote:

Peaceful agitation, open and free discussion, cannot fail to be of the greatest utility in this colony where men have as yet scarcely begun to think upon political questions. It is in order that a better state of things may be established, that the poor are now seeking for their fair share in the Government of the country; and if they avoid all violence and outrage; if they seek redress in a constitutional manner, there can be no doubt of their ultimate success.¹¹¹

In a rousing close to this editorial, the *Citizen* attempted to rally the people of Australia to assert their right in claiming the same rights which they associated with British subjects. It read:

And why should we, the people of Australia, be less alert than our fellow-subjects in Britain in securing to ourselves the privileges of British subjects-Equality of Rights? We are not deficient in the materials for arranging and carrying out in this Great Colony institutions similar to those which have effected such a glorious and constitutional reformation in the land of our ancestors. And we behold the misrepresentation which exists in the Colonial Legislature, shall we not shake off the lethargy which now seems to overwhelm us, and, arousing our energies to active exertion, assert our independence as citizens, and our resolution to be represented only by those who will pledge themselves to do justice to their constituents. Will the Citizens of Sydney, the

¹¹⁰ Malouf , “Made in England: Australia’s British Inheritance”, *Quarterly Essay*.

¹¹¹ *Citizen*, February 6, vol.1, no. 24, 1847, p. 186.

metropolis of this infant empire, remain inactive when their duty as men and patriots calls them to assert their rights?¹¹²

It is highly instructive that this clarion call to the people, concluded with the entreaty to the “Citizens of Sydney”. It is a further application of the term designed to encourage individuals to participate in the pursuit of political reforms. As mentioned previously, this form of ‘citizenship’ was argued to be based upon a bedrock of historical influences, consisting in large portion of English Parliamentary institutions. It is without doubt that references to ‘citizens’ and ‘citizenship’ in this era represented a clarion call to political activity and involvement. But whilst it was prepared to call upon the radical examples of European rebellions in the name of inspiration, it also issued entreaties contending that such violence ought to be avoided, and championed the role that civil rights and parliamentary reforms might play in evading these perils.

Between these invocations encouraging ‘citizens’ to actively pursue political reform, and the entreaties directed towards maintaining social order, lay another of the key characteristics of ‘vernacular citizenship’. Respectable individual behaviour was considered to be one of the defining characteristics of the citizen. Good manners, industry and respectability were essential in good citizenship. Within ‘vernacular citizenship’ these personal and ‘domestic’ virtues aspects exerted a dominant influence. Whereas the place of the warrior had occupied a major position within the traditions of ‘classical citizenship’, matters pertaining to the conditions of the local community dominated ‘vernacular citizenship’. This was exemplified by the importance placed on high standards of civil behaviour, in the course of facilitating social change.

Historical references were regularly mixed in with favourable political characteristics to accentuate the appeal of active citizenship. The editorial closed with these words, “Fellow-citizens-we call upon you therefore to be true to yourselves-be prepared for action-be resolute in defence of your rights and privileges, and the result of your exertions will be a GLORIOUS TRIUMPH TO THE FRIENDS OF JUSTICE AND THE POPULAR CAUSE.”¹¹³. This summary rounded out the defining characteristics which

¹¹² *ibid*, p. 186.

¹¹³ *Citizen*, February 6, vol. 1, no. 24, 1847, p. 186.

moulded the shape of popular citizenship in colonial Australia at this point in time. It was couched in language, and littered with examples, that signified it as representing a seminal feature of political thought in this era.

NATIONALISTIC IMPLICATIONS

There is a streak of fervour running through these ideas which inexorably draws them into a nationalistic train of thought and identity. This is most evident, not only in the references which presented individual citizens identities and rights being connected with the active exercise of collective will, but also with the references to the nationalistic outcomes of European political and social protest. In these examples, active citizenship equated to individuals joining in collaborative pursuit of progressive reform. In referring to 'popular' uprisings from Europe, and wrapping them in inspirational and triumphant tones, political action became equated with the patriotic sentiments of nationalism. In a like fashion, the idealised and imagined versions of Australian citizenship required this involvement of citizens to act on behalf of establishing democratic reforms for a national community. One effect of this was to connect the issues of citizenship and the active involvement in political action with the virtues of patriotism and nationalism. From this situation it is possible to observe the potential for notions of 'Australianness' to have become attached to these virtues.

A feature of this movement was the recurrent theme celebrating the virtues of 'the people', and their place at the heart of these schemes. In much of the discourse of this era there was a perennial refrain that nominated the 'people' as the 'true' voice, or, the 'true' patriots. This group was invested with the implicit attributes of being almost in a sense, the 'unblemished'. Who were more pre-disposed to pursue unselfish moral ends, and more likely to avoid the pitfalls of monopoly and avarice than other persons in the Australian colonies of this time. Within this scheme it is possible to judge that the figure which personified these ideas and ideals was the figure of the 'vernacular citizen'.

The Place Of Citizenship in the Ideas of Daniel Deniehy

The career of Daniel Deniehy will now be examined on the basis that his life and times illustrate several of the principle themes of this thesis. By drawing upon the discourse generated during his career, it will be possible to illustrate how some of the key ideas

commonly associated with citizens and citizenship were not only expressed within the *Citizen* and the *People's Advocate*, but also the speeches of this prominent political figure. Deniehy's presence was at its most formidable during the mid 1850s,¹¹⁴ reinforcing the robust presence of these ideas during this period in time. Many of these shared close connections with the ideas espoused in 'classical forms of citizenship'. His ideas stand as an important example of the manner in which popular political ideas of this era were in substantial part derived from models of 'classical citizenship'.

His work shows how most of the key ideas involving citizenship in this era were also in wide circulation. The form of these ideas, as well as the popularity of their appeal across a broad cross-section of the national community, saw them become equated with a raft of ideas that comprised 'vernacular citizenship'. In drawing upon these examples, it is possible to highlight both the manner, as well as the means, whereby their influence extended into a body of popular ideas, which then mixed into the mosaic of mainstream Australian political thought. Their influence resonated through the political consciousness of the nation, playing important roles in the construction of the political and social identity of the Commonwealth of Australia.

THE POLITICAL SPHERE:

The Speeches of Daniel Deniehy

Daniel Henry Deniehy was born in Kent Street Sydney on the 16th of August 1828. As a child he was educated at 'W.T. Capes private school', reputed to be one of the most highly credentialed in Sydney at the time. The school itself was located on grounds that have now been subsumed by the University Of Sydney.¹¹⁵ Deniehy was a man of nimble mind with a vivacious interest in reading and writing. He was widely published, whose output included contributions to such publications as the *Colonial Literary Journal* and *Weekly Miscellany of Useful Information* as well as a plethora of other journals and newspapers.¹¹⁶ His oeuvre included fictional and critical pieces, but his involvement in

¹¹⁴ E. A. Martin, *The Life And Speeches of Daniel Henry Deniehy*, p. 22.

¹¹⁵ Cyril Pearl, *Brilliant Dan Deniehy: A forgotten genius*, Thomas Nelson Australia, Melbourne, Australia, 1972, p. 1.

¹¹⁶ Pearl, *Brilliant Dan Deniehy: A forgotten genius*, pp. 7-8.

colonial politics remains his foremost legacy. Deniehy was a robust and integral player in the politics of the mid 1840s and 1850s in colonial Australia. He wrote voluminously to the newspapers and frequently addressed¹¹⁷ audiences across the state.¹¹⁸ As an indefatigable advocate of democratic reform, he was closely associated with such luminaries as Henry Parkes, as well as Charles Harpur and the artist Adelaide Ironside. Today he is probably best remembered for his part in the development of republican politics.¹¹⁹ Deniehy figures as one of the most prominent figures¹²⁰ in the seminal politics of this era.¹²¹

Whilst Deniehy's oratorical skills captured a broad hearing, it should not be forgotten that the extent of this popularity exceeded his immediate audience. Reports and transcripts of his speeches were often recorded in the local press. His speeches contained references to citizens and citizenship, but they were also framed in a manner which illuminated his own implicit ideas in regard to the categories. As one combs through Deniehy's discourse it is possible to trace themes which bear an unmistakeable likeness to ideas involving citizenship which featured on the pages the *Citizen* and the *People's Advocate*, and fit the outlines of 'vernacular citizenship'.

On the 12th of May 1858, Daniel Deniehy delivered a speech on electoral reform in New South Wales. During its course he was reported¹²² to have said:

“...in a young country like this, every citizen who paid taxes, let his position be what it might, had a right to vote for a representative in the government of the

¹¹⁷ Atkinson, *The Europeans in Australia: A History. Volume Two: Democracy*, pp. 259-260.

¹¹⁸ Headon & Perkins, “Daniel Henry Deniehy (1828-1865) Towards a Great Australian Republic”, pp. 114-194, in, *Our First Republicans: John Dunmore Lang, Charles Harpur, and Daniel Henry Deniehy, Selected Writings 1840-1860*,

¹¹⁹ Most works which discuss Deniehy devote much of their attention to his connection with republicanism in Australia. For an example, see, John Moloney, “Australian Republicanism”, p. 59, in, *Trusting the People: An Elected President For An Australian Republic*, 2001, pp. 54-82. Also, D. J. Headon & E. Perkins, *Our First Republicans: John Dunmore Lang, Charles Harpur, and Daniel Henry Deniehy, Selected Writings 1840-1860*, The Federation Press, N.S.W., Australia, 1998, and, McKenna, *The Captive Republic: A History of Republicanism in Australia, 1788-1996*, pp. 71-72. Also see, Hirst, *The Strange Birth of Colonial Democracy: New South Wales 1848-1884*, pp. 1-13 for an introduction to the involvement of Deniehy in the Republican movement.

¹²⁰ For a robust portrait of Deniehy and his influence in shaping political matters, see, Headon's, “ ‘Sons of the morning’: Daniel Henry Deniehy's trustees of the coming republic”, in Headon, Warden & Gammage, (eds), *Crown or Country*, pp. 53-68.

¹²¹ Hirst, *The Strange Birth of Colonial Democracy: New South Wales 1848-1884*, pp. 267-268.

¹²² *Sydney Morning Herald*, May 12, 1858, p. 3.

country. When hon. gentlemen pointed out to them the examples of Grecian democracies and the danger of putting large powers into the hands of the populace, they had forgotten to tell them there was not the slightest similarity between the popular institutions of those days and the representative system of England. The former were the primary assemblies of the people, and were often wrought to violent and hasty action by fiery and intemperate orators; and the great difference was, that the latter, the representative system, provided for the election of representatives who should calmly deliberate for the masses.¹²³

Deniehy's speech predates Federation by some forty-three years. It is not however, a 'dated' document, of questionable relevance to a discussion about citizenship in the period that culminates with Federation. The report of this speech is significant for a number of reasons. Firstly, it is another instance of the application of the term 'citizen' in the historical record of Australia's past. This alone hardly provides a basis upon which any conclusive judgement can be sustained. There are however, several details within Deniehy's speech that indicate important issues may be gleaned from his oration.

When Deniehy prefaced his statement regarding franchise by saying, "...in a young country like this, every citizen who paid taxes, let his position be what it might, had a right to vote for a representative in the government of the country."¹²⁴, it was apparent that he was using the word 'citizen' in a meaningful and purposeful context. He was also introducing some of the key and enduring ideas which have contributed to the development of 'vernacular citizenship' within the mainstream political consciousness of Australian society. Some of the more significant of these contained implications for future conceptualisations of the interaction between these bodies and their relationship within the heart of the mainstream national community.

One of the most significant related to the question of franchise. When Deniehy

¹²³ Martin, *The Life And Speeches of Daniel Henry Deniehy*, pp. 60-61. It should be noted that excerpts from Deniehy's speeches cited in Martin's (often questioned) text have been cross referenced with other sources in order to support their veracity. For example, the quotation from the *SMH* report in footnote no. 123 matches the record of this speech set down in Martin's collection, specified in this reference.

¹²⁴ Martin, *The Life And Speeches of Daniel Henry Deniehy*, pp. 60-61.

pronounced that¹²⁵, "Into any young country it was the duty of the Government to welcome new-comers, and put them in possession of the rights and responsibilities of citizenship, and that was to be done by giving them the franchise...."¹²⁶, he employed the term 'citizenship' within an implicit contextual paradigm. Explicitly linking 'the rights and responsibilities' of citizenship with the right to vote. This placed citizens and citizenship within the parameters of a political future based on the foundations of democratic parliamentary institutions and representative government. The significance of this may be more fully explored by examining some of the other predominant themes associated with the issue of citizenship.

One involved Deniehy's conviction that in order to facilitate the ideal political future he envisaged, the auspices of government were required to engage in 'welcoming newcomers', and 'encouraging citizenship'. In promoting these goals, Deniehy insisted that it was the responsibility of the government to bestow the franchise upon the members of the community. He implicitly proposed that government act as a benign and pro-active instrument motivated to both define, as well as actively pursue the best interests of its constituents.

It is equally noteworthy that while Deniehy linked this image proclaiming the 'new dawn' of a political future as being contingent upon the right to vote, he also nominated an allied set of 'rights and responsibilities' that accompanied citizenship. These comments hinted that there were a range of significant ideas appearing which were shaping the outline of 'vernacular citizenship'. At the forefront of these was the notion of reciprocity within the relationship between the people and their parliament. In outlining his ideas about citizenship, and their connection to franchise rights, he had also set down a range of accompanying responsibilities.

Another closely related issue was the sense that the status of citizenship represented the primary gift that the auspices of government could bestow upon those within its boundaries. In a similar way 'vernacular citizenship' entailed rights as well as responsibilities, which were inferred to represent the most honourable burdens that might

¹²⁵ *Sydney Morning Herald*, May 12, 1858, p. 3.

¹²⁶ Martin, *The Life And Speeches of Daniel Henry Deniehy*, pp. 61-62.

be borne by the people or 'citizens'. In the process of shouldering these responsibilities, the citizen might display their most favourable and honourable characteristics. This signalled both the scale of investment associated with this informal conceptualisation of citizenship, as well as the integral role that it played in the theorised outline of ideal political imagining. The significance of this is magnified when we consider the developing political consciousness in colonial Australia at this time. Within this network of ideas the conceptualisation of citizenship offered an irresistible appeal to both the apparatus of government, as well as the people themselves. In Deniehy's framework, citizenship was implied to represent a feature that offered mutual benefits to its benefactors as well as its beneficiaries. It was in this idealised shape that 'vernacular citizenship' formed a crucial amalgam that could cement a range of ideas and perspectives together to create a compatible and complimentary political framework.

Within the context of this imagined relationship between the Australian people and their government, and the issues connected with these notions of citizenship, it is enlightening to further read of Deniehy's statement in support of the proposed measures. He announced that:¹²⁷

He would vote for the second reading; and he had never before recorded his vote with such entire satisfaction to himself, because he felt that he was discharging his duty to the country as a citizen, as a representative to those who had sent him there, and to himself as a man, a husband, and a father.¹²⁸

As well as repeating the basic sentiments associated with one's duty as a citizen, and a member of the national community, Deniehy went further in linking his identity as a citizen with his position as man, husband and father. These roles were, particularly within in the context of the time, iconic, forming the cornerstones of mainstream masculine identity. Providing another example of the gravitas attributed to citizenship in this era, albeit in a manner that remained largely implied. Within this schema of mainstream manhood's responsibilities, one's role as a participant in political affairs, or a 'citizen', was presented as being as important a responsibility as being a husband and

¹²⁷ *Sydney Morning Herald*, May 12, 1858, p. 3.

¹²⁸ Martin, *The Life And Speeches of Daniel Henry Deniehy*, pp. 61-62.

father. This shows how these implicit citizenship values that represented 'vernacular citizenship', despite their at times obscure nature, were able to play a profoundly influential role as a collection of ideas and values which would prove popular to mainstream sensibilities.

When Deniehy made reference to the example of the American polity, he spoke of several other issues which were imbued with significance from the perspective of 'vernacular citizenship'. He commented:¹²⁹

So far as regard to character, ability, and attainments was concerned, she set a noble example to England by exercising what was purely a patronage of worth. Into any young country it was the duty of the Government to welcome newcomers, and put them in possession of the rights and responsibilities of citizenship, and that was to be done by giving them the franchise; and he believed that in such a place, where a man lived by the reward of labour, none would wish for a destructive or revolutionary policy. He would vote for the second reading; and he had never before recorded his vote with such entire satisfaction to himself, because he felt that he was discharging his duty to the country as a citizen, as a representative to those who had sent him there, and to himself as a man, a husband, and a father.¹³⁰

Deniehy drew an analogy between the image of the colonies as 'a young nation', and the opportunity to shape a 'new' political future. The application of language representing 'new' and innovative developments in political thought and practice, was representative of the language frequently used to evoke images of 'progressive' and 'modern' developments in colonial Australia.¹³¹ It also reflected some of the predominant characteristics of the intellectual milieu from which 'vernacular citizenship' had been borne. Such

¹²⁹ *Sydney Morning Herald*, May 12, 1858, p. 3.

¹³⁰ Martin, *The Life And Speeches of Daniel Henry Deniehy*, pp. 61-62.

¹³¹ See Melleuish for a discussion of both the presence, and the appeal of the claims to modernity in Australian political 'structures and ideas', through out the history of the Australian nation, "Distributivism: The Australian Political Ideal?", in, *Journal of Australian Studies*, No.62, 1999, pp. 20-29. Also see Beverley Kingston for a presentation of the background of ideas that both embraced and promoted notions of modernity and progress in pre-Federation Australia, *The Oxford History of Australia. Volume 3, 1860-1900: Glad Confident Morning*, pp. 57-107.

terminology generated enthusiasm for the political aims for which Deniehy campaigned. There was a wide appeal in equating political change with notions of progress and modernity. Within this paradigm, the figure of the 'vernacular citizen' was an integral player. The political democracy that Deniehy campaigned for was based on the guarantee of franchise rights, which were equated with the essential rights of 'citizenship'. Within this schema, the figure of the 'implicit citizen' emerged as an essential component in this progress towards a 'modern' democratic political system in Australia.

It is also instructive to observe the nuances involved in Deniehy's reference to the United States of America. In a rousing speech, Deniehy appealed for the creation of political rights in colonial Australia, drawing upon the vibrant symbolism of American political developments.¹³² In the process, confirming the appeal of rhetoric based on the claims of 'modern political developments' for the proponents of political change, as well as demonstrating the appeal of ideals symbolised in the constitution of the United States Of America. Essential to these, was the notion of a 'citizenship' that was built upon the right to vote.

It is equally important to note that as Deniehy made these appeals, borrowing freely from these sources of imagery, he also referred to his preference that political developments in the colony should incorporate the "...representative system of England..." These examples depict how Deniehy, whilst enthusiastically borrowing from the evocative images of politics in the United States, clearly advocated the foundation of representative political institutions in Australia that would be based on the British Parliament.¹³³ This is an important instance of the proponents of political matters predisposal to summoning inspiration from a variety of sources. And then, mixing them in a form attractive to those hungry for 'modern' progressive developments, as well as those of more conservative predilections. Bold and heraldic political symbolism offered broad attractions on some levels, but there was also a concurrent acknowledgment of the abiding appeal of the British Parliament and the stability that its institutions and mores

¹³² This appeal that the United States had for political figures such as Deniehy is discussed by Hirst in, *The Strange Birth of Colonial Democracy: New South Wales 1848-1884*, p. 268. McKenna also investigates this theme in his work, *The Captive Republic: A History of Republicanism in Australia, 1788-1996*, pp. 71-72.

¹³³ Malouf, "Made in England: Australia's British Inheritance", pp. 46-48.

were held to represent.¹³⁴ A situation reflecting the historical appetite for the heroic and brazen in political discourse of Australian political affairs, balanced by a countervailing respect for stable processes and institutions.

In Deniehy's reasoning, "...the representative system, provided for the election of representatives who should calmly deliberate for the masses."¹³⁵ His support for the representative system was predicated on it serving as a model in which representatives could 'calmly deliberate' on behalf of the people. These stand as testimony to the efforts invested in presenting democracy as a model which need not necessarily visit blood and turbulence upon the societies who embraced it. Proponents of change, such as Deniehy were eager to separate popular democracy from the bloody images of European revolution. This shows the full extent of the popularity that the representative system was able to engender within the Australian society of this era. People like Deniehy believed it offered the best chance of facilitating peaceful conduct in political matters

This faith in political reform formed a complementary feature of 'vernacular citizenship' and its aim to discourage any revolutionary action or dissent. Deniehy's citizenship would offer sufficient freedom of expression for the public to voice their opinions through the ballot box. The cornerstone of which was the representative system, that had been enthusiastically championed on the basis that it encouraged the peaceable conduct of political matters. These aspects of Deniehy's reasoning were clearly enunciated in this speech:¹³⁶

When hon. gentlemen pointed out to them the examples of Grecian democracies and the danger of putting large powers into the hands of the populace, they had forgotten to tell them there was not the slightest similarity between the popular institutions of those days and the representative system of England. The former were the primary assemblies of the people, and were often wrought to violent and hasty action by fiery and intemperate orators; and the great difference was,

¹³⁴ The abiding faith in the British Constitution is discussed by Hirst, *The Strange Birth of Colonial Democracy: New South Wales 1848-1884*, pp. 11-13, and pp. 32-45. McKenna also discusses the issues involved in the appeal of the British Constitution, *The Captive Republic: A History of Republicanism in Australia, 1788-1996*, see, pp. 17-28 and pp. 31-39.

¹³⁵ Martin, *The Life And Speeches of Daniel Henry Deniehy*, pp. 60-61.

¹³⁶ *Sydney Morning Herald*, May 12, 1858, p. 3.

that the latter, the representative system, provided for the election of representatives who should calmly deliberate for the masses.¹³⁷

What emerges from this oration is the thematic thread which connects these ideas with similar notions within the *Citizen* and the *People's Advocate*. These sentiments were distilled in the antipathy directed towards "The Demon of Fanaticism",¹³⁸ and the missives which disclaimed political violence or public misconduct.

If one accepts the broad thrust of these points, it is possible to discern the place of the 'citizen' at the heart of this apparent dichotomy. For, just as Deniehy could appropriate from the terminology of citizenship within the guise of American politics, he could also manage to blend these symbolic notions within an implicit representation of Australian citizenship. Equally, he could combine these references with the examples of English political institutions, demonstrating the flexibility of the lexicon of citizenship in Australia. This speech exemplified the versatility which the language of citizenship offered to political figures, as well as a means whereby apparently divergent political matter could be reconciled to form a coherent outline for the imagining of Australian democracy. In this context it is easy to see how the malleable contours of 'vernacular citizenship' were able to accommodate this fecund mix of symbols and ideas.

This is not to say that the language of citizenship was randomly chosen by a succession of opportunists who applied them with a ramshackle collection of ideologies and theories. As we progress through these early examples, it is evident that particular ideas resonate throughout this era. It is the frequency with which particular ideas are associated with notions of citizenship, which lends credence to the contention that a particular brand of 'vernacular citizenship' derived from these 'informal' and 'popular' ideas and can be argued to have been developed during this era.

Some of the points championed by Deniehy incorporated the main themes of 'vernacular citizenship' that had permeated through the pages of the *Citizen* and the *People's Advocate*. 'Vernacular citizenship' emerges as a constant, if somewhat background feature in these ideals for Australian democracy and political development

¹³⁷ Martin, *The Life And Speeches of Daniel Henry Deniehy*, pp. 60-61.

¹³⁸ *Citizen*, October, 17, 1846, No. 8, vol. 1, p. 57.

during this time. Citizenship was an essential component in the projected ideals that called for an 'open', vigorous and 'Enlightened' democracy. In a similar fashion this explains why this brand of 'citizenship' was intricately connected within the parameters of representative parliamentary government. As Deniehy suggested, his 'citizenship' was contingent upon the establishment of political institutions and democratic parliamentary representation. In the context of Deniehy's speech, 'citizenship' formed an essential part of the ideal political future. This bespoke of the way in which 'vernacular citizenship' was one of the key vessels containing symbols that were used to portray a political destiny celebrated for its featuring of the best aspects of the historical past as well as the brightest attractions of the future.

The ramifications of these ideas extended beyond Deniehy's pronouncements. In the reasoning of this thesis, these suggestions open up a much larger discussion involving the parameters of the relationship between the Commonwealth and the Australian people in our contemporary times. There is a latent sense that from this initial set of ideas which constituted 'vernacular citizenship', lay the foundations upon which the formulation of a significant component in the relationship between the government of the nation and its people might be negotiated. Of prime significance was the implicit suggestion that these ideas represented a blue-print for an incipient relationship between the auspices of government and its members. This held vital significance in the context of the fledgling Australian Commonwealth and the relationship with its constituents that would be formed over the coming years.

Deniehy's ideas also serve as an example of how ideas and issues related to the categories of 'citizens', and 'citizenship', whilst being difficult to spot amidst the terrain of Australian history, do in fact exist. While much has been written about Deniehy and his influential role in the practice of politics in Australian history, especially republican issues,¹³⁹ he has not been noticeably associated with the issues involving citizens, or the

139 For an example, see, Moloney, p. 59, "Australian Republicanism", pp. 54-82, in, *Trusting the People: An Elected President For An Australian Republic*, 2001. Also, Headon & Perkins, "Daniel Henry Deniehy (1828-1865) Towards a Great Australian Republic", pp. 114-194, in *Our First Republicans: John Dunmore Lang, Charles Harpur, and Daniel Henry Deniehy, Selected Writings 1840-1860*. As well as, McKenna, *The Captive Republic: A History of Republicanism in Australia, 1788-1996*, pp. 71-72. Also see, Hirst, *The Strange Birth of Colonial Democracy: New South Wales 1848-1884*, pp. 1-13, for an introduction to the involvement of Deniehy in the Republican movement.

state of citizenship. His discourse illustrates that whilst the references to 'citizens' and 'citizenship' notions may be fleeting, there is an undeniable debt to the 'classical' concepts of citizenship' highlighted by his reference to 'Socrates, Plato and Demosthenes'.¹⁴⁰ And most importantly, this debt is a significant one. For as this thesis argues, these ideas of 'citizenship', though at times quite challenging, have played a significant role in the development of political ideas and the construction of political institutions in this country.

CONCLUSIONS

A significant body of informal ideas that represented 'vernacular citizenship' came to be connected with the categories of citizen and citizenship prior to Federation. Many of these ideas were carried into the community by newspapers and magazines which were increasingly 'popular' as they prospered from the burgeoning growth of printing and literacy during this era. They were able to be accessed by increasing proportions of the population, therefore multiplying the likelihood that these thematic ideas would further spread through the community as time progressed. The widespread application of these terms within mainstream discourse generated a groundswell of ideas which were ideally compatible with the role of shaping the political consciousness of the broad mainstream population, from the 'bottom up', as it were. They were disseminated throughout the wider community, through conversation and debate, forming a pervasive 'dialogue of ideas'.

¹⁴⁰ *Sydney Morning Herald*, May 12, 1858, p. 3.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Literary Sphere

Chapter four examines several literary texts which are of great relevance to this thesis as their contents offer further evidence of the place of ‘popular’ ideas involving citizenship within colonial Australia between the mid to late 1840s and early Federation. They contain various informal references to citizenship, as well as a range of implicit notions, that share a thematic similarity with ‘vernacular citizenship’. The texts stand as testimony to the popularity of these ideas, and the attention they generated at this time. The publication of these works is also representative of the ways and means whereby these ideas involving citizenship were widely distributed amongst the wider population.

The reasons for selecting the individual texts and the motivations for analysing their particular relevance to the themes of the thesis will be explained at greater length during the course of this chapter. However, from a general perspective the texts offer an eclectic selection of material with which to pursue ‘vernacular citizenship’. They have not been chosen on any other particular basis, or with any intention to represent an exhaustive catalogue of material. As will be argued over the course of closer reference to the various texts, each in some ways represents divergent aspects of colonial society, presenting a relatively wide cross-section of material. The autobiographical writings of Spence, which focus on a life spent largely in the political sphere, contrast with the fiction of Joseph Furphy and the life of its central character, Tom Collins, as does Rolfe Boldrewood’s *Miner’s Right: A Tale of the Australian Goldfields*. In these works attention focuses on two characters and their alternate experiences, set primarily in the Australian outback.

Some of the works appeared quite late in this period, most notably William Spence’s *Australia’s Awakening* which was not published until 1909. However each can be described as ‘products’ of the era that this thesis explores, representing a selection of material that carries an iconic nationalistic air. On the strength of either literary reputation, or the subject matter they explore, they represent a selection of material that can be considered to be quintessentially ‘Australian’. Each represents important aspects of the society in which they were produced. For example, Spence’s autobiographical

account of his life reflects his years growing up in rural Australia. It is fascinating to pursue his life, largely spent traversing the countryside as a union organiser, and to examine his discussions surrounding citizenship. By analysing the texts and the intellectual milieu in which they were formed, it is possible to further explore the propensity for the ideas connected with citizenship to be disseminated within the colonial community.

However, the publication dates of the texts should not be considered to be the most important factors in assessing their pertinence to this thesis. Each reflects particular aspects of the life and times of this broad period of Australian life. Upon tracing the common thematic pathway of ideas relating to ‘vernacular citizenship’ which weaves between their pages, it is evident that these ideas were sufficiently popular to have been discussed within these various texts. And are therefore representative of the circumstances and ways in which these ideas assumed high relevance in colonial Australia. Furthermore, their publication within these texts suggests that they were likely to have found a broader distribution within the community, and further advanced the spread of these ideas. In this way these ideas were ideally situated to continue shaping the imagining of political matters.

THE WRITINGS OF W.G. SPENCE

The life and writings of W.G. Spence form a cogent example of the ideas and informal conceptions of ‘citizenship’, making their appearance in Australian history and shaping the form of ‘vernacular citizenship’. William Guthrie Spence was six years old when he landed in Geelong from the Scottish islands of Orkney with his family in 1851. In these early years Spence and his family pursued the trail of gold to ‘Jackass Creek’ three miles from Creswick near Ballarat.¹ These experiences provided Spence with a vast range of observations and influences which would mould his opinions and convictions.² By the time he turned thirty he had begun his career as a union organiser, an occupation which would take him vast distances across the country.³

Knowledge accumulated from the gold fields of Victoria and the wider expanses of the

¹ H. J. Palmer & J. MacLeod, *W.G. Spence and the Rise of the Trade Unions*, Longmans, Green and Co. Ltd. Victoria, Australia, 1964, p. 14.

² *ibid*, pp. 14-26.

³ Palmer & MacLeod, *W.G. Spence and the Rise of the Trade Unions*, p. 27.

country, demonstrates the broad range of influences and experiences from which he could draw. Beginning at the 'grass roots' as a miner, and then a union organiser with the Amalgamated Miners Union, where he also served as the General Secretary in 1882. He was then elected General Secretary of the Amalgamated Shearers Union in 1886, preceding the Foundation of the Australian Workers Union. Spence reached the summit of public service as a political representative, initially as the Member for Cobar in the NSW State election of 1898, and then as the Federal Labor Member for Darling, following Federation. His ideas developed against the backdrop of the broad reaches of the colonial community and its scattered geographical locations. Spence's story, beginning with his arrival in Melbourne in 1851, and flourishing in the period that leads into Federation, reflects seminal aspects of this era.

Spence's ideas and opinions, which invoked implicit notions of citizenship, demonstrated how these informal 'citizenship' ideas had permeated the thinking of some of the most influential political figures of this time. When one considers the trajectory of Spence's career, ascending the hierarchical levels of colonial society, from manual labourer to Member of Parliament, it is possible to comprehend the influence that these informal ideas played in shaping aspects of Australian political thought. His incorporation of 'vernacular citizenship' values embodied the process in which these notions had forded the distance between the 'top' and 'bottom' in the hierarchy of colonial society. This vouched for the popularity of the terms at this time, as well as their ability to infiltrate the consciousness of mainstream colonial Australia. As Spence's writings show, this influence was considerable, and at the same time also quite 'subterranean' in its nature, with these notions and ideals seeping through his dialogue of ideas.

In his 1909 tome, *Australia's Awakening*, Spence presented his perceptions of the gold digging era in Australia. He wrote:

There was no life more free than that of the gold digger. He was no wage slave, but a freeman, with all those high qualities only developed under free conditions. His influence counted for much in our early history. He was a democrat. He believed in law and order of the true kind - that which considers the interests of the mass as a first consideration- not that of the kind we hear so much of in late years, in which the mass and their wishes are to be suppressed for the gratification of the ignorant and selfish ideas of a few. No force was

required in those days, as the digger recognised that he was a citizen interested in putting down anything calculated to work against the common good of all. Thieves were promptly dealt with by the diggers, and made to feel that honesty would pay best. No injustice was done. Freedom begets justice.⁴

The first significant feature of Spence's recollections is his use of the term 'citizen' in describing fellow diggers. It is evident that Spence applied the term in conjunction with an implicit framework of informal ideas, demonstrating definite opinions of what constituted a 'citizen'. It is also apparent that some of these characteristics bore definite resemblance to the 'classical' models of citizenship discussed in Chapter One.

Spence's idyllic account indicates that he considered the 'digger's' character and behaviour to be in alignment with his own ideals of 'citizenship'. The first characteristic was the 'freedom' which Spence considered the 'digger-citizens' enjoyed. This 'freedom' was derived from the fact that the diggers were working for themselves, rather than 'as slaves for someone else'.⁵ An inherent part of this 'freedom' was their status as 'democrats'.⁶ This notion of political freedom accorded with classical notions of citizenship in which democracy⁷ was considered the ideal form of political system, and one that was also dependent upon the active participation of its citizens.⁸

It is therefore even more noteworthy that Spence personified the qualities of the diggers in this form, "He believed in law and order of the true kind..." Spence referred to the 'digger's' ability to not only recognise what was 'lawful' and 'right', but to also actively maintain these standards. This echoes the classical definitions of 'ideal citizenship', in which virtue is attributed to those citizens who are capable of not only ruling, but also of being ruled. One can take Aristotle's dictum, "On the other hand,

⁴ William Guthrie Spence, *Australia's Awakening: Thirty Years in the Life of an Australian Agitator*, The Worker Trustees, Sydney, 1909, p.18.

⁵ Gollan refers to the importance of working for ones self in regard to the independence of the miners, and also the implications that this employment situation exerted upon political conceptualisations, see, *Radical and Working Class Politics; A Study of Eastern Australia, 1850-1910*, pp. 15-16.

⁶ This issue involving the place of democracy on the goldfields is examined by Hirst in, *The Strange Birth of Colonial Democracy: New South Wales 1848-1884*, pp. 198-215.

⁷ For a brief historical background to the activities of the 'diggers' and their political inclinations, see, Gollan, *Radical and Working Class Politics; A Study of Eastern Australia, 1850-1910*, pp. 20-32.

⁸ It can also be said that many of the characteristics which Spence identified are also the types that many contemporary critics have identified as representing 'anachronistic' features of citizenship. Namely, the masculine identities of the diggers and their central position within the traditional outlines of gender relations in colonial Australia.

people hold in esteem the capacity both to rule and to obey, and they regard the excellence of a good citizen as being a matter of ruling and obeying well."⁹, and apply it accurately to Spence's 'diggers' and their capacity to define what was lawful. Enabling them to 'rule', and maintain what was 'lawful' and 'right'.

If one looks behind Spence's assertions on the issue of the diggers and their status as 'democrats', it is possible to see the shadow of Aristotelian thought and the issue of democracy, "The principle of a constitution is its conception of justice; and this is the fundamental ground of difference between oligarchy and democracy. Democrats hold that if men are equal by birth, they should in justice have an equal share in office and honours;"¹⁰ Spence's opinions represent a 'black stump' democracy in which, nominally, 'all' were born equal. 'All', were therefore also required to participate in the maintenance of public order and the policing of civic behaviour.

There is more evidence of the pervasiveness of these idylls in Rolf Boldrewood's, *The Miner's Right*. In the following passage Boldrewood discusses the diggers on the Australian goldfields:

Among this class of miners, constituting a very large proportion of the mining population on every goldfield, it will be seen that the chance of lawless behaviour being supported is slight. Malcontents and criminals doubtless there were in due proportion to the exceptional circumstances which brought together the community, but the police being aided by the whole body of respectable miners, and still more strengthened by the propriety of public feeling, there was little probability of crime rioting and reigning unchecked, as (unless their own chroniclers are marvellously and unnecessarily mendacious) was the case on the American gold and silver fields.¹¹

This excerpt expresses confidence in the miners being able to manage their own affairs harmoniously with the assistance of the police. For Boldrewood, this defined the local goldfields and their inhabitants as possessing superior qualities to their American counterparts. He reinforced this with an inference towards the lawlessness of the

⁹ Aristotle, *The Politics of Aristotle: with an introduction, two prefatory texts, and notes critical and explanatory*, W. L., Newman, Arno Press, 1973, pp. 92-93.

¹⁰ Aristotle, *Politics*, p. 102.

¹¹ Rolf Boldrewood, *The Miner's Right: A Tale Of The Australian Goldfields*, Macmillan and Co., London and New York, 1890, p. 63.

prospecting lands of America. He wrote, “Such were the reflections of many honest Australian citizens, who deplored as deeply the nationality of the criminals as the criminality of the deed.”¹² These sentiments reflected the optimism that some felt in regard to the qualities of the local population, and their ability to maintain high standards of public order and decorum. It is also possible to detect in these expressions the shoots of an incipient national pride developing.

Spence's words form an outline of a 'rustic citizenship', in which classical notions of 'being ruled' and also 'able to rule', were closely matched with his belief that the diggers were 'independent', and able to 'rule'. Interestingly Spence's application of the word 'citizen', equated to an almost 'colloquial' representation of the word. His idealised 'digger citizens', are in some ways Australian archetypes.¹³ The 'digger-citizens', characterised by their independence and their embrace of freedom and democracy, were the arbiters of what constituted 'the common good' as well as the 'interests of the mass'. For an echo of these sentiments in more contemporary settings, one only has to refer to the considerations of those who have written of the independent nature of Australian military personnel¹⁴ and their ability to productively organise themselves in the pursuit of group oriented tasks with minimum supervision.¹⁵

The examples of the preceding paragraph also exemplify the propensity for mythological developments to grow around these mores. The characteristics attributed to the 'Diggers' and the society of the mining fields were personified by a range of virtues. Many were inspired by the spirit of altruism, manifesting themselves in the traits of responsible behaviour that were forged in the circumstances of rugged manual labour¹⁶ and masculine co-existence.¹⁷ In this same way, these qualities were features

¹² *ibid*, p. 171.

¹³ Richard White, “Symbols of Australia”, in Lyons & Russell, *Australia's History: Themes and Debates*, p. 125.

¹⁴ For a brief introduction to these types of ideas read C.E.W. Bean, *The Official History of Australia in the War of 1914-1918, Volume 1, The Story Of Anzac*, University Of Queensland Press in Association with the Australian War Memorial, Queensland, 1981, pp. 549-551.

¹⁵ Charles Blackton made a similar point in the footnotes (no. 29) to his article, “Australian Nationality and Nationalism, 1850-1900”, *Historical Studies Australia and New Zealand*, Vol. 9, November 1959-May 1961, pp. 351-367.

¹⁶ Atkinson, *The Europeans in Australia: A History. Volume Two: Democracy*, p. 258.

¹⁷ Gollan examines the place of the 'man of the outback' in Australian literature and assesses their implications in the context of the historiography of the time, in, *Radical and Working Class Politics; A Study of Eastern Australia, 1850-1910*, pp. 112-115.

which suited the dimensions of the colonial society. They reflected the makeup of that community and its large numbers of manual labourers and artisans, as well as the fact these ideals encouraged collective action and productive involvement in the community. In this context, the characteristic aspects of the society were presented in a fashion that accentuated the positive potential of the working, and predominantly masculine, population. This perspective was also reflected in the idealistic representation of these predominant traits of the colonial society that were celebrated in local folklore. These segments of informal citizenship values became encased in the potent representations of national character and identity. Together, these virtues bore such a tight fit with the mythological dimensions of national stereotypes, that it is possible to gauge the popularity of these ideas and values of 'vernacular citizenship', that were able to seep into the consciousness of the national community.

This confidence in the diggers to maintain order and stability in harmonious cooperation with officialdom reflects similar ideas expressed by Thomas Paine, "Great part of that order which reigns among mankind is not the effect of government. It has its origins in the principles of society and the natural constitution of man. It existed prior to government, and would exist if the formality of government was abolished."¹⁸ It is apparent that Spence shared this confidence in the capacity of the people to independently govern themselves without the need for excessive formal governance. At the heart of these considerations lay the conviction that humans possessed an innate capacity for conducting themselves in a manner that best served the interests of themselves and their neighbours. From this proposition stemmed the confidence that the sense of mutual obligation would accommodate the ambitions of the greater community. For an echo of these considerations, one can once more refer to Paine, who wrote that:

The mutual dependence and reciprocal interest which man has upon man, and all the parts of the civilized community upon each other, create that great chain of connection which holds it together. The landowner, the farmer, the manufacturer, the merchant, the tradesman, and every occupation, prospers by the aid which each receives from the other, and from the whole. Common

¹⁸ Thomas Paine, p. 266 , "The Rights of Man, Part 2", *The Thomas Paine Reader*, Penguin, Victoria, Australia, 1987, pp. 263-364.

interest regulates their concerns, and forms their law; and the laws which common usage ordains, have a greater influence than the laws of government.¹⁹

Once more it is possible to understand the confidence that was built upon this belief in the capacity of a mutuality of shared interests to unite the disparate interests of the community.²⁰ One fundamental tenet involved the faith invested in the goodness of human nature, and the optimistic belief that mankind would naturally endeavour to assist their fellow humans. As one reads the lineage of these ideas emerging from Boldrewood's text, it is also possible to trace the reasons why they were so suited to the colonial milieu in which they were shaped. A substantial component of their persuasive powers was due to the fact that these beliefs in the goodwill of humankind and their capacity to find solutions to the problems of the world, represented some of the most influential and popular philosophies of the day. This spirit of optimism had fired the spread of Enlightenment ideas through the intellectual milieu of colonial Australia. Works such as Boldrewood's *The Miner's Right: A Tale Of The Australian Goldfields* were not only imbued with these ideas, but also buoyed by this same spirit of optimism. In this manner these political philosophies were being melded into a form, which matched with the social characteristics of the local community and its demographic features, to produce a hybrid form of informal and popular citizenship.

Joseph Furphy also expresses this optimistic faith in the capacity for mankind to utilise their reasoning to enrich their age. He wrote:

Ours is pre-eminently the age of goodwill; it is the age of goodwill because it is the age of enlightenment; it is the age enlightenment because throughout the civilised world a thousand pens, such as petrified prejudice and vested interests can never hire, are writing in varied style and phrase the unchallengeable charter of human brotherhood, and the whole world, being kin, responds gallantly to the touch of nature.²¹

Furphy's words exhibit the lineage connecting these ideas with similar ones expressed in the *Citizen* and the *People's Advocate*, as well as the discourse of Deniehy and Spence. As explored in Chapter Three, The Enlightenment's spirit of optimism and

¹⁹ *ibid*, pp. 263-364 .

²⁰ For another discussion involving these matters see, Galligan & Roberts, *Australian Citizenship*, p. 6.

²¹ Quoted from John Barnes, *The Order Of Things; A Life of Joseph Furphy*, Oxford University Press Australia, South Melbourne, Australia, 1990, p. 157.

intellectual challenge guided these ideas. This affirmation of the spirit of shared kinship concluded with a reference to 'the touch of nature', reinforcing the influence of 'vernacular citizenship' and their contextualisation as organic elements within the natural destiny of humankind's advance.

The other point of interest involves the reference that Spence made to 'the interests of the mass', and the 'common good'. These accorded with values that were extremely popular in this era, and that have continued to resonate through Australian history. The concept of the 'common good' formed a core element of 'vernacular citizenship'. Necessarily this required the certitude that the 'common good' could be defined, and pursued within this wider movement of common ideas which celebrated political and social reform. A 'citizenship' that was based on notions of 'common good' was a prominent motif in this early Federation period, and remains a recurring ideal of Australian history. Spence makes an implicit reference to it in the guise of his idealised 'diggers'. In reading his account we can see how these basic values which lionised not only the capacities of the diggers, but more significantly their compatibility in the larger scheme of what constituted 'the common good', came to be incorporated into a wider tapestry of national values. As Spence suggested, the 'diggers' were capable of not only recognising 'the common good', they were also able to actively work towards maintaining it. This type of 'citizenship' carried responsibilities, and chief amongst these were the pursuit and protection of this concept of the 'common good'.

Having read Spence's description of the 'diggers', as well as those of Boldrewood, it is possible to draw a comparison with the ideas expressed by Jean- Jacques Rousseau and his 'social contract'.²² When we read Rousseau it is possible to understand its relevance to the 'diggers':

How to find a form of association which will defend the person and goods of each member with the collective force of all, and under which each individual, while uniting himself with the others, obeys no one but himself, and remains as free as before.' This is the fundamental problem to which the social contract holds the solution.²³

²² Atkinson refers to the influence of Rousseau and his *The Social Contract or Principles of Political Right* on political ideas in the English speaking world, see, *The Europeans in Australia: A History. Volume One: The Beginning*, pp. 50-51.

²³ Jean- Jacques Rousseau, "*Book 1*", *The Social Contract or Principles of Political Right*, with translation and introduction by, M., Cranston, Penguin Books, Australia, First Published, 1968, p. 60.

It is not difficult to comprehend how Rousseau's ideal,²⁴ with its claims to protect each individual's safety, as well as safeguard their belongings through the agency of a collective body, while simultaneously shielding the individual from the coercion of this mass, resembled the ideals articulated by Spence and Boldrewood. This is clearest in their comments about the capacity of the diggers to maintain 'self-rule' which satisfied the demands of the greater community.

These opinions stand as testimony to the implicit level of trust that was invested in the goals of democratic political development. This faith also accorded with notions of a 'common' and 'public good'. Spence and his ideal of the 'digger', bestowed with the attributes of a democratic citizen, harmoniously working with fellow 'digger citizens' towards mutual goals, correlates with the themes of 'vernacular citizenship'. Many of these had been enunciated in previous years by such vessels as the *Citizen* and the *People's Advocate*, as well as Deniehy. They believed that representative parliamentary systems would dissuade opponents from mounting revolutionary challenges, and actively encourage lawful participation within the community. They form a lineage of ideas equating 'good citizenship' with industrious purpose and peaceful co-existence, which runs from these examples all the way to the Federation era and beyond.

Both Spence and Deniehy proclaimed the merits of a democracy based on robust and innovative ideas in vigorous tones. Equally, they also made clear references in support of peaceful conduct. They hoped that these measures would actively dissuade the ordinary person, or 'citizen', from engaging in violent revolutionary action or other public mischief. This reinforces the pervasive influence that idealised standards of civilised conduct in civil affairs and political discussion, have exerted on the discourse of colonial and pre-federation Australia. 'Vernacular citizenship' emphasised the importance of peaceful and respectable behaviour. These characteristics represented some of the features which most sharply differentiated 'vernacular citizenship' from 'classical citizenship' and in particular, its accent upon the 'warrior citizen'.

This is not to say that informal citizenship ideas in Australia were in any way effete. It is more correct to say that their focus was to direct the energies of the working

²⁴ A. Carter & G. Stokes, p. 4, "Liberal Democracy and its Critics", pp. 1-20, in, Carter & Stokes, *Liberal Democracy and its Critics: Perspectives in Contemporary Political Thought*, Polity Press, Cambridge, U.K., 1998.

population towards goals that would benefit the broad society in ways precluding unnecessary bloodshed or carnage. The ideas of 'vernacular citizenship' were deployed in channelling the energies of the population towards constructive and peaceful ends.

This wary approach to matters of conflict and violence was connected with political and social considerations. The expectation or requirement for citizens to fight also entailed their being granted political rights. This was spelt out in the popular newspaper the *Truth* during the time of the Boer war when it commented:

The brave and gallant Britishers- English, Irish, Scottish, Welsh and Australians- who are now shedding their blood and giving up their lives for the political enfranchisement of their fellows in the Transvaal, are the veriest helots in creation. They have no political rights in their own country, not even such rights as the Boers are willing to concede to the foreigners in their midst.²⁵

These comments indicated that the *Truth* was critical of the impoverished political status of those engaged in the Boer war, rather than being opposed to their involvement upon other conscientious grounds. Another example of the place of armed conflict within 'vernacular citizenship' concerns the views expressed by W. M., 'Billy' Hughes. He spoke of the pre-eminent national issues of that time as being, "... White Australia, Old-Age pensions, a National Bank, and a democratic Military system."²⁶ Hughes' recognised the need for a military body in Australia, but he also held strict ideas of the shape it should take. His preferred citizens soldiers as, "This country can't afford a big standing army, and doesn't want it if it could. The standing army means the military caste, altogether antagonistic to democratic practices and ideals..."²⁷ Soldiers and military matters were important, but they were also connected to a network of political ideas. This is apparent when we read that Hughes considered that a large standing army was not suitable for the Commonwealth nation. These views are clearly compatible with the egalitarian ideals which shaped 'vernacular citizenship'.

It is pertinent to note that the ideals which constituted this template for behaviour in political and community affairs, were in some senses quite modest. They consisted of a belief in the right of the individual to work with a sense of freedom, as well as an

²⁵ *Truth*, Sunday, January 14, 1900.

²⁶ L. H., Fitzhardinge, *William Morris Hughes: A Political Biography, Pt. 1: That Fiery Article, 1862-1914*, p. 116.

²⁷ *ibid*, p. 116.

equally important responsibility of understanding the overriding sense of obligation to the wider community. Over time these values were subtly transferred to describe the responsibilities of individual citizens within the representative electoral system.

The ideas and opinions expressed by Spence and Deniehy, also reflect the role that idylls and mythological symbols have played in shaping popular political consciousness. One prominent example involved the matching of informal citizenship values with the iconic figures and traces of local idiom which have become synonymous with national stereotypes. Take Spence and his idyll of the outback workers scouring the earth, with hearts of gold, noble intentions, and minds educated in the importance of the 'common good'. Pair these with the promotions of Deniehy for the rights of these 'common' people to claim the status of 'citizens' in conjunction with voting rights, and one has assembled an outline of 'vernacular citizenship'. A 'popular' conception of Australian citizenship that conferred the fruits of advanced political reforms within the broad mainstream of Australian society at that time.

This also illustrates the dimensions of 'vernacular citizen', and its central place within this idealised political democracy presented in the ideas of persons such as Spence and Deniehy, as well as publications as the *Citizen* and the *People's Advocate*. One of the characteristic features that emerge in the time leading to Federation was the practice of borrowing images from political systems and situations elsewhere. The 'citizen' regularly featured these various examples of 'borrowed' and appropriated representations. This versatility prompted the burgeoning symbolism of the 'citizen', and its predilection for serving the political imagination of pre- and early Federation Australia. Whilst the examples of imagery were fairly eclectic, it is possible to glean some characteristics which were frequently applied to the Antipodean imagining of the 'citizen' during this era of early Federation.

Spence's ideas also illustrate the manner in which the influence of 'classical citizenship' shaped the historical discourse of the early Federation era. They make up a significant part of the political discourse of the mid to late 19th and early 20th century in Australia. Spence's writings also reveal several important aspects about the history of the term 'citizen' in this period in Australian history. Initially, it may be quite surprising to find that the ideas of Spence are considered to accord with classical notions of 'citizenship'. He does not explicitly define 'citizenship' or overtly present expositions of what it constitutes. However, the implicit references are clearly observable. Spence's

views provide an example of the way in which notions of 'citizenship', whilst they have rarely been clearly or carefully defined, have still left their indelible fingerprints over political discourse in 'modern' Australia. Whilst the images of the citizen may be short on explicit details, and the outlines of their citizenship imprecise, they none the less, have played a considerable role in shaping the imagining of Australian political history.

The life of Spence show how this 'vernacular' level of influence that citizenship ideas exerted, has come to permeate the political lexicon, and in some cases seep into the formal political institutions of Australia. This is most clearly evident in the processes by which the popular masculine sentiments of working class politics were incorporated into Labor party politics. Spence's own political career, which began as a trade union organiser with the 'Amalgamated Miners Union', culminating with his place in the Commonwealth Parliament as a member of the Labor Party, is a sound example.

The ideas of Spence and Deniehy carry key themes that recur through layers of discourse in the time leading up to Federation. Some of the most important involve liberty, freedom, equality and the importance of community, which were underpinned by the theme of progressive democratic policies. These ideas were effectively entwined with the references to 'citizenship' that were made at both an implicit and explicit level. The place of these ideas and their role in the movement towards Federation will be discussed in more detail in Chapters Five and Six.

JOSEPH FURPHY AND *SUCH IS LIFE*

Joseph Furphy's novel *Such is Life* provides a wealth of material germane to the examination of the development of 'vernacular citizenship' in pre-federation Australia. The appearances of the words 'citizen' and 'citizenship' within its pages offer further evidence of their existence upon the canvas of Australia's historical past. A closer analysis provides clues suggesting they contain several important details. One such clue emerges in this reference to Greek politics, "Mosey would have our cities resemble ancient Athens, in respect of having more public statues than living citizens."²⁸ There is a shadow of insinuation behind this reference to the ancestral home of classical notions of citizenship, that sparks suspicion that there is more substance to be found in this text than may seem apparent on first inspection.

One could argue that these references have represented a variety of meanings as well

²⁸ J. Barnes, (ed.), *Joseph Furphy Such is Life, stories, verse, essays and letters*, p. 28.

as alternative degrees of comprehension amongst the readers of Furphy's novel. And quite clearly, from this perspective any attempt to claim a comprehensive and unequivocal insight into the minds of readers of Furphy's text is clearly unsustainable. However, if we examine some of these references in greater depth within the context of Furphy's novel, then it becomes evident that to too lightly dismiss the significance of their appearance, or to summarily discredit their importance, might be erroneous. It is possible also to comprehend how one might utilise these points of conjecture to cite Furphy's novel as representing an emblematic example of 'vernacular citizenship'. This can be argued on the basis of the range of ideas that are connected with citizenship within *Such is Life*, as well the context in which Furphy and the novel wove their presence into Australian history.

While the novel was not published until 1903, its relevance to this thesis can be justified on account of the circumstances of Joseph Furphy's life and their impact on the book's genesis. In considering the milieu in which *Such is Life* was delivered, it becomes evident that the relevance of this text extends back further than the dawn of the twentieth century. Furphy was born on the 26th of September, in 1843 at Yering in the upper Yarra Valley in Victoria. By the time he submitted the original manuscript of *Such is Life* to the *Bulletin* in 1897, he had spent the major part of his 54 years in Northern Victoria and the Riverina in South- Western New South Wales in a variety of physically demanding jobs.²⁹

One can judge that much of the stimuli which inspired Furphy's tome was derived from these experiences³⁰, particularly his time spent in the Riverina.³¹ Furphy's narrator Tom Collins commented that, "It is not in the cities or townships, it is not in our agricultural or mining areas, that the Australian attains full consciousness of his own nationality; it is in places like this, and as clearly here as at the centre of the continent."³² Clearly, Furphy considered his experiences in the outback of colonial Australia were crucially important in the development of his thoughts and reasoning. A

²⁹ The experiences of Furphy during these years are recounted, in, Barnes, *The Order Of Things; A Life of Joseph Furphy*, pp. 100-134.

³⁰ A point made by Julian Croft in *The Life and Opinions of Tom Collins-A Study of the works of Joseph Furphy*, Queensland University Press, St. Lucia, 1991, p.20.

³¹ Barnes, (ed.), *Joseph Furphy, Such is Life, stories, verse, essays and letters*, p. xiii.

³² Barnes refers to this sentence as well, see his introduction, *Joseph Furphy, Such is Life, stories, verse, essays and letters*, foreword, p. xiii. The quotation itself can be found on p. 65 of *Such is Life* in the edition edited by Barnes.

point reinforced by the novel being set in the Riverina during the year of 1883. Many of the philosophies and ideas which influenced Furphy can be attributed to these years of labour preceding the novel's publication.

In the course of analysing the references to citizens and citizenship in *Such is Life* it is possible to understand that the novel harbours valuable information in regard to their place within the evolving political imagination of colonial Australia. Furphy's text is useful not only on account of the references to these terms, but also because of the details of the society and times in which it was produced. The novel represents an ideal window through which one can seek insight into the interplay of ideas involving citizenship within the developing mainstream of political consciousness in colonial Australia.

THE CIRCUMSTANCES IN WHICH *SUCH IS LIFE* APPEARED

Many of the reasons for claiming that Furphy's novel is of acute relevance to this thesis are due to its place at the core of several developments, which profoundly shaped colonial Australia. This is most vividly characterised by the novel emerging during a halcyon era for printing³³ and reading that nurtured the development of a national literature pivotal to the shaping of a broader national culture.³⁴ Of course not everyone agrees with these impressions. W. G. McMinn is one critic who has questioned this era's impact upon the development of a 'new nationalism'.³⁵ What seems incontestable is that a burgeoning publishing and literary environment which reflected national trends in education and lifestyle developed at this time. Rates of literacy³⁶ were continuing to rise in colonial Australia encouraged by the education reforms of the 1870s, which included compulsory education for the first time. These factors had combined with the rising affluence of the colonial population to stimulate a flourishing publishing scene.³⁷ More than one hundred different publications saw the light of day between 1880 and

³³ As David Malouf so quaintly puts it, Australians were 'inveterately bookish', see, "Made in England: Australia's British Inheritance", p. 29.

³⁴ For a solid exposition of these ideas connecting the expansion of publishing and nationalist thought, see Blackton, "Australian Nationality and Nationalism, 1850-1900", pp. 351-367.

³⁵ W. G. McMinn, *Nationalism and Federalism in Australia*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, Melbourne, 1994, pp. 151-152.

³⁶ Atkinson, *The Europeans in Australia: A History. Volume Two: Democracy*, pp. 148-151.

³⁷ Blainey refers to the rapid expansion in publishing during the 1880s, see *Black Kettle and Full Moon: Daily Life in a Vanished Australia*, pp. 107-108.

1900.³⁸ On this evidence alone, *Such is Life* can be understood as representing several significant elements relevant to this study.

One publication which emerged during this time was the *Bulletin*³⁹ whose maiden issue appeared on January 31 1880. This magazine is frequently described as a spearhead of these broader cultural developments, as well as a source of considerable influence upon nationalistic imaginings.⁴⁰ One of the most easily demonstrated impacts of the *Bulletin* relates to the reciprocal relationship it fostered with its readership. Encouraged to send their own offerings for publication, readers responded enthusiastically, demonstrating the appetite within the expanding colonial population not only for reading, but also for the expression of opinions and ideas. *Such is Life* was in several ways emblematic of the burgeoning literary and publishing scene of the 1880s and 1890s. Author Joseph Furphy was closely connected with the *Bulletin*, initially as a reader,⁴¹ and then as a contributor, with an article, 'The Mythical Sundowner' being first published in 1889, followed by several other minor contributions. This link was strengthened further when the magazines publisher, A.G. Stephens, agreed to publish *Such is Life* in 1897.

Amongst the purposes of nominating the place of Furphy and *Such is Life* within broader social and cultural developments of this period, is that they illuminate several issues pertinent to this study. The circumstances surrounding the publishing career of Furphy highlight the reasons why this era is considered to represent a seminal time in the development of a national literature. In particular, *Such is Life* is representative of the development of a culture of 'popular reading' in this era. Both the novel and its author, can be considered to be central characters in this highly influential national movement. As if to emphasise their role in the nurturing of a national consciousness, Furphy himself announced the completion of his novel with this summary, "temper,

³⁸ Walker, *The Newspaper Press in New South Wales, 1803-1920*, p. 247.

³⁹ Two texts which document the life and times of the *Bulletin* are Patricia Rolfe's, *The Journalistic Javelin* and Sylvia Lawson's, *The Archibald Paradox*.

⁴⁰ The discussions inspired by the *Bulletin* and its influence upon the development of a national literature, and the development of a national culture have been widely canvassed. One of the most influential accounts appears in R. Ward, *The Australian Legend*, Oxford University Press, London, 1958, pp. 211-237. A later discussion appears in Richard White, *Inventing Australia: Images and Identity 1688-1980*, George Allen & Unwin, North Sydney, New South Wales, 1981, pp. 85-109. Nadel addresses the influence of the *Bulletin* in fostering nationalism, *Australia's Colonial Culture: Ideas, Men and Institutions in Mid-Nineteenth Century Eastern Australia*, pp. 99-100.

⁴¹ Introduction to, Barnes (ed.), *Joseph Furphy, Such is Life, stories, verse, essays and letters*, p. xiv.

democratic; bias, offensively Australian.”⁴² In doing so he sketched an indelible line linking his novel with notions of democracy and their place at the heart of these imaginings within the nascent national community.

The reasons for discussing Furphy’s novel and its connection to ideas and notions which clearly predated its publication are underlined when one analyses his text. It clearly bears the fruits reaped from lengthy and devout reading, in the years prior to publication.⁴³ The manner in which Furphy wrote his book, and the ideas incorporated into it, reflected several characteristic features of this era. We can grasp not just his voracious appetite for reading and literature, but also his eagerness to draw from these sources, and express this knowledge in his writing.⁴⁴ *Such is Life* is replete with examples of Furphy expressing his extensive and erudite reading background.⁴⁵ It is filled with quotations derived from sources as diverse as The Bible, and the works of Shakespeare, including *Coriolanus*⁴⁶, as well as references to Goethe’s *Faust*,⁴⁷ Zola’s *Nana*,⁴⁸ Voltaire’s *Candide*⁴⁹, and poems such as Milton’s *Paradise Lost*⁵⁰, Coleridge’s, *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*⁵¹, and the poetry of Byron.⁵² There are also references to the histories of Herodotus⁵³, and Carlyle’s, *French Revolution*.⁵⁴

⁴² Barnes, (ed.), *J. Furphy, Such is Life, stories, verse, essays and letters*, p. xv.

⁴³ Furphy’s description of himself as “Half-bushmen and half book-worm...”, in a letter to Miles Franklin in 1904, would seem to encapsulate this aspect of his life perfectly, Barnes, *The Order Of Things: A Life of Joseph Furphy*, see p. 13.

⁴⁴ See, R. Driehuis, who discusses Furphy’s voracious appetite for reading, and his desire to incorporate his knowledge into “the European cultural tradition”, in “The coming Australienne’: Landscape and Gender in Furphy’s Nationalist Thought”, in, *Journal of Australian Studies*, “Fresh Cuts”, no. 67, 2001, pp. 144-151.

⁴⁵ Barnes, (ed.), *Furphy, J., Such is Life, stories, verse, essays and letters*, p. xiv, introduction. For a deeper discussion of this characteristic of Furphy’s work, see *The Order Of Things: A Life of Joseph Furphy*, pp. 212-246.

⁴⁶ J. Furphy, *The Annotated Such Is Life: Being Certain Extracts From the Diary of Tom Collin’s: With Introduction and Notes* by - F. Devlin-Glass, R. Eaden, L. Hoffmann, G. W., Turner, Oxford University Press, Australia, 1991. See, p. 558, of annotations, 271:16/338:17.

⁴⁷ *ibid*, see, p. 458, of annotations, 132:24/165: 15.

⁴⁸ *ibid*, see, p. 544, of annotations, 248:1/308: 42.

⁴⁹ *ibid*, see, p. 429 of annotations, 95: 8/118: 27.

⁵⁰ *ibid*, see, p. 417, of annotations, 88: 11/109: 40.

⁵¹ *ibid*, see, p. 458, of annotations, 132:30/165: 21.

⁵² *ibid*, see, p. 436, of annotations, 108:5/ 134:29.

⁵³ *ibid*, see, p. 427 of annotations, 94: 22/117: 31.

⁵⁴ *ibid*, see, p. 434 of annotations, 104:16/129:40.

Furphy had not only availed himself of the 'classical traditions of reading' but also by implication, gleaned an appreciation of 'classical conceptions of citizenship'. We can deduce from Furphy's references that he was exceedingly well read, and that it is most probable that he would have consumed other literature that canvassed these topics of citizenship and related political material.⁵⁵ To reinforce these points, if we peruse this reference from *Such is Life*, which begins, "At last Burn's and Paine flashed their own strong, healthy personalities on the community, marking an epoch..."⁵⁶ we gain an insight into Furphy's methods as a writer. It is possible to observe how his writings contained information that resonated beyond its initial application. For instance, in reference to this quotation Furphy is quoted as writing to a friend, "What a rotten world it was before Paine preached and Burns sang and Byron scoffed and Carlyle snarled. I find great comfort in the ferment of society in these our days, but gude save us! What a lot of suffering it takes to earn a little progress."⁵⁷ (sic)

It is evident that Furphy was well versed in the literature of Thomas Paine and others of his era, but also keenly aware of the implications of their work. His words show his understanding of Paine's works, and its connection with the prevailing 'ferment of society'. Providing further proof that the references within Furphy's work consisted of more substance than might immediately appear apparent.

It should also be considered that Furphy's instincts were representative of the ethos of 'self education' whereby the practices of individuals broadening their knowledge by reading⁵⁸ and discussion were both popular and enthusiastically pursued in the colonial society at that time.⁵⁹ The ambitions of the 'autodidact' featured in this era.⁶⁰ This

⁵⁵ Barnes, *The Order Of Things; A Life of Joseph Furphy*. Barnes comments on Furphy's appetite for the *Bulletin*, and draws upon the evidence that indicates that he would have been exposed to quiet a tumult of ideas and speculation involving notions of socialist thought, as evidenced by his exposure to the works of Henry George, etc., see, pp. 156-160.

⁵⁶ Furphy, *The Annotated Such Is Life: Being Certain Extracts From the Diary of Tom Collin's With Introduction and Notes*, p. 91. For a more detailed account of this correspondence see also, Barnes, *The Order Of Things; A Life of Joseph Furphy*, pp. 240-241.

⁵⁷ Furphy, *The Annotated Such Is Life: Being Certain Extracts From the Diary of Tom Collin's With Introduction and Notes*, see pp. 423-424 of annotations, 91: 8/113:26.

⁵⁸ Winsome Roberts refers to burgeoning levels of literacy as evidenced on the gold fields of colonial Victoria, see, pp. 99-103, "Reading the Peoples Stories: Tales of Trial and Toil, and Australia's Federal Republic", pp. 95-103.

⁵⁹ For a historical back ground to the progress of literacy and reading in this era see, Kingston, *The Oxford History of Australia, Volume 3*, pp. 212-218.

⁶⁰ One such example involves the experiences of W. M. 'Billy' Hughes. As a recent immigrant from England, Hughes discussed politics with W. A. Holman and others in his Beattie Street bookshop in

suggests that the topics of 'citizens' and 'citizenship' would have been enthusiastically aired amidst the general climate of interest in political matters, and other 'progressive ideas' in the private as well as public domains. As similar references made by Quick & Garran to the discussion of 'citizens' and 'citizenship' in their monumental work published in 1901 indicate, it is clear that the legacy and traditions which evolved from the 'classical traditions of citizenship', were widely held and discussed in many circles in the time preceding Federation.⁶¹

In selecting Furphy's iconic Australian novel we also glimpse an insight into the consciousness of a potentially considerable section of Australian readership. The evidence gleaned from Furphy's own experiences with the printed word, reflect the opportunities available to many in colonial society. If we accept that the germination of *Such Is Life* embodied so many crucial features which characterised the evolution of literacy and its place in the development of a fledgling national culture, it is possible to understand how it represents a key text of this era. The references to citizenship within this popular novel, vouch for their potential resonance in the minds of the readership of mainstream colonial Australia. In this sense they may be seen as the active embodiment of Alan Atkinson's idea expressed in these terms, "It was by telling stories about the country, and about themselves within it, that Europeans began to know Australia."⁶² It is arguable that the references to citizenship contained within *Such Is Life* were representative of their existence in the 'popular' domain of the public mind of this era. Furphy's novel represents the way that ideas about citizenship, however abstract, were able to permeate into the consciousness of the Australian mind, and contribute to the burgeoning development of 'vernacular citizenship'. In this fashion one can understand the advances in literacy, reading and learning that progressed with the growth and development of the colonial settlement of Australia as part of this 'Enlightened' advance. Within this scheme, speculation upon political matters, including the

Balmain. As readers of Herbert Spencer, J. S. Mill and others, Hughes and his fellow travellers undoubtedly absorbed a range of ideas and political opinions, see, L. H., Fitzhardinge, *William Morris Hughes: A Political Biography, Pt. 1: That Fiery Article, 1862-1914*, pp. 24-25. To cite another of many similar examples, see, B. E. Mansfield, *Australian Democrat; The Career of Edward William O'Sullivan*, pp. 212-213.

⁶¹ Within Quick & Garran's monumental work are several references to the political categories of 'citizens' and 'subjects'. These references illustrate the knowledge of, as well as the level of interest in, the categories during this period of history. In the section between pp. 954-959, there is an introduction to the historical ancestry of the terms, as well as a discussion about their implications. See, *The Annotated History Of The Australian Commonwealth*, pp. 954-959.

⁶² Atkinson, *The Europeans in Australia: A History. Volume Two: Democracy*, p. 205.

discussion of citizenship, formed an elemental part of this wider process.

‘FURPHY’S CITIZENSHIP’

Some of the most powerful passages within *Such is Life* feature the ideas of Tom Collins in relation to the issues of justice and equality. They were often associated with informal and implicit notions of citizenship. These concerns echoed views similar to those presented in earlier examples of ‘vernacular citizenship’. The most pertinent of these involved Collins referring to prevailing social conditions. He was especially critical of the role that organised religion played in maintaining material inequalities.

These thoughts are expressed by Collins in this passage,

Yet while the church teaches you to pray, “Thy will be done on Earth, as it is in heaven,” she tacitly countenances widening disparity in condition, and openly sanctions that fearful abuse which dooms the poor man’s unborn children to the mundane perdition of poverty’s thousand penalties.⁶³

These ideas show that material inequality and the disadvantages which it visited upon the poor lay at the heart of his concerns.⁶⁴ If we read the following stanza which states:

While the church teaches you to pray, “Thy Kingdom come”, she strikes with mercenary venom at the first principle of that Kingdom, namely, elementary equality in citizen privilege. Better silence than falsehood; better no religion at all-if such luck be possible- than one which concedes equal rights beyond the grave, but denies them here.⁶⁵

it is possible to glean the central importance attributed to the equality and justice in the mind of Furphy. The musings of Tom Collins show just how important these conditions in contemporary society were considered to be. They formed the heart of his philosophy of mankind and civilisation. This importance is reflected in his nomination of the first principle of the ‘Kingdom’, as being the elementary virtue of equality. To emphasise this, he referred to one of the pillars of religious teaching, the Kingdom of heaven itself, and suggested its first principle involved ‘elementary equality in citizen

⁶³ Barnes, (ed.), *Joseph Furphy, Such is Life, stories, verse, essays and letters*, p. 88.

⁶⁴ See Headon, who refers to these passages also, in “ ‘For Australia’: Joseph Furphy’s Socialist Blueprint for a New Nation”, *The New Federalist: The Journal of Australian Federation History*, No. 5, June 2000, pp. 34-39.

⁶⁵ Barnes, (ed.), *Joseph Furphy, Such is Life, stories, verse, essays and letters*, p. 89.

privilege'. Furphy's reference to 'citizen privilege' emphasise the vital place which these implicit notions played in his thinking.

Collins also expressed a great faith in mankind. He states:

Collective humanity holds the key to that kingdom of God on earth, which clear-sighted prophets of all ages have pictured in colours that never fade. The Kingdom of God is within us; our all-embracing duty is to give to it form and effect, a local habitation and a name.⁶⁶

He considered that collective humanity possessed the inherent capacity to bring about a kingdom of God on Earth. Such was his confidence in the essential goodness of 'mankind', he asserted that the Kingdom was within all 'men'. Furphy expressed a devout faith in the ability of humankind to change itself and transform human society.

These passages signified the connection that Furphy made, linking the domains of religious and spiritual beliefs with the social conditions prevailing within the contemporary world. This preoccupation with the material condition of society, demonstrated their importance in the moral landscape that formed 'vernacular citizenship'. It is telling that within the many layers of Furphy's text, replete with the offerings of his voracious reading and insatiable inquiry, the issues which bubble to the surface most vibrantly are those concerned with equality and material justice in contemporary society.

In this light it is fascinating to read further into this exposition:

In the meantime, our reluctance to submit to the terms of citizenship has no more effect on the iron law of citizen reciprocity than our disapproval has on the process of the seasons; for see how, in the great human family, the innocent suffer for the guilty; and not only are the sins of the fathers visited upon the children, but my sins are visited upon your children, and your sins upon someone else's children; so that, if we decline a brotherhood of mutual blessing and honour, we alternatively accept one of mutual injury and ignominy.⁶⁷

⁶⁶ Barnes, (ed.), *Joseph Furphy, Such is Life, stories, verse, essays and letters*, p. 95. Nadel has used this same quotation to illustrate his discussion involving religious views and the developing secularism in colonial Australia, see, *Australia's Colonial Culture: Ideas, Men and Institutions in Mid-Nineteenth Century Eastern Australia*, pp. 256-260.

⁶⁷ Barnes, (ed.), *Joseph Furphy, Such is Life, stories, verse, essays and letters*, p. 95.

From this excerpt it is possible to postulate that Furphy equated his philosophy for mankind with a type of citizenship based upon notions of unanimity and co-operation. His reference to the 'iron law of citizen reciprocity', clearly drew a parallel between the duties which constituted his citizenship, as well as stipulating that these were the responsibility of each human being.⁶⁸ The potential for mankind to reach its highest aspirations, were contingent upon the founding of a 'brotherhood of mutual blessing and honour'. He envisaged a union between humanity requiring the mutual commitment of all people towards the acceptance and forgiveness of one another's sins and shortcomings.⁶⁹

His reference to the sins of the fathers indicate that he was speaking of the need to radically transform society and the ways that mankind had historically lived so that this ideal might be fulfilled. Furphy was speaking through Tom Collins, his narrator, to express the necessity of changing the direction of history and the course of civilisation. These ambitions matched the aims of 'vernacular citizenship' to bring about political and social transformation.

The other closely related dimension to Furphy's imaginings involved the enmeshing of religious and spiritual beliefs within his more worldly concerns. In the following paragraph the main thrusts of Tom Collins ideal were reinforced. It begins:

Eternal justice is in no hurry for recognition, but flesh and blood will assuredly tire before that principle tires. It is precisely in relation to the palingenesis of Humanity that, to the unseen Will, one day is said to be as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. A Divine Idea points the way, clearly apparent to any vision not warped by interest or prejudice, nor darkened by ignorance; but the work is man's alone, and its period rests with man.⁷⁰

This shows the extent to which citizenship was frequently implicated with the spiritual and sometimes mystical dimensions of its purveyors, whilst being applied within the contours of contemporary society. A feature that shows how 'vernacular citizenship'

⁶⁸ Nadel includes *Such is Life* in his description of the movement in Australian literature to promote, '...the idea of harmony for all classes by means of a common culture.'" *Australia's Colonial Culture: Ideas, Men and Institutions in Mid-Nineteenth Century Eastern Australia*, p. 108.

⁶⁹ Headon, also discusses the idealism which drove Furphy's faith in the qualities of 'ordinary' Australians, see p.39 in " 'For Australia': Joseph Furphy's Socialist Blueprint for a New Nation", *The New Federalist: The Journal of Australian Federation History*, No. 5, June 2000, pp. 34-39.

⁷⁰ Barnes, (ed.), *Joseph Furphy, Such is Life, stories, verse, essays and letters*, p. 95.

could be imbued with the most idealistic and on occasion, utopian⁷¹ strands of hope.

Within this passage Collins reiterated his yearning for ‘man’ to transform himself and his society, claiming that a ‘Devine Idea points the way’ for humanity to follow, and redeem itself. But Collins espoused these opinions with reasoning which related this wave of transformation as being contingent upon the application of ‘man’s’ intellect. It is significant that these entreaties which sought this application of intelligence were proclaimed to be free of prejudice. Within this passage it is possible to observe the similarities between Furphy’s beliefs and those voiced within this passage from the *People’s Advocate* which had proclaimed its virtues in these terms, “...we are entirely free from all influence or control, except that of a clear head and a good conscience.”⁷² The echoes of these sentiments ring most clearly in the way that Furphy’s prognostications were associated with the advance of reasoning, avowed to be free of prejudice. To further strengthen these considerations, they were represented as a revolutionary and inexorable force.

These were reinforced further in these opinions:

For a revolt undreamt of by your forefathers is in progress now- a revolt of enlightenment against ignorance; of justice and reason against the domination of the manifestly unworthy. The world’s brightest intellects are answering one by one to the roll-call of the New Order, and falling into line on the side championed by prophet, from Moses to the “agitator” that died o’Wednesday. Inconceivably long and cruel has the bondage been, hideous beyond measure the degradation of the disinherited; but I think the cycle of soul-slaying loyalty to error draws near its close; for the whole armoury of the Father of Lies can furnish no shield to turn aside the point of tireless and terrible PEN-that Ithuriel-spear which, in these later days, scornfully touches the mail-clad demon of Privilege, and discloses a swelling fog.⁷³

It is important to note how Furphy connects these ideas within his contemporary

⁷¹ Hudson discusses the presence of Utopian streams of thought and their influence in shaping conceptions of how societies could be ‘organised’ to improve the condition of the world, “Republicanism And Utopianism”, in *The Republicanism Debate*, pp. 158-176. Also see, Headon, p. 39, “ ‘For Australia’: Joseph Furphy’s Socialist Blueprint for a New Nation”, *The New Federalist: The Journal of Australian Federation History*, No. 5, June 2000, pp. 34-39.

⁷² *Peoples Advocate*, December 2, 1848, Vol.1, No.1, p.1.

⁷³ Barnes (ed.), *Joseph. Furphy, Such is Life, stories, verse, essays and letters*, p. 90.

circumstances. For instance, he says that the ‘the world’s brightest intellects’ are responding to the ‘New Order’. Whilst this is clearly an example of Furphy reinforcing the importance of his beliefs, he further accentuated their pertinence by linking the elements of religious faith and biblical iconography. These were represented by the reference to Moses, and the figure of the ‘agitator’ who, ‘died o’Wednesday’. One effect of this was to link the hierarchical levels of societal status pertaining to intellect, religion and the ‘agitator’, within Furphy’s ‘New Order’. On one hand, this reinforced the sense of popularity associated with these ideas. Furphy’s words implied that these were so popular, they were shared between these diverse levels of society. In a more basic and hierarchical sense, Furphy’s implicit ordering of society suggested that the unanimity attached to this collection of thoughts was so pervasive, their popularity permeated from the top of society down to the bottom.

This last point is best explained by the references to the ‘prophet’ and the ‘agitator’. Within the domains of literary representation the prophet has traditionally occupied a position of reverence. On the other hand the agitator is clearly a symbolic product of his time. Within the contemporary society, he was an outcast or, more topically a stereotypical figure of Australian lore, a ‘stirrer’, or a ‘rat-bag’. This figure carried none of the reputation, nor the respect accorded to the religious prophet. He can be understood as representing in some ways the lot of the ‘ordinary man’, voicing opinions that the ‘ordinary person’ were not in a position to articulate.

It is worthwhile reading the following paragraph from *Such is Life* to pursue this stream of ideas involved in the development of ‘vernacular citizenship’ in this period:

Contemporaneous literature (continued the pipe thoughtfully) is our surest register of advance or retrogression: and, with few exceptions indeed, the prevailing and conspicuous element in all publications of more than a century ago is a tacit acceptance of irresponsible lordship and abject inferiority as Divine ordinances. Brutal indifference, utter contempt, or more insulting condescension, towards the rank and file, was an article of the fine old English gentlemen’s religion-“a point of our faith”, as the pious Sir Thomas Browne seriously puts it-the complementary part being a loathsome servility towards nobility and royalty.⁷⁴

⁷⁴ Barnes, (ed.), *Joseph Furphy, Such is Life, stories, verse, essays and letters*, p. 90.

Tom Collins lengthy exposition reflects the influence of one of the predominant Enlightenment ideas in the contemporary society. This was the belief that literature and ideas could deliver social and moral change to the contemporary world. As Collins emphasised, the literature of this era contrasted with the works of the preceding century, which he associated with the maintenance of 'kingship' and the rule of the church. These negative outcomes were characterised by, "Brutal indifference, utter contempt, or more insulting condescension, towards the rank and file..."⁷⁵ Whilst reading of his umbrage at the treatment of the 'rank and file' it is possible to gauge the importance that was invested in the plight of the 'ordinary' person in society. The literature of the time was considered to be a measure of whether the circumstances of the 'ordinary' person were in a state of 'advance' or 'retrogression'. In Collins' reasoning, contemporary literature was invested with the responsibility of advancing the interests of the ordinary 'man'.

I find it irresistible to consider that while Collins ruminates over these profound issues involving philosophy, religion and the social condition, he does so with pipe lit, sitting on a log in the shade of a tree, observing the transit of a swagman in the distance.⁷⁶ It is tempting to observe this image as being representative of the nature of Furphy's novel itself. Perhaps this portrait of Collins symbolises many of the more significant elements of the contemporary environment⁷⁷ as fully as all of the words within his tome. While it presents an enduring image of Collins against the backdrop of an iconic Australian colonial scene, it also reflected the importance of Furphy and his place in the landscape of contemporary Australian literature and ideas. Within this bucolic setting, the full weight of ideas involving these profound issues was being contemplated by Collins sitting in the 'bush' with a pipe in his mouth.⁷⁸ Within this rustic image we may perceive Furphy articulating these ideas from his place in the uncultivated terrains of the Australian outback.

With this contextual setting in mind it is possible to comprehend how texts like *Such is*

⁷⁵ *ibid*, p. 90.

⁷⁶ *ibid*, pp. 84-85.

⁷⁷ Deakin referred to the importance of 'local scenery' and atmosphere in the contemporary literature of his day, citing Furphy's text as a key example. See Headon for a broader discussion of these points, in " 'For Australia': Joseph Furphy's Socialist Blueprint for a New Nation", *The New Federalist: The Journal of Australian Federation History*, No. 5, June 2000, pp. 34-39.

⁷⁸ R. Driehuis, 'The coming Australienne': Landscape and Gender in Furphy's Nationalist Thought", pp. 144-151.

Life were able to extend the influence of ‘vernacular citizenship’. As Collins ruminates upon the profound issues of his citizenship in outback Australia, it is possible to observe these matters assuming the identity of the background in which they are being mused over. In this fashion, these ideas developed a ‘vernacular’ identity. Something exemplified by the representation of Collins as an archetypal ‘outback’ colonial figure, who personified so much of what Australia represented at that time. In a similar vein, the form in which his views on the conditions of ‘man’ and his world were presented, reflecting local idioms and location, made them particularly appealing to his local readership. Furphy’s novel presented its informal and implicit ideas concerning citizenship in a form compatible with the contemporary intellectual and cultural environment, encouraging their proliferation within mainstream Australian society. The setting for the novel and its preoccupation with local affairs accentuated the capacity for these ideas to leech into the mindscape of the local population.

Another germane element of Furphy’s text relates to the manner in which Collins’ reverie on the condition of mankind actively incorporated colonial Australia within the margins of enquiry set down by the prevailing standards of western civilisation. Furphy’s writings incorporated the Australia of this time within the domains of ‘classical western’ thought and civilisation. The full implications of this may be illustrated by the fact that the transient figure of the iconic Australian swagman triggered a reflection upon the history of mankind and human civilisation.

These propositions reinforce the probability that ‘vernacular citizenship’ formed a real and substantial element in the landscape of the developing Australian political consciousness during this era. It had been derived and assembled from several and various sources. It can be compared with the ‘bower bird’ like collection of ideas from which Furphy had derived both inspiration and method in regard to his own practices of reading and writing. This reflected both the milieu in which he lived, as well as the contents of what he wrote and thought. It is also suggestive of the manner in which an array of ideas, that included political and philosophical subject matter, shaped the contours of political thought, and in particular the issues involving citizenship.

Allowing for the challenging nature of Furphy’s conceptualisations of citizenship within *Such Is Life*, it is possible to argue that the novel represents a basis upon which one may explore the role that these notions played in shaping the political imaginings in this era. This is most apparent if we accept that, at the very least, the references made

by Furphy were representative of a space in the developing mind of mainstream Australian that offered the opportunity for these conceptions of citizenship to develop. This space allowed for the imagination to construct particular versions of Australian citizenship that were marked by their lack of strict definition. This allowed political idealism as well as the mythological elements inherent in Furphy's fiction, to develop into a construct imbued with 'Australian' characteristics. This evidence offers reasons to explain how 'vernacular citizenship' forged its pathway into the Australian imagination. The specific features of this citizenship's identity may have remained sketchy and imprecise, but this in turn reinforced the capacity that these types of reference offered to foster the imagining of the incipient nation's political consciousness. The absence of strictly defined definitions effectively encouraged a looser and more eclectic approach to the way political issues, and in particular the notions associated with citizenship, were considered.

CONCLUSION

Each of the texts examined in Chapter Four reflect important aspects of the society in which they were written. It is immensely significant that each contains references to citizenship, and that these carry thematic similarities connecting them to 'vernacular' citizenship. When one takes into account the eclectic nature of the issues and themes which these books pursue, the fact that they share a common interest in the subject of citizenship, strongly suggests that citizenship provoked considerable interest and discussion at this time.

The appearance of these ideas in these texts placed such topics within the guise of distinctly Australian settings. Joseph Furphy's *Such is Life* stands out as the most emblematic example of ideas concerning citizenship being sketched within the context of distinctly iconic Australian settings. This enhanced the popularity of these ideas, and strengthened the likelihood that they would reverberate within the thoughts, discussions and reasoning of the mainstream population. The 'literary sphere' performed a vital role in cementing the sense that citizenship constituted an important topic in colonial Australia.

The primary influence of the 'literary sphere' concerned the way it encouraged the distribution of these ideas, but in a manner which extended the defining characteristics of 'vernacular citizenship'. It was one of the peculiarities of such developments that

ensured that these ‘vernacular’ ideas should be absorbed into the minds of the readership in a form that did not encourage close examination or rigorous dissection. The ideas surrounding ‘vernacular citizenship’ provoked sufficient interest to generate a popular currency, but they existed in the readership’s mind as a set of predominantly abstract ideas and ideals.

In combination, Chapters Three and Four present the rich flow of informal discourse that had nourished the growth of ‘popular’ ‘citizenship’ ideas amongst the mainstream population. These can be traced from their initial appearance in the *Citizen* till the arrival of Federation. Chapters Three and Four support the conclusion that these largely implicit and informal references to citizenship and citizens, were likely to have figured in the thoughts and discussions of the mainstream population. Thereby, contributing to a groundswell of ideas that shaped the political consciousness of the broad community, from the ‘bottom up’, as it were.

CHAPTER FIVE

Official Matters: Citizenship And The Constitutional Convention Debates

THE FORMAL DISCUSSIONS ON THE QUESTION OF 'WHAT IS CITIZENSHIP?'

Chapters Three and Four uncovered a network of 'vernacular citizenship' ideas within a broad sample of 'popular' and informal discourse. They argued that a 'popular' understanding of citizenship has developed within the mainstream of Australian society. This perspective shares a similar thematic approach with Brian Galligan and Winsome Roberts¹ as well as Graeme Davison² and Helen Irving³, regarding informal and unofficial notions of citizenship. The overarching purpose of these Chapters's was to present examples of informal discourse which had distributed a rich stream of 'popular' citizenship ideas amongst the mainstream population. In this Chapter, the lens of this thesis shifts slightly away from informal ideas distributed amongst 'popular' sources. Chapter Five will analyse the influence of these 'informal' ideas amongst the formal and official domains of late colonial and early Commonwealth politics.

This approach reflects the spirit of Wayne Hudson's 'differential approach' to analysing citizenship in Australia. He writes that, "A differential approach to citizenship qualifies the standard literature on Australian citizenship in so far as this assumes a single exclusionary citizenship and a slow teleological transition from 'subject to 'citizen'."⁴ Initially this thesis drew upon Hudson's ideas in challenging the predominant focus of contemporary academic studies upon formal and official definitions of citizenship in Australian political history. Chapter Five once more draws upon these ideas, but this time examining the role that informal ideas played in shaping formal and official versions of citizenship.

¹ Galligan & Roberts, *Australian Citizenship*, p. 3.

² Davison, *The Use and Abuse of Australian History*, pp. 272-274.

³ Irving, p. 9. "Citizenship before 1949", in, Rubenstein, (ed.), *Individual, Community, Nation: Fifty Years of Australian Citizenship*, pp. 9-20.

⁴ See Hudson, "Differential Citizenship", pp. 18-19 in Hudson & Kane, *Rethinking Australian Citizenship*, pp. 15-25.

This approach refocusses our concentration upon the presence of ‘vernacular citizenship’ ideas which appeared in the formal and official context of late colonial and early Commonwealth Australia. By subtly shifting this perspective, Chapter Five will explain how these informal ideas, within formal and official contexts, reinforced the pervasive nature of ‘vernacular citizenship’. This allows a more expansive examination of ‘vernacular citizenship’ and its influence on the way that political matters were imagined within the fledgling national community.

THREE SECTIONS

To fully explain the nuances involved in this argument, Chapter Five will consist of three sub-sections. Each presents a particular formal sphere in which the informal ideas of ‘vernacular citizenship’ were being discussed. The first features the Constitutional Conferences conducted during the 1890s. By re-examining these it will introduce the broad theme of Chapter Five in regard to the capacity of ‘vernacular citizenship’ ideas to pervade the broad dimensions of colonial society. The recapitulation of the debates will uncover ideas and themes being discussed in official forums, which shared a thematic commonality with those informal ideas widely aired in the public forum.

The second sub-section will analyse the issues surrounding ‘Commonwealth Invalid and Old Age Pensions’. This will show how the informal values of ‘vernacular citizenship’ were being discussed within the formal domains in which official Commonwealth legislation would be formulated. The discussion of informal ideas in the formal sphere, prepared the way for these ideas to gain increasing currency within the nascent Commonwealth. Commonwealth legislation came to embody aspects of ‘vernacular citizenship’ in ways that put flesh on this quote from Ann-Mari Jordens, “A nations cultural and moral values are reflected in its laws”.⁵ By analysing this piece of Commonwealth legislation it will be possible to explore some of these cultural and moral values, and then further assess the role that ‘vernacular citizenship’ played in this process.

Section three will look at the Commonwealth franchise and the discussions which it

⁵ Jordens, *Redefining Australians: Immigration, Citizenship and National Identity*, p. 1. These themes are explored between pp. 1-24.

provoked in the informal domains of newspapers and texts, during the lead up to the first Federal elections. The conjunction of these informal ideas within the formal context of the Federal franchise further represents the progression of ideas which constituted ‘vernacular citizenship’, and the strengthening of their influence within the society of this time.

In summary, the three sections will present evidence that the informal ideas and values of ‘vernacular citizenship’, were deeply implicated in the most influential spheres of formal and official colonial society. Together these sections will vouch for the popularity of these ideas and their broad appeal, showing that ‘vernacular citizenship’ was not restricted to any particular class or section of colonial community. Bolstering the reasons why ‘vernacular citizenship’ was able to sustain its popularity and continue shaping the ways that political matters were imagined in the nascent polity.

THE CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION DEBATES OF THE 1890s

Background

This Chapter will explore ‘vernacular citizenship’ within the context of formal and official Commonwealth political affairs. The Constitutional Conventions were the brainchild of the Premiers Conference held in Hobart on the 29th of January 1895, which resolved that the matters involved with the Federation of the colonies required prompt attention. It was decided that Victoria, New South Wales, South Australia, Western Australia, and Tasmania, should hold public elections to vote for representatives to attend a series of Conferences with the purpose of formulating a Constitution for the Federal Commonwealth. Queensland was the only colony which did not send representatives to the Conventions.⁶

The Conventions represent an extensive record of the debates and proceedings which shaped the delivery of the Australian Commonwealth Constitution, containing the oratory and reasoning of some of the seminal figures of early Australian politics. They provide an invaluable source of material which accurately reflects the political ideas and conditions prevailing within the formal domains of Australian politics at his time. As

⁶ Quick & Garran, *The Annotated History Of The Australian Commonwealth*, pp. 159-165.

each of the participating States sent an equal representation of ten elected delegates to the conventions, it can be concluded that they represent an extensive cross-section of the ideas and views of the political classes of colonial Australia.

THE DEBATES

The Constitutional Conventions and the Constitutional document that they spawned have played central roles in the academic debates over citizenship in Australia.⁷ As discussed in Chapter Two, the inability to reach agreement over citizenship has been reflected in the absence of explicit definitions within the Constitution and legislative volumes. Sir Frederick Holder summarised this equivocation during the Melbourne session of the Constitutional Conventions in 1898, stating, "We have no definition of citizen."⁸ Sir Isaac Isaacs compared it with the constitution of the United States, commenting, "There is no definition of "citizen" in this Bill. In the United States there is a definition."⁹

This evidence has been regularly cited by critics¹⁰, as an example of the paucity of citizenship within the context of Australian history and politics, and a basis for the critical assessment of citizenship in Australia. Despite this, I consider that a brief revisiting of these convention debates delivers some essential insights into the ways that 'vernacular citizenship' shaped the circumstances in which the Commonwealth polity was constructed. The most compelling reason is that the topics of citizenship and citizens provoked robust discussions during the debates. They provide a fascinating insight into the thinking which delivered the formal dimensions of the Australian Constitution.¹¹ Despite the conflicting opinions and disagreements, the debates represent the indelible awareness of the importance of 'citizenship' and 'citizens' at this instrumental level of colonial Australia.

⁷ Irving, *To Constitute a Nation: A Cultural History of Australia's Constitution*, pp. 156-170.

⁸ *The Convention Debates*, Tuesday, February 8, 1898, p. 669, <http://search.aph.gov.au/search/Parlinfo>.

⁹ *The Convention Debates*, Tuesday, February 8, 1898, p. 665, <http://search.aph.gov.au/search/Parlinfo>.

¹⁰ See chapter 2 of this thesis for an introduction to these sources and the basis of many of these debates.

¹¹ See Galligan & Roberts, *Australian Citizenship*, for a discussion that covers the types of issues discussed at the Constitutional Conventions and their pertinence to issue concerning Australian citizenship, pp. 19-45.

SHAPE OF IDEAS

The convention debates also represent a counterpoint to the central themes of this thesis. Within the debates may be found a rich testimony to the importance of 'vernacular citizenship' in relation to the Australian polity. This is reflected in the contextual importance of these discussions taking place during the tabling of the Constitution which would provide the Commonwealth with its political template. These gentlemen laid down the official and formal dimensions of Australian citizenship. The importance of these debates in relation to their impact upon the shape and form of citizenship in Australia is unquestionable. By referring back to the debates, it is possible to gauge the manner in which the formal dimensions of the Commonwealth legislature complemented many of the major ideas which had formed 'vernacular citizenship'. The combination of these would continue to exert a profound influence upon the ways in which political matters in Australia would be comprehended.

FORMAL DISCUSSIONS SURROUNDING 'CITIZENS' AND 'CITIZENSHIP' IN THE NEW COMMONWEALTH: THE CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION DEBATES

This period which leads from the Constitutional Conventions, culminating with the Federation of the Australian Commonwealth, contains a wealth of events pivotal to Federal politics and national life. It is highly significant that the arrival of the Commonwealth created a forum in which the parameters of, what had previously been State based citizenships, could be re-shaped, creating a new category of 'Australian citizenship'. The most persuasive evidence of this is the formal legislation which sketched an outline of the basic legal rights of 'Australian citizens'.¹² The most important implication of this was the usurping of the individual State's rights to legislate laws that might impinge upon the Commonwealth rights of individuals.¹³ This was spelt out in, *section 117*, 'Right of residents in States', which today reads,

¹² Irving explains, prior to 1901, individual colonies were responsible for the administration of their own 'naturalisation Acts', *To Constitute a Nation: A Cultural History of Australia's Constitution*, pp. 156-170.

¹³ This issue of the creation of a legal category of national citizenship 'superior' to State citizenship is discussed in, Quick & Garran, *The Annotated History Of The Australian Commonwealth*, p. 955.

A subject of the Queen, resident in any State, shall not be subject in any other State to any disability or discrimination which would not be equally applicable to him if he were a subject of the Queen resident in such other State.

This section of the Constitution outlined the legal dimensions which created a 'national' citizenship that superseded the existing conceptualisation of State based citizenships.¹⁴ The importance of this becomes more apparent when one reads the convention debates that accompanied the passage of this section into the Constitution. In the Convention debates of 1898, the merits of what was then 'clause 110', which had been presented by Sir Edward Braddon from Tasmania, had been debated.¹⁵ The discussions provoked by this proposed legislation show that 'vernacular' citizenship' would be further shaped within the parameters of formal and official debates.

Bernhard Wise set out his views on citizenship in the new Commonwealth. He stated:

If we are to have Federation, the idea that when a man moves from one part of the Commonwealth into another he becomes an absentee, or ceases to be an Australian, is one that must vanish, and we ought, as far as our Constitution will permit us, to do everything to make it vanish quickly. It is a survival of an old idea that there is a distinctive citizenship in a Victorian, and a distinctive citizenship in a New South Wales man. That is the idea which I am endeavouring to destroy by supporting the amendment of Tasmania, that Australian Citizenship, and that alone, shall be recognised in every part of the Federation. The way to secure that is to provide in the clearest terms, as Tasmania suggests, that no local Parliament can have any authority to, in any way abridge the citizenship of an Australian.¹⁶

Wise believed that Federation ought to confer the status of citizenship on all Australians. The basis of this citizenship should centre upon the identity of individuals as Australian citizens, and that this should be defined and enshrined within Commonwealth

¹⁴ This point is also referred to in Quick & Garran, *The Annotated History Of The Australian Commonwealth*, p. 955.

¹⁵ J. A. La Nauze, *The Making of the Australian Constitution*, pp. 228-232.

¹⁶ *The Convention Debates*, Tuesday, February 8, 1898, p. 675, <http://search.aph.gov.au/search/Parlinfo>.

legislation. In effect, this brand of citizenship would be defined by its nominal embrace of all Australians, and in theory, effectively eclipse the existing State based citizenships. Just who would be eligible to claim this status of citizenship in practical terms was not however so clear. The full extent of the challenges which these dimensions of a Commonwealth citizenship would pose became increasingly apparent in the ensuing debate.

Sir Edmund Barton interpreted the clause as being, "...a provision inserted in the constitution for the equality of citizens of the Commonwealth- for the prevention of those of them who happen to reside in one state having their citizenship abridged as compared with citizens of the same Commonwealth residing in another state."¹⁷ In reply, Sir John Forrest queried, "Would citizen mean alien?"¹⁸ Barton answered, "No, unless he has become a citizen by naturalization.", thereby opening up the vexatious questions of how citizenship ought to be distributed, and whether there ought to be restrictions on eligibility. There also remained the questions of whether State governments should be able to administer such decisions.

Isaacs introduced the 14th amendment of the American Constitution and its role in widening access to citizenship to a broader reach of people residing in the United States. He pointed out, "There is no definition of "citizen" in this Bill. In the United States there is a definition." Barton replied, "There is no definition of the word "citizen" here, but I take it that a citizen is either a natural-born or a naturalized person possessing the ordinary political privileges of the Commonwealth, or of a state."¹⁹ In commenting thus, Barton raised the practical issues of residence and naturalisation in connection with the status of citizenship.

When Forrest raised the problems that he foresaw in the legislation, it was clear that the assignation of citizenship rights in the new Commonwealth would not be without controversy. And it was equally clear that the complexities would reflect both the social attitudes, as well as the political policies of Australia's colonial history. He warned of,

¹⁷ *The Convention Debates*, Tuesday, February 8, 1898, p. 665, <http://search.aph.gov.au/search/Parlinfo>.

¹⁸ *ibid*, p. 665.

¹⁹ *ibid*, p. 665.

"...the difficulty in regard to coloured aliens and to coloured persons who have become British subjects. In Western Australia no Asiatic or African alien can get a miner's right or go mining on a gold-field."²⁰ Forrest particularly objected to the potential power of the clause to preclude the State's rights to control the passage of persons between the States,²¹ specifically in regard to race and colour.²² He candidly admitted,

It is of no use for us to shut our eyes to the fact that there is a great feeling all over Australia against the introduction of coloured persons. It seems to me that should the clause be passed in its present shape, if a person, whatever his nationality, his colour, or his character be, happens to live in one state, another state could not legislate in any way to prohibit his entrance into that state.²³

As these discussions progressed it became apparent that the notion of an Australian citizenship presented many challenges. The crux of these involved the question of who would confer this status. Many who opposed the idea of an Australian citizenship, argued that it would challenge the capacity of State based legislatures to manage their own affairs. Sir George Reid encapsulated these concerns, stating,

I think that the constant attempts which are being made to interfere with the rights of states, in matters which are left to them expressly, is becoming quite alarming. There are a number of general words already in this Constitution which, I fear, may be used so as to almost destroy the independent powers of legislation of the states..."²⁴

Reid expressed alarm that Commonwealth citizenship threatened State government's right to legislate on behalf of their populations. He presented practical examples which illustrated his apprehensions. He referred to taxation, asserting that, "The states are supposed to be left in absolute independence of the Commonwealth as to their powers of

²⁰ *The Convention Debates*, Tuesday, February 8, 1898, p. 665, <http://search.aph.gov.au/search/Parlinfo>.

²¹ The respective rights of states to either allow or bar entry to their borders are cited in, Galligan & Roberts, *Australian Citizenship*, pp. 25-26.

²² Irving draws upon Forrest's remarks to make this point also, *To Constitute a Nation: A Cultural History of Australia's Constitution*, pp. 156-159.

²³ *The Convention Debates*, Tuesday, February 8, 1898, p. 666, <http://search.aph.gov.au/search/Parlinfo>.

²⁴ *ibid* p. 675.

internal taxation.”²⁵

Sir Joseph Carruthers then expressed his own difficulties with the clause. He confessed that he had been asked to explain the clause in the Legislative Assembly of New South Wales, and had been unable to do so.²⁶ He queried what the issue of Commonwealth citizenship would hold, asking, "Is it directed at any system of taxation? Is it directed at those persons who hold property in one colony but reside in another? And are we going to give a power in one colony to grant an immunity to its citizens from taxation at the hands of a neighbouring state?"²⁷ While the prosaic matters of taxation served as an exemplar of the conflicts between the interests of the States and the Commonwealth, it was equally apparent that these had the potential to interfere across a range of matters.

When Wise supported Commonwealth citizenship with this endorsement, "...it seems to me that the clause as it stands would be a powerful instrument to prevent an abuse of powers by a state, not for the purpose of injuring the citizens of that state, but for the purpose of injuring the citizens other states.", he was revealing that Commonwealth citizenship might protect citizens from any State legislation impinging upon their rights as 'Commonwealth citizens'. When pushed by Isaacs to provide a 'concrete' example, Wise suggested the scenarios in which a 'poll tax', 'extra probate duty' or absentee tax' might be levied by individual States upon citizens passing between state borders.²⁸ Isaacs queried, "How could that be a privilege or immunity of the citizens of the other states?" Wise replied,

You cannot impose exceptional treatment upon the citizens of another state, that applies to everything. It does appear to me that this clause is a powerful instrument in the hands of the federal authority to prevent any state acting in an overt manner, permitting overt acts of hostility against citizens outside its jurisdiction.²⁹

²⁵ *ibid*, p. 675.

²⁶ *The Convention Debates*, Tuesday, February 8, 1898, p. 666, <http://search.aph.gov.au/search/Parlinfo>.

²⁷ *ibid*, p. 667.

²⁸ *ibid*, p. 675.

²⁹ *ibid*, p. 671.

Sir Josiah Symon from South Australia expressed many of the concerns of those unconvinced by the merits of an Australian citizenship. He stated,

I think the honourable member (Mr. Wise) has expanded the spirit of Federation far beyond anything any of us had hitherto contemplated. He has enlarged, with great emphasis, on the necessity of securing one citizenship. Now the whole purpose of this Constitution is to secure a dual citizenship.³⁰

Symon opposed this vision of citizenship borne out of the spirit of Federation, as it threatened the existing models of State based citizenships.³¹ He resolutely opposed the ideas that Commonwealth citizenship would supersede existing State based versions of citizenship. Instead, he proposed that a 'dual citizenship' be pursued as the preferred model of political citizenship, a situation which would allow the States to retain their powers in controlling issues within their boundaries.

RAISING SOME LESS PRACTICAL, AND MORE CHALLENGING ISSUES

In assessing some of the points that were made at the Convention's, several issues pertinent to the deliberations surrounding the place and influence of 'vernacular citizenship' in Australian political history take shape. The major conflict involved the latent sense that a Commonwealth citizenship posed challenges extending beyond the prosaic matters of jurisdiction, and State powers. Some of the more intriguing of these involved a range of largely implicit and latent issues connected with the themes of 'vernacular citizenship', which emerged during the debates. These included an assortment of complex issues involving the universality of citizenship rights, as well as the related notions of freedom, equality and liberty. Many of these potential repercussions would involve implicit ideas and ideals compatible with the form of 'vernacular citizenship'.

Some of these issues would become evident when the debates traversed the issue of Commonwealth citizenship. More intriguingly, there are clues that some of the persons

³⁰ *The Convention Debates*, Tuesday, February 8, 1898, p. 675, <http://search.aph.gov.au/search/Parlinfo>.

³¹ These comments issued by Symon are cited in Galligan & Roberts, *Australian Citizenship*, p. 24.

involved in the Conventions understood the implications of the more esoteric elements involved with citizenship, and their possible repercussions. These implications first rose to the surface during the oration of Charles Kingston, delivered in response to an unidentified Honorable Member enquiring, “What is the meaning of citizenship?”

Kingston replied:

“...it ought to be defined in the Constitution, or else we ought to give power to the Federal Parliament to define it. And, after having defined what shall constitute Australian citizenship for the purposes of the Commonwealth, we ought to carefully prevent any state legislating in such a way as to deprive any citizen of the Commonwealth of any privileges which citizenship of the Commonwealth confers within its borders.”³²

Kingston campaigned spiritedly for the establishment of a ‘Federal citizenship’, arguing that its creation was one of the primary necessities for establishing the Commonwealth.³³ He continued,

I say we are creating a Commonwealth in which I hope there will be a federal citizenship, and I shall be glad indeed to see the powers of the Federal Parliament enlarged to enable that body to legislate, not only with reference to naturalization and aliens, but also with reference to the rights and privileges of federal citizenship.³⁴

Kingston’s declaration³⁵ shows that the political stakes were high and the potential implications immense. As one can judge, his vision for Federal citizenship extended beyond formal issues such as taxation and State rights, and represented an introduction to some of the prominent ideas which would fill out ‘vernacular citizenship’. He made this point more clearly when stating, “I am prepared to do what I can for the purpose of establishing a common citizenship within the Federation, and giving to each citizen throughout the Commonwealth, irrespective of provincial boundaries, common

³² *The Convention Debates*, Tuesday, February 8, 1898, p. 677, <http://search.aph.gov.au/search/Parlinfo>.

³³ References to Kingston and his commitment to citizenship are also cited p. 19 & p. 25, by Galligan & Roberts, *Australian Citizenship*.

³⁴ *The Convention Debates*, Tuesday, February 8, 1898, p. 677, <http://search.aph.gov.au/search/Parlinfo>.

³⁵ Irving also refers to this speech by Kingston, *To Constitute a Nation: A Cultural History of Australia’s Constitution*, p. 159.

rights...”³⁶ He argued that Commonwealth citizenship should include the definition of the rights and privileges of its citizens.

In staking these claims, Kingston alluded to issues of a more esoteric kind when he declared, “I think that for the fostering of the federal spirit we ought to abolish, once and for all, these distinctions between the citizens of the different states...”³⁷ These comments show citizenship being equated with notions of national spirit and shared kinship, with Kingston speaking of a ‘Federal spirit’ in connection with national citizenship. Indicating how these citizenship ideas were compatible with notions of national identity, and their potential influence in moulding crucial aspects of national character.

The shape and character of these latent ideas which had figured within the informal dimensions of ‘vernacular citizenship’, were now being sketched against the outline of the prospective Federal Commonwealth. This point was expounded more explicitly when Kingston added, “I go further, and I say that a matter of that sort is a fair subject to introduce into this Constitution- this federal compact.”³⁸ The use of the word ‘compact’ in this context indicates that the Constitution was equated with issues extending beyond the dry formulation of a political document.

The influence of these ideas extended beyond the thinking of Kingston alone. Sir Adye Douglas, expressed these thoughts:

If we are to federate, let us federate in a proper spirit. What is the use of talking about the Federation if a citizen in one part of the Commonwealth may be treated differently from a citizen in another part of the Commonwealth? Unless the true spirit of federation is infused into this Constitution, we had better have no federation at all...”³⁹

A close connection existed between the concept of universal citizenship rights within the inchoate Commonwealth, and their potential to foment a sense of national spirit. This

³⁶ *The Convention Debates*, Tuesday, February 8, 1898, p. 678, <http://search.aph.gov.au/search/Parlinfo>.

³⁷ *The Convention Debates*, Tuesday, February 8, 1898, p. 677, <http://search.aph.gov.au/search/Parlinfo>.

³⁸ *ibid*, p. 678.

³⁹ *ibid*, p. 679.

was reinforced when Douglas stated, “If we are to have a federal community, do not restrict us in this sort of way...”⁴⁰ These show that he considered a Commonwealth citizenship to be an essential ingredient in the development of a Federal community.

The issues raised at the 1898 convention vouch for the importance of the concept of an Australian citizenship which would be contingent upon the formation of the Commonwealth. The wide-ranging debate that ensued demonstrated that citizenship was a challenging, and at times perplexing issue. Both Wise and Kingston spoke of the importance of establishing a formal version of citizenship that might be defined and documented, supported by legal rights which exceeded the scope of existing state based legislation and practice. If we reprise the words of Deakin eight years prior to the debates of 1898, they reinforce how the most influential people who shaped the construction of the Commonwealth, comprehended the potential role that citizenship might play in moulding national loyalty. Addressing the Melbourne Conference of 1890⁴¹, Deakin had offered these expressions of hope:

We must direct much of the loyalty which is now attached to individual colonies to a central idea of the national life of Australia, so that our countrymen shall exhibit their loyalty to the nation, and the nation only, and shall feel that what transpires in any part of the colonies has as much interest for them as events occurring in the particular spot in which they dwell.⁴²

National political development involved the more esoteric notions of national identity, loyalty and patriotism. And furthermore, Deakin’s words emphasise again the lineage of these ideas.

FURTHER COMPLEXITIES INVOLVED IN THE QUESTION OF CITIZENSHIP

Some of the major challenges confronting those who tackled these issues surrounding citizenship clearly emerged during the debates. The ideas expressed by Richard O’Connor cover some of the more contentious issues. They also introduce some of the

⁴⁰ *ibid*, p. 679.

⁴¹ Quick & Garran, *The Annotated History Of The Australian Commonwealth*, p. 119.

⁴² *Debates of the Conferences*, Monday, February 10, 1890, p. 24, <http://search.aph.gov.au/search/Parlinfo>.

inherent contradictions which characterised these discussions on citizenship. He began by eloquently arguing against the need to introduce the considerations summarised within the 14th amendment of the American Constitution, into the Australian Constitution. He said:

I am pointing out that there is no necessity for it in our Constitution- no necessity to point out that every person in the states is a citizen of the Commonwealth. There is no necessity for it, because citizenship follows from the rights you give every person in every portion of the Commonwealth under the Constitution.⁴³

As O'Connor continued his oration it became clear that the topics of citizenship and citizens contained many subtleties, presenting a variety of challenges to the Convention's interlocutors. For whilst O'Connor opposed the proposals floated by Kingston and Wise, he nevertheless supported the sentiments associated with their ideas. For example, he stated, "In regard to what the right honourable member (Mr. Kingston) has said, I should say that the citizenship which is aimed at in this amendment is not to be attained by a provision of this kind, but by the comity and friendship which must ensue when we are all one people."⁴⁴

O'Connor clearly rejected Kingston's proposal to officially gazette Commonwealth citizenship within the Constitution. But he objected⁴⁵ in a way that acknowledged the importance of sentiments such as 'comity and friendship', which he considered would develop 'when we are all one people'. O'Connor embraced the values referred to by Kingston and Wise, and also spoke favourably of their positive influence in shaping a polity in which 'friendship and comity' would prevail. However he qualified this support by stating that such a situation would be more likely to flourish in a country in which 'we are all one people'. O'Connor was suggesting that political unification itself would encourage the development of these features more effectively than their formal prescription within official legislation.

⁴³ *The Convention Debates*, Tuesday, February 8, 1898, p. 672, <http://search.aph.gov.au/search/Parlinfo>.

⁴⁴ *ibid*, pp. 682-683.

⁴⁵ A reference to O'Connor's stance is also made by Galligan and Roberts, *Australian Citizenship*, p. 25.

To further emphasise the nuances within O'Connor's reasoning, it is instructive to examine some of his other comments. Whilst opposing the formal ratification of citizens rights, O'Connor still felt that these issues of equality and individual rights were worthy of endorsement. His commitment to these principles is evident in his support for the rights of citizens within the new Commonwealth. He presented these amendments to the original suggestion forwarded by Braddon, "A state shall not deprive any person of life, liberty, or property without due process of law, or deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of its laws."⁴⁶

He felt this stanza needed to be added, "So that any citizen of any portion of the Commonwealth would have the guarantee of liberty and safety in regard to the processes of law, and also would have a guarantee of the equal administration of the laws as it exists." These comments exemplified O'Connor's implicit commitment to the ideals of universal equality and the individual's rights to liberty. They were phrased in a way that personified the notion of a Commonwealth based citizenship defined by its pursuit of the principles of equality and liberty. O'Connor's optimistic pursuit of idealistic ends complemented the spirit of 'vernacular citizenship'. As he concluded, "...in the administration of the laws you have made, all the citizens shall be treated equally. And that should be so. Whatever privilege we give to our citizens, the administration of the law should be equal to all..."⁴⁷

There can be little doubt as to O'Connor's commitment to the establishment of Commonwealth rights, which would provide every citizen of the newly federated nation with inalienable rights.⁴⁸ This much was clear when he announced:

One word as to the first part of my amendment, which is to the effect that a state shall not deprive any person of life, liberty, or property without due process of law. In the ordinary course of things such a provision at this time of day would be unnecessary; but we all know that laws are passed by majorities and that

⁴⁶ *The Convention Debates*, Tuesday, February 8, 1898, p. 673, <http://search.aph.gov.au/search/Parlinfo>.

⁴⁷ *The Convention Debates*, Tuesday, February 8, 1898, <http://search.aph.gov.au/search/Parlinfo>.

⁴⁸ There is a reference to O'Connor's opinions on this matter, La Nauze, *The Making of the Australian Constitution*, pp. 232.

communities are liable to sudden and very often to unjust impulses- as much now as ever.⁴⁹

Isaacs countered with this caveat, “That is a very dangerous proposal-that the Supreme Court should control the Legislatures of the states within their own jurisdictions.”⁵⁰

Symon also took issue with O’Connor, querying whether these rights were already insured under ‘the various state Constitutions.’ O’Connor replied:

We are dealing with a provision which will prevent the alteration of these Constitutions in the direction of depriving any citizen of his life, liberty, or property without due process of law. It is a declaration of liberty and freedom in our dealings with citizens of the Commonwealth. Not only can there be no harm in placing it in the Constitution, but it is also necessary for the protection of the liberty of everybody who lives within the limits of any State...⁵¹

O’Connor’s responses to the questions posed by Isaacs and Symon show that he was convinced of the necessity of establishing statutory provisions which would protect the rights of citizens within the Commonwealth. His ideas highlighted the complexities at play when citizenship was debated. In the course of analysing these it is apparent that they represented some of the characteristic features of ‘vernacular citizenship’. Some of the more challenging areas become visible when we pursue the lines of his reasoning. The juxtaposition of his stance, opposing the need to document the rights of citizenship, whilst also supporting the protection of citizenship rights, introduce some of the complexities of the citizenship debates. On one hand O’Connor deferred from the train of thought which advocated that the Constitution ought to document the formal dimensions of citizenship. And yet on the other, he clearly supported a Commonwealth citizenship built upon the implicit principles of equality and liberty, regardless of ones personal circumstances, or place of residence.

O’Connor’s antipathy to the prescription of Commonwealth citizenship forms another predominant characteristic of ‘vernacular citizenship’. His opposition to the

⁴⁹ *The Convention Debates*, Tuesday, February 8, 1898, p. 683, <http://search.aph.gov.au/search/Parlinfo>.

⁵⁰ *ibid*, p. 683.

⁵¹ *The Convention Debates*, Tuesday, February 8, 1898, p. 683, <http://search.aph.gov.au/search/Parlinfo>.

documentation of citizenship rights within the Constitution reflected the spirited optimism that permeated many of the dominant themes of ‘vernacular citizenship’. Such was the vitality of this optimism, people like O’Connor believed there was little need to protect these principles by preserving them within government legislation. As John La Nauze has pointed out, these beliefs reflected the blind optimism of those who believed that ‘civilised men’ would never “repudiate the civil liberties won by their forefathers”.⁵² O’Connor’s ideas encapsulated the idealism invested in informal notions of citizenship, which personified ‘vernacular citizenship’. Furthermore they show how these themes exerted a defining influence in political Australia, without being formally documented or explicitly defined.

These examples show how informal characteristics were being attached to the categories of citizenship by the most influential figures in the political sphere. O’Connor’s prescriptions illustrate how the ideas of ‘vernacular citizenship’ were influential within many reaches of colonial society. The informal and unofficial dimensions of ‘vernacular’ citizenship formed an indispensable part of the process in which notions of citizenship were imagined amongst broad reaches of the mainstream community. A process that reflected their popularity, and strengthened their ability to extend their influence as time progressed.

O’Connor’s ideas also reflected the difficulties that emerged in trying to define and document citizenship in the fledgling Commonwealth. As he suggested, the act of defining such sentiments was both difficult and unwieldy, and furthermore it was debateable as to how effective such documentation may prove to be over the course of time.⁵³ Many of these potentially problematic areas emerged in connection with the issues of interpretation, which he so presciently raised in this manner:

“...we should be careful of every word that we put in this Constitution, and that we should have no word in it which we do not see some reason for. Because there can be no question that in time to come, when this Constitution has to be interpreted, every word will be weighed and an interpretation given to it; and by

⁵² La Nauze, *The Making of the Australian Constitution*, p. 231.

⁵³ La Nauze, *The Making of the Australian Constitution*, pp. 231-232.

the use of what I may describe as idle words which we have no use for, we may be giving a direction to the Constitution which none of us now contemplate.⁵⁴

The absence of clearly defined formal definitions of citizens, or any official compilation of the rights and responsibilities of Australian citizenship, reflect some key characteristics in the development of 'vernacular citizenship'. Without doubt, the debates testify to the virulent life of the ideas surrounding citizenship, and their influence upon the speakers at the conventions. Equally, they also illustrate that the nature of these matters were in some ways quite tantalising, as they hinted at a range of issues which were largely implicit in their nature. As the conclusions of the Convention's interlocutors were rather vague, as evidenced by their avoidance of formal definitions, it left the way open for the exploration of some of the 'popular' ideas that took shape within this area of debate. The absence of clearly outlined definitions and characteristics at an official level, allowed sufficient space for less formalised varieties of 'citizenship' to develop outside of these formal domains. It is not surprising therefore to conclude that the most amenable avenues for these to develop were characterised by their 'popular' and mainstream nature, most particularly the imaginings of the broad population.

CONCLUSIONS

The Convention debates show how informal ideas and notions mingled freely within the official and formal dimensions of Australian society. When we examine these it is possible to see how they reflected some of the predominate streams of thought that had been articulated previously in regard to the development of 'vernacular citizenship'. It is possible to pursue this point by suggesting that the Conventions show how 'informal' citizenship ideas were subtly incorporated into 'formal' and 'legal' domains. In this way, 'informal' and 'formal' ideas developed common features which made it difficult to cleanly differentiate them. Each was in some way, formed or shaped from those predominant streams of thought extending initially from the 'classical' traditions, and then augmented by the progressive ideas of the Enlightenment.

⁵⁴ *The Convention Debates*, Tuesday, February 8, 1898, p. 672, <http://search.aph.gov.au/search/Parlinfo>.

FORMAL AND “SUBSTANTIVE” DIMENSIONS OF CITIZENSHIP

In referring to the Convention debates it was possible to examine the major issues raised by ‘vernacular’ ideas within the formal political context of the Conventions, and the way they influenced formal affairs. One of these involved the way that ‘vernacular’ ideas often underlay the reasoning which created some of the official dimensions of the Commonwealth polity. Section Two of this chapter will examine the issues surrounding ‘Commonwealth Invalid and Old Age Pensions’. It provides a practical example of the ways that the thematic stream of ideas comprising ‘vernacular citizenship’ pervaded the reasoning which delivered official statutory legislation and shaped formal legal definitions.

This process demonstrates the pivotal role that the formal contours of citizenship, as specified within the Australian Constitution and its official legislation, have played in further shaping the way citizenship has been imagined in Australia. The point that needs to be reaffirmed is that the official and formal dimensions of citizenship, have served as indispensable points of reference that have reinforced some of the predominant streams of understanding in relation to the contours of ‘vernacular citizenship’. This Chapter has aimed to explain how the ‘informal’ and ‘formal’ dimensions of ‘vernacular citizenship’ have tended to ‘dovetail’ in a manner that suggests each has exerted a substantial degree of influence upon the other. As instrumental as informal ideas have proven to be, the formal dimensions as specified within official statutory legislation have served as equally important factors in guiding and reinforcing conceptualisations of citizenship.

'A POLICY FOR THE COMMONWEALTH FEDERAL OLD AGE PENSIONS'

The following extract from the *Bulletin*, 'A Policy for the Commonwealth Federal Old Age Pensions', discusses the issues pertaining to the distribution of pension funds within the policies of the coming Commonwealth. It proffered these guidelines to determine the criteria for receiving pension funds, "The applicant must qualify by living in the State for a certain number of years- enough to make it reasonably certain that he gave the State some value in labour and taxes, and in carrying the other burdens of citizenship..."⁵⁵

⁵⁵ *Bulletin*, October 20, 1900, p. 6.

This article introduces some of the most significant issues regarding the implicit theoretical dimensions of citizenship that were being moulded within the embryonic Federal Commonwealth. The ideas espoused by the *Bulletin* were illustrative of an important stage of the conceptual evolution of 'vernacular citizenship'. The second part of the quotation sheds further light upon these issues:

When the Commonwealth takes over the vexed Old Age Pension question it is to be hoped that it will do it in a wide and generous spirit. Above all it is to be hoped that it will drop the weary shibboleth about confining state aid to the "deserving". If a citizen has the requisite age and residential qualifications, and is in need, no further questions should be asked.⁵⁶

These comments represented the widening of the theoretical conceptions of 'vernacular citizenship', which in their 'classical' forms, had been based upon participation in the political arena, and 'providing service' to your community. Within the convictions of the *Bulletin*, the traditional parameters of citizenship were being extended beyond the responsibilities of political service and public office. In the eyes of the *Bulletin*, access to the Old Age Pension ought to be predicated solely upon a person's age and residential status.

Furthermore, as the *Bulletin* suggested, once individuals had fulfilled their responsibilities and given 'value' to the state, they should then be eligible to claim the status of citizenship. Within this paradigm, 'service' was to be achieved via the prospective citizen's paid employment and the payment of taxes to the state. These responsibilities equated to being 'the burdens of citizenship'.⁵⁷ This context presents the manner in which the Federation of the Australian Commonwealth formed a vital part of the process by which a broader conception of Australian citizenship was being imagined. The outlines of a 'modern democratic citizenship' were being traced in the prescriptions offered by such 'popular' sources as the *Bulletin*. One of the central features of this conceptualisation consisted of the unmistakable movement towards including a

⁵⁶ *Bulletin*, October 20, 1900, p. 6.

⁵⁷ A similar point is also made by Marion Sawer who writes, "Pensions were an entitlement of citizenship, regardless of whether citizenship had involved paid or unpaid service to the community.", *The Ethical State? Social Liberalism in Australia*, p. 5.

potentially wider cross-section of the mainstream community within the possibility of attaining 'citizenship'. The seeds of thought were being sown that would allow the status of 'citizenship' to be equated more closely with being merely a member of a national community.

One of the interesting aspects of this broadening of the conceptualisation of citizenship, involved these directions reflecting the predominant thematic streams of 'vernacular citizenship'. As the quotations from the *Bulletin* testify, there is compelling evidence that the imagined contours of 'citizenship' status were being broadened to encompass such principles as equality, liberty and the universal rights of the individual. For instance, the *Bulletin* considered that the distribution of pensions should be based solely upon the criteria of a person's age and residence. These were considered to constitute a basis to judge individual's claims to the benefits of citizenship. These ideas carried many of the hall-marks espoused by the Utilitarians and their aim to deliver the greatest good to the greatest number.

These examples also showed how the suggestions proffered by informal sources, such as the *Bulletin*, could influence Commonwealth policy. The ideas of the *Bulletin* represented the ways that popular and informal conceptions of 'vernacular citizenship' were being introduced into discussions pertaining to matters of formal and official government policy. These conceptualisations of citizenship were also moving towards an intimate coupling of the interests of the individual and the state. One aspect which personified this progression was the identification 'citizens' and their connection to the auspices of the state. For instance, the act of working was described as providing 'service' to the state and therefore deserving of the state reciprocating by delivering the old age pension. Equally, the act of providing taxation revenue to the state through your labour was also specified as constituting one of the 'burdens' of citizenship.

Having examined the views of the *Bulletin*, it is now pertinent to explore some similar ideas offered by James Henderson Howe in regard to the policy for 'Invalid and Old-age Pensions'. These stand as a further example of the way in which the definitions of citizenship were being subtly shaped during this seminal time in which many matters of

political importance were being discussed. Howe⁵⁸ was responsible for initially raising the matter at the Constitutional Convention held in Sydney in 1897, but did not have the opportunity to argue for its inclusion until Melbourne in 1898.⁵⁹ His speech contains these ideas:

In Germany it is compulsory for those in fixed employment, and for employers, to contribute to a fund which is subsidised by the Government. Then when a man comes on the fund he does not come upon it as a man comes upon the charitable institutions of the country. He can hold his head among his fellow men. This law prevents a man who fulfilled all the obligations of citizen, husband, and father, from becoming a pauper in his declining days.⁶⁰

This statement makes interesting reading from the perspective of the notions espoused by the *Bulletin*, regarding pensions.⁶¹ Howe's ideas, later espoused within the *Bulletin*, supported the inclusion of invalid and old age pensions within the Constitution on the grounds that they constituted a universal right. In this fashion, 'substantive' matters relating to the economic and social conditions of citizens had been included in the theoretical outline of implicit citizenship. Furthermore it was asserted that this coverage ought to be available to all who had satisfied the criteria of contributing to the national cause through their labour and payment of taxes.⁶² As a quick comparison of Howe's comments with the extract from the *Bulletin* shows, there was a confluence of opinion flowing between informal domains and official statutory spheres, in regard to critical matters of Commonwealth policy. In reviewing the proposals floated within the *Bulletin*, and comparing them with the argument mounted by Howe, it is possible to further

⁵⁸ Howe's comments have been analysed by Irving also, see, *To Constitute a Nation: A Cultural History of Australia's Constitution*, p. 95.

⁵⁹ For an account of the Melbourne Convention, and Howe's campaign for the inclusion of old-age and invalid pensions within Commonwealth legislation, see La Nauze, *The Making of the Australian Constitution*, pp. 204-206.

⁶⁰ Quick & Garrahan, *The Annotated History Of The Australian Constitution*, p. 613.

⁶¹ McMinn addresses the significance of this legislation in the context of Commonwealth affairs, *Nationalism and Federalism in Australia*, pp. 209-210.

⁶² Irving, "A Gendered Constitution?: Women, Federation and Heads of Power", in Irving, (ed.), *A Woman's Constitution?: Gender and History in the Australian Commonwealth*, Hale & Ironmonger, Sydney, 2001, p. 105.

understand the ways that informal ideas and notions became ensconced within official Federal legislative policy.

The fact that it was suggested that the apparatus of the Federal Commonwealth ought to assume this area of responsibility from the States serves as additional evidence that the notion of universal rights was being embedded within official Federal domains. As Howe had argued, by extending the coverage beyond the individual States, a more universal system was able to be theoretically assembled.⁶³ One of the prime examples which exemplified this was the plight of itinerant labourers within Australia, who in the course of their travels in the pursuit of work, may have had to regularly cross State boundaries.

These considerations reflect the importance of many of the issues raised by Kingston, Wise, and to a lesser extent O'Connor, at the Constitutional Conventions. Their commitment to Commonwealth based citizenship rights, show how this implicit support might translate into practical matters, such as the policy for 'old age and invalid pensions'. In analysing the references to Commonwealth pensions it is possible to gauge the practical implications that flowed from these areas of policy conjecture, and their possible impact upon the notions of citizenship as Federation approached.

Another salient issue that emerges from these discussions involves the sharing of the financial burden incurred by the creation of a universal pension scheme. Howe had commented that, "In Germany it is compulsory for those in fixed employment, and for employers, to contribute to a fund which is subsidised by the Government".⁶⁴ He favoured a model in which employers, employees and the Government would work cooperatively to ensure that 'no man need end his days as a pauper'. His support for this model represented the resonance of the principles which had featured prominently within 'vernacular citizenship' in previous years. It is possible to discern the ideals previously voiced within the *Citizen* and the *People's Advocate*, extolling the shared interest which existed between employee and employer, and the potential benefits which they might deliver to the whole community.

⁶³ Quick & Garran, *The Annotated History Of The Australian Constitution*, p. 613.

⁶⁴ Quick & Garran, *The Annotated History Of The Australian Constitution*, p. 613.

Howe's suggestions echo the ideas of those who had campaigned for government to tackle the major policy issues facing the polity, many of which had already featured as characteristics of 'vernacular citizenship'. These reflected the trust invested by the broader community in the beneficence of Government, and the strength of the relationship that was implied to exist between them. An integral element of this relationship consisted of the belief in the importance of nurturing the sense of co-operation and shared interests. Holding this conceptual paradigm together was the amalgam of commonality of interest, consisting of the virtues of co-operation and shared values and ideals. This had previously been espoused in various forms by William Spence, as well as authors such as Boldrewood and Furphy.

These examples show how the relationship between the Commonwealth and its citizens was being profoundly moulded during this period of time. One clear trait that emerged, was the growing relationship between the people and the Commonwealth. Howe's ideas show how these informal citizenship ideas, and the related supposition of what characteristics constituted the identity of citizens, were being quite surreptitiously developed. And in a similar manner they were being subtly enshrined within the spirit, as well as the prospective format of Commonwealth legislation.

Further evidence of this process in which the theoretical contours of the relationship between the Commonwealth and its citizens was being imagined, was provided by the *Bulletin* when it proclaimed that:

The third abiding principle of statesmanship for the Commonwealth is the principle of the equalisation of fortunes. Good government can do much to level the disparity of classes. It cannot make all men equal, but it can give to all equal opportunities as far as the sphere of government extends. The Commonwealth can tax the rich for the benefit of the poor, and ensure to some extent a redistribution of wealth at each generation. It can place education within the reach of all, and capital within the reach of the industrious- always with the aim of making as many of its citizens as possible their own employers, independent of wages.⁶⁵

⁶⁵ *Bulletin*, December 8, 1900, p. 8.

This excerpt indicated the potential role which it perceived the Federal Government ought to play in the lives of its constituents. This involvement included the Commonwealth pursuing the principle of 'equalising the fortunes' of the populace, by redressing financial inequality through taxation. However, it is equally important to note that the *Bulletin*, in making these claims, also opined that the Federal Commonwealth should pursue these principles by providing universal educational opportunities as well as 'capital' to those pursuing industrious ends.

This range of ideas prefaced by the *Bulletin* in discussing the formulation of prospective Commonwealth policy, shows the major role which the auspices of government would be expected to play in shaping the nation. One principle expectation was that the state would actively guide and assist the members of the Commonwealth and the broader interests of the nation. A crucial element of this relationship involved mixing 'substantive'⁶⁶ matters in to the theoretical outline of the relationship between the Commonwealth and its citizens. In the wider context of the national community, this implicitly situated the state shouldering the 'burdens' that were identified by the citizenry. This might include everything from constructing railway infrastructure to outlining and maintaining the 'White Australia' policy.

Both W.K. Hancock and Michael Roe have written insightfully about these aspects of the relationship between the Commonwealth and its citizens. Hancock's quotation stands out as being emblematic of his perceptions, "...Australian democracy has come to look upon the State as a vast public utility, whose duty is to provide the greatest happiness for the greatest number."⁶⁷ Roe used a similar quotation from Hancock to support his own reasoning that held that this situation had been brought about by the influence of a collection of ideas which he has described as 'moral enlightenment'.⁶⁸ From the perspective of this thesis, the key aspect of this developing relationship between the Commonwealth and its citizens, which these scholars touch upon, has involved this

⁶⁶ Chesterman & Galligan, *Defining Australian Citizenship: Selected Documents*, pp. 8-9.

⁶⁷ Hancock, *Australia*, p. 55. Nadel has expressed similar ideas in regard to the expectations invested in the state assisting the material advancement of individuals, see *Australia's Colonial Culture: Ideas, Men and Institutions in Mid-Nineteenth Century Eastern Australia*, pp. 273-274.

⁶⁸ Roe, *Quest For Authority In Eastern Australia 1835-1851*, pp. 204-205.

relationship being shaped by informal notions of citizenship. Furthermore, some of these predominant ideas have continued to impact upon the imagined form of citizenship in the consciousness of the mainstream population, and have formed a considerable layer of influence in the ways in which political matters have been shaped.

The sentiments expressed by the *Bulletin* illustrate how the concepts of state and nation were becoming tightly entwined with notions of 'citizenship', within the auspices of the prospective Federal Commonwealth. The full implications of the *Bulletin*'s belief that the state should stand alongside its 'citizens', and 'equalize fortunes', are more apparent when placed in the context of classical conceptions of citizenship. In classical traditions, a key component involved the concepts of 'virtue' or 'virtu', which were displayed when citizens were confronted by the vicissitudes of 'fortune'. Pocock describes the concept of virtue as existing, "...in the quality of personality that commanded good fortune and in the quality that dealt effectively and nobly with whatever fortune might send..."⁶⁹

Pocock has acknowledged that the anglicised version of *virtus*, or virtue, has evolved into different shapes over the years.⁷⁰ Over time it has come to signify a range of practices which might include, "...a devotion to the public good; it could signify the practice, or the preconditions of the practice, of relations of equality between citizens engaged in ruling and being ruled; and lastly, since citizenship was above all a mode of action and practicing the active life, it could signify that active ruling quality - practiced in republics by citizens equal with one another and devoted to the public good...."⁷¹

Against the backdrop of these ideas, the proposed involvement of the Commonwealth government in the lives of its citizens, reveal how significant these suggestions were. This relationship was so close, that government and citizen were sharing interests that had previously been considered separate. One aspect of this theoretical relationship was

⁶⁹ Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition*, pp. 37-38.

⁷⁰ For example, as Pocock states, this term was also applied by Greek thinkers in regard to notions of civic excellence, *The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition*, pp. 37-38.

⁷¹ Pocock, "Virtues, rights, and manners: A model for historians of political thought", p. 41, in Pocock, *Virtue, Commerce and History: Essays on Political Thought and History, Chiefly in the Eighteenth Century*, pp. 37-50.

that the identities of the individual, or citizen, were now becoming more closely linked with the state. As Federation approached, the identity of the individual citizen was increasingly influenced by the dimensions of political developments. Given the strong nationalistic flavour of Federation, it is possible to understand how national identity became so intimately connected with informal notions of citizenship.

The themes of universality and egalitarianism are some of the predominant informal streams of thought which emerge from the discourse in this era. They may be freely located in discussions of franchise rights, as well as the debates which deal with policy issues such as rights of access to the old-age pension. These notions tie together as they show the way essential notions of classical citizenship, particularly in regard to the issues of participation in political matters, were reshaped to accommodate the social and political circumstances of the contemporary society. They show how this process of redefining of citizens and their rights, was being moulded into dimensions that fitted the intellectual and demographic characteristics of the colonial community.

THE FRANCHISE

The Commonwealth franchise highlights many of the points previously mentioned, on the ways that the formal parameters of Commonwealth legislation shaping the dimensions of citizenship within the Australian polity. This section will begin by exploring the frequent references made within the 'popular' discourse of colonial Australia, which identified voting as being one of the primary defining characteristics of citizenship. This will illustrate two main points.

The first is that these represented the common association of voting with the primary characteristics of citizenship. These 'popular' ideas associated with suffrage were closely related to the thematic stream of ideas which constituted 'vernacular citizenship', and had been in existence since at least the mid to late 1840s. So pervasive were these ideas, it will be argued that they represented a significant and enduring current of implicit understanding within the political consciousness of mainstream Australian society.

The second factor involves the manner in which this stream of ideas was then guided into the contours which were set down by the formal and official dimensions of Commonwealth Australia. The most telling evidence of this involved voting becoming a

matter of Constitutional legislation. In this way, some of the most enduring ideas of 'vernacular citizenship' were incorporated within formal and official gambits. Examples from the press, in the time immediately preceding Federation, will illustrate the range of implications that the Commonwealth franchise created in the thinking of the mainstream population.

The overall impression created by this material suggests that the prospect of the national franchise represented major symbolic dimensions that were compatible with the themes of 'vernacular citizenship'. They would prove to be highly influential in shaping the ways in which democracy and the Australian polity would be imagined. Some of the ideas expressed by the public displayed the potential for the Commonwealth franchise to nurture sentiments inspired by the promise of shared values and a concomitant bond of national identity. Voting became one of the conduits that carried the seeds for the development of a national ethos built around political unification.

One can begin by referring to the connections made between the issue of franchise, and the defining characteristics of 'citizenship' in the minds of Australians in this early Federation era. It is worthwhile recalling these convictions of Daniel Deniehy in the 1850s,

He would vote for the second reading; and he had never before recorded his vote with such entire satisfaction to himself, because he felt that he was discharging his duty to the country as a citizen, as a representative to those who had sent him there, and to himself as a man, a husband, and a father.⁷²

Deniehy's speech couples his act of voting with an assortment of implicit criteria constituting his identity as a citizen. It is this connection between the identity of the citizen and the act of voting which is of particular relevance to this Chapter. It represents a pervasive collection of ideas pertaining to 'vernacular citizenship', which permeated through many of the discussions that entertained the act of voting in Australia.

Catherine Helen Spence expressed ideas of a similar timbre when she opined that, in regard to the general elections held in the state of South Australia in 1896, "...the first

⁷² Martin, *The Life And Speeches of Daniel Henry Deniehy*, pp. 61-62.

elections of this state found many women voters fairly well equipped to accept their responsibilities as citizens of the State."⁷³ She too, clearly equated the right to vote with the role of 'citizenship', and she prefaced this by nominating the status of citizenship as being contingent upon the citizens' acceptance of this responsibility. While this reinforced the popularity of the notions equating citizenship with the issue of franchise, there was an extra level of relevance to Spence's statement when one considers that the elections she referred to were the first opportunity for females to vote in the Australian colonies.⁷⁴ These sentiments, voiced by Spence, who was one of the pivotal political figures of this era,⁷⁵ indicated that this informal categorisation of citizenship characteristics was one that was applied to women as well as men within colonial Australia at this time.

As Alison Holland has written, "White feminists, in particular, self consciously articulated their demands within a rhetoric of citizenship. From the late nineteenth century, they sought equal citizenship (principally the vote)..."⁷⁶ This strongly suggests that this informal connection of voting within the guise of ideal citizenship, constituted primary features that shaped the imagining of political matters.⁷⁷ The association of franchise with citizenship was becoming increasingly pervasive. Whereas Deniehy's references to voting and citizenship had been intimately connected with masculine identity in the preceding years, Catherine Helen Spence was now nominating these as constituting a women's responsibility for meeting the demands of citizenship. The popularity of these ideas shows that this form of citizenship may be considered to have constituted a universal category within the imaginings of mainstream Australian life at this time.

⁷³ Catherine Helen Spence, *An Autobiography*, p. 79.

⁷⁴ Marilyn Lake refers to the hopes that many women, both in Australia and beyond these shores, held in regard to the issue of franchise rights in her article, "Personality, Individuality, Nationality: Feminist Conceptions of Citizenship 1902-1940", *Australian Feminist Studies*, No. 19, Autumn, 1994, pp. 25-38.

⁷⁵ A concise introduction to Catherine Helen Spence and her impact upon Australian society and politics may be found in Headon's, "No weak-kneed Sister: Catherine Helen Spence and 'Pure Democracy'", in Irving, (ed.), *A Woman's Constitution?: Gender & History in the Australian Commonwealth*, pp. 42-54.

⁷⁶ Holland, "The Common Bond? Australian Citizenship", in Lyons & Russell, *Australia's History: Themes and Debates*, p. 156.

⁷⁷ Malouf has referred to the 'Australianness' of voting days in Australia, see *A Spirit of Play: The making of Australian Consciousness*, pp. 111-112.

These developments also showed how citizenship was aligned with progressive political reform. Spence's ideas show that 'vernacular citizenship' was associated with significant social and political issues in this era. In this case they involved the emancipation of women as well as liberty, equality and the universal access to rights. These notions of citizenship became implicitly embroiled in these major issues of political freedom and gender equality. And in a characteristic fashion, they tended to feature at a 'vernacular' level, being widely discussed within the colonial community.

The ideas of Deniehy and Spence show how the franchise came to represent a pivotal feature in the conceptualisation of citizenship in the Australian polity. In referring back to Deniehy and the informal connection of citizenship with the act of voting, it is clear that these formed keystones in the popular conceptualisation of 'citizenship'.⁷⁸ The key element in any 'classical' configuration of citizenship in the 'Western tradition' resides in the 'citizen' being 'actively' involved in the political activities of the community to which they belong. When one considers these classical connotations of the 'citizen', it is readily apparent that there is a chasm between them and the reality of a modern nation-state, such as the Australian Commonwealth that was inaugurated in 1901. Put simply, the classical models of citizenship that were fashioned in the city states of Greece and the Roman Republic, were worlds away from those that function in modern democracies. Rather than exercising their democratic duties in the town or village assemblies, the modern day member of a representative democracy was to exercise their right and responsibility as a citizen via the ballot box.⁷⁹

From this store of historical discourse it is apparent that the informal and implicit conceptualisations of citizenship frequently involved the issues of franchise and voting, and that these formed a compatible set of features within 'vernacular citizenship'. What becomes clearer as Federation approaches, is that the theoretical implications for these models begin to change. In referring once more to the contemporary popular press, it is possible to observe how the prospect of a national Parliament was shaping the way that

⁷⁸ A recent publication has examined a variety of themes that pursue the question of, "...how democracy became institutionalised in Australia.", p.1, in, Sawer's, "Pacemakers for the World?", in M. Sawer, (ed.), *Elections: Full, Free, and Fair*, pp. 1-27.

⁷⁹ Sawer & Zappala, "Introduction: Representation in Australian Politics", in Sawer & Zappala, (eds), *Speaking For The People: Representation in Australian Politics*, p. 1.

‘vernacular citizenship’ was being imagined in subtle, but quite profound ways. Perhaps the most significant alterations involved the explicit connection that was being drawn between the identity of the individual and the nation. The full ramifications of these changes can be more roundly examined by exploring the time of Federation itself and this perspective is analysed more closely in Chapter Six. However it is possible to glean an insight into these initial directions by reviewing some of the stories which were printed in the press prior to Federation.

THE APPROACH OF FEDERATION AND THE NATIONAL VOTE

One example is to be found in the *Sydney Morning Herald*:

Today the Revision Courts convened for the purpose of examining the State electoral rolls will begin their sittings, and it becomes the duty of every male citizen of statutory age to be aware of the fact. For on an occasion like that of the approaching Federal election it is above all things desirable that every franchise exercising individual should use his right, and to that end it is necessary that each should see that his name has been placed upon the rolls. But on an occasion like that now in view, when the first election under the Commonwealth is about to be held, the country has a right to expect that each and every citizen will show his interest in the new nation by recording the vote to which he is entitled.⁸⁰

This report contains several of the essential issues involved with the Commonwealth franchise and its adoption by the Federal Commonwealth of Australia. There was a clear message that the rights of franchise were closely equated with the concurrent responsibility that individuals register their votes, and that this was a 'duty' that ought to be reasonably expected of 'citizens'. Reciprocation formed a key element in the relationship between the franchise holders, and the national community. In this vein, the following statement from the *Sydney Morning Herald*, "But on an occasion like that now in view, when the first election under the Commonwealth is about to be held, the country has a right to expect that each and every citizen will show his interest in the new nation

⁸⁰ *Sydney Morning Herald*, January 16, 1901, p. 6.

by recording the vote to which he is entitled."⁸¹, indicated that the exercise of franchise equated to a defining act of reciprocation in the relationship between the 'new nation' and its 'citizens'.

Within this entreaty to fellow citizens to accept the responsibility of franchise, may be heard the echo of similar invocations expressed in the *Citizen* and the *People's Advocate*. While these publications had extolled the virtues of citizens actively engaging in the political processes, the words of the *Herald* signified the incipient stages of transition within the conceptualisation of this involvement. The emphasis was subtly moving from active participation in political demonstrations and rallies, to engagement in the representative electoral system as a member of the voting public. Furthermore this implicit support for the representative system accorded with the similar preferences expressed in previous years by people such as Deniehy.

This example illustrated the process whereby the ideal citizen of the time of the *Citizen* and the *People's Advocate* was now evolving into someone committed to the representative electoral system. These shifts within the conceptualisations of 'vernacular citizenship' held significant implication for the ways that matters pertaining to democracy and politics would be imagined within the context of the approaching Federal Commonwealth. Furthermore it is possible to observe how this development involved the inculcation of patriotic values. Nationalistic sentiments would emerge as more evident features within this new package, particularly as Federation loomed.

When one assesses the significance of the franchise, and the influence of the approaching Federal Commonwealth, it is quickly apparent that there were several levels in which 'vernacular citizenship' and more expansive political matters were imagined. One primary aspect can be observed in these types of statements issued from the pages of the Sydney newspaper, the *Truth*, which read, "Democracy is real, and lives, when it truly lives, in the hearts of the people, when educated and right-minded citizens assemble at the voting places in the spirit of respect for others rights as well as in determination to preserve their own."⁸²

⁸¹ *ibid*, p. 6.

⁸² *Truth*, June 24, 1900, p.1.

This quotation persuasively demonstrates the capacity for voting to transcend the limitations of formal and institutional arrangements. It shows how the franchise generated enthusiasm and excitement, stirring the emotions of individuals. And it also shows that these spirited responses drew upon the similar themes which had celebrated the virtues of the ideal 'citizens' within the realms of 'vernacular citizenship'. Including their being sufficiently 'educated' to understand their roles within the political system. The marrow of these had been previously voiced by such sources as the *Citizen* and the *People's Advocate*, and they formed some of the most basic features of 'vernacular citizenship'. To extrapolate further, it is also clear that the heart of these notions which formed 'vernacular citizenship' celebrated the qualities of co-operation and shared values, aligned with respect for individual's freedom. These mirrored ideas that had been similarly expressed by Boldrewood, Spence and Furphy, which had been derived from an eclectic range of sources, including Paine, Mill, Bentham and Rousseau, to name a few.

VOTING-SYMBOLIC ELEMENTS

As the birth of the Commonwealth approached, the process of voting had come to signify what was arguably the essential ingredient of 'vernacular citizenship'. In one sense, the act of voting in a representative democratic system was the nearest example that an Australian person could pursue aspire to within the classical characteristics of citizenship. This point was referred to by a range of persons who articulated their thoughts in the context of the incipient Australian political scene. In the contemporary press there is evidence that members of the public shared this enthusiasm for the right to vote. In a letter to the editor of the *Sydney Morning Herald*, dated the 19th of September, 1900, Mark Mitchell wrote:

Many suggestions have already been made for honouring in a fitting manner the great day, now near at hand, when the Commonwealth of Australia is to take her place among the sisterhood of nations. I have a proposition to submit which would, if adopted, enable each elector in the Federated states to obtain a permanent and interesting record of the time, a record which posterity would highly value. For the election of senators and representatives in the first Federal Parliament let special electors rights be printed; let there be of a design suited for

the occasion, and let them be available for that one election only, so that, after being presented to and stamped by the presiding officer, they may be taken away from the poll clean and intact, and carefully kept in albums, or framed and hung on the wall of the cottage, villa, or mansion as lasting reminders that on a certain day all Australia united to return members to her first parliament.

Mark Mitchell.⁸³

Mitchell's letter shows the 'popular' excitement that was associated with the right to vote. It inspired Mitchell to suggest that commemorative polling sheets be printed in order to memorialise the first Federal elections of the Australian Commonwealth. He considered it to be an integral part of the process whereby, "...all Australia united..." The national franchise was a pivotal development in the incipient formation of a national sense of 'belonging' and patriotic identity. As Mitchell's correspondence suggested, it was not only a source of pride within the voting community, but also an emblem of unity. It represented an important symbol connecting all Australians

The franchise represented both a right that belonged to the members of the new Commonwealth, as well as a bond that could be claimed to be a universal entity in the recently formed nation. There was in Mitchell's reckoning, no division based on wealth or social standing, as commemorative souvenirs could be hung "...on the wall of the cottage, villa or mansion..." It thus, nominally incorporated 'everyday Australians' with the inauguration of the national Federal parliament. Thereby encouraging the development of a pervasive sense that 'Australianness' was closely linked to the political processes that delivered the Federal Commonwealth. Showing how formal issues could be coupled with implicit ideas and notions, and in the process, imbued with a social and cultural resonance within the context of the nascent Federal Commonwealth.

With this point in mind it should be noted that Mitchell's correspondence bore the same themes of millennial excitement that would characterise the great majority of newspaper articles, as well as speeches inspired by Federation. Significantly, Mitchell distilled his own excitement into enthusiasm for the Commonwealth franchise. This serves as

⁸³ *Sydney Morning Herald*, September 20, 1900, p. 7.

supplementary evidence that the franchise was imbued with similar themes of aspiration and hope that would emerge during the celebrations which greeted the inauguration of the Federal Commonwealth and form the focus of Chapter Six.

CONCLUSION

The response to the Commonwealth franchise demonstrated the depth of the connection between its symbolic significance, and the wider issues of national identity. At one level it may seem tendentious to invest the right to vote with so much significance. However the connection between the heritage of ‘vernacular’ ideas initially voiced by William Spence and Daniel Deniehy, and the broader enthusiasms voiced by people such as Catherine Helen Spence, vouched for the longevity of the ideas. Their exhibition within the wider public, showed their deep resonance within the mainstream national psyche. In the broad sweep of this appeal, shared between prominent figures in public forums as well as the general public, it is possible to comprehend the ‘popular’ appeal of franchise.

The right to vote was arguably one of the most representative emblems of the political developments of Federation. It carried a multitude of references to political emancipation and social progress in Federation Australia. Not the least important of these involved the connection between the informal and popular conceptualisations of citizenship which formed the basis of ‘vernacular citizenship’. This was imbued with many of these ideas, and a good deal of the excitement associated with the act of casting a vote in Commonwealth elections. In examining the range of reactions to the Federal franchise, it is possible to observe the reach of the themes of universality, inclusion, and democratic equality.

CHAPTER SIX

1901 - The Inauguration of the New Nation

THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA: 'VERNACULAR CITIZENSHIP' AND THE IMPLICATIONS FOR THE 'IMAGINING' OF POLITICAL MATTERS

The events that greeted the inauguration of the Federation of the Commonwealth of Australia have been thoroughly documented by historians.¹ While it may therefore seem self-evident to suggest that Federation² represented a seminal and pivotal moment in the political and social life of the nation, this Chapter will discuss the role that notions of 'informal' and 'popular citizenship' played during this period. It will argue that amidst the tumult that greeted the Commonwealth, are clues which strongly suggest that the inchoate collection of 'popular' and 'informal' citizenship values and ideas that constituted 'vernacular citizenship', played active roles in shaping the arrival of Federation.

One of the major reasons for drawing upon the events of Federation is to further explore the theme of 'vernacular citizenship', and bolster the argument that it exerted a considerable degree of influence in moulding the ways that democratic political development, and the wider issues connected with the arrival of the Commonwealth, were imagined.³ One method for addressing these propositions is by illustrating the connection between the major ideas that were in evidence during the mid to late 1840s, and were still visible in the period which culminated with Federation.

¹ Most of the general works which cover the events of the early 1900s in Australian history have recounted to some extent, the circumstances and events that ushered in Federation. For example, Macintyre, *The Oxford History Of Australia, Vol. IV., 1901-1942, The Succeeding Age*. A comprehensive summary is also provided in Gavin Souter's, *Lion and Kangaroo: The Initiation of Australia*. There are a range of more recently produced texts which concentrate more closely upon the events of Federation itself. For example, Irving, *To Constitute a Nation: A Cultural History of Australia's Constitution*, also, Irving, (ed.), *The Centenary Companion To Australian Federation*, as well as, Hirst, *The Sentimental Nation: the making of the Australian Commonwealth*.

² Ged Martin presents a provocative summary of the approaches of historians to Federation, see, Review Article; "Explaining The Sentimental Utopia: Historians and The Centenary of Australian Federation", *Australian Studies*, Vol. 18, No.1, Summer 2003, pp. 211-230.

³ The role that Federation played in fostering "colonial nationalist imaginings" is discussed by Galligan & Roberts, (see p. 90) in, "The People's Constitution?", *The New Federalist: The Journal of Australian Federation History*, No. 5, June 2000, pp. 87-90.

By recalling this period in Australian history, the influence of the major ideas and themes that constituted 'vernacular citizenship', initially circulated in the *Citizen* and the *People's Advocate*, as well as by W. G. Spence and Daniel Deniehy, can also be observed in the events of Federation. By revisiting the appeals of the *Citizen* and the *People's Advocate* for democratic political reforms, one may witness the fruition of their endeavours emerging during the formal events of Federation. In analysing the impact of these ideas it is important to note that they were being expressed through the political sphere, as well as other popular public forums. By examining these it is possible to examine the influence of these ideas and values in the informal and social environment of colonial and early Commonwealth Australia. The other purpose of referring to the Federation era is to assess the extent of these influences upon the movement which culminated with the arrival of the Federated Commonwealth, and their continuing presence and influence upon Australian politics and society.

The nascent ideas prefaced in the *Citizen* and the *People's Advocate*, and bolstered by Spence and Deniehy, constituted an early representation of 'citizenship' characteristics in Australian political thought. Federation illustrated how these ideas had taken root in several layers of the mainstream community, and were continuing to spread. During Federation, a range of these key ideas and opinions relating to 'vernacular citizenship' may be observed to have been in active circulation, in the local press as well as civic events. Furthermore, the initial basis of these ideas, principles and values had been expanded, and more widely distributed by contemporary vessels such as the *Bulletin*. In this context it is possible to observe the manner in which this pathway of 'vernacular' 'citizenship' ideas has exerted an indelible and crucial influence in the formation of Federation Australia. It shaped the ways in which democracy was imagined, and exerted a profound influence upon the development of the polity.

In reflecting upon the response of the public to the events of Federation, this thesis argues that some of the threads of ideas concerning 'citizenship' raised by people like Deniehy and Spence, formed vital pieces in the patchwork of ceremonial events. In re-appraising Federation, some of the sentiments relating to citizenship, including national identity and national kinship, reappear over the course of the celebrations. The inchoate ideas of Deakin, Kingston and Wise (and to some extent O'Connor) and their hopes for

an 'Australian citizenship', that might nurture a sense of national pride and identity, were being expressed across a varied cross-section of the infant nation's populace. The response of the general public to the Federation events, reflected the type of aspirations that had emerged during the Conference discussions. Showing how conceptualisations which had originally emanated from formal political spheres were reflected in more popular and informal domains.

FEDERATION AND HIGH AMBITIONS- A BETTER WORLD

The establishment of formal outlines of Australian citizenship in the Australian Constitution handed down in 1901, by virtue of their imprecise detail and incomprehensive nature, offered ample opportunity for the proliferation of informal values to flourish. The vaguely drawn parameters of formal definitions acted as a subtle reinforcement of these informal values. The events of Federation illustrated the manner in which particular informal thematic streams of thought pervaded the era in a variety of ways. One of the starkest examples concerned the widespread expectation that Federation would deliver a cornucopia of blessings that would fulfil an exhaustive array of hopes expressed across a broad cross-section of the community.⁴

One might also observe the presence of the sub-themes which had developed around the predominant stream of ideas connected to the topic of 'vernacular citizenship'. As has been explained, many of these political arguments advanced from the mid to late 1840s onward, were driven by the determination to establish progressive political reforms. The European Enlightenment had provided the intellectual impetus which sparked the drive to spread democracy. In colonial Australia, there was a deep dread of the bloody insurrections which had followed the push for reform in Europe during the 1840s. It was complemented by a powerful desire that political and social development in the new nation of Australia should avoid the pitfalls of the old world.⁵ Whilst exploring the

⁴ As Galligan & Roberts summarise, Federation was shaped by an era in which "...politics was seen as the means by which moral truths could be shaped to become historical realities." (p. 88) in, "The People's Constitution?", *The New Federalist: The Journal of Australian Federation History*, No. 5, June 2000, pp. 87-90.

⁵ Hirst draws our attention to these ambitions which, "...embodied the hopes for Australia as a better world. Australia was not only to be better Britain; it was also to be a better new world than the United States...", *The Sentimental Nation: the making of the Australian Commonwealth*, p. 22.

discourse of the Federation era it becomes apparent that these thematic issues were as strong as ever. In fact, within the contemporary discourse associated with Federation there is sufficient evidence to suggest that much of the dialogue encapsulated these prime elements in such a subtle way that their origins had been subsumed, so that their presence seemed to represent matters of a particularly Australian quality.

THE PEOPLE AS CITIZENS

One of the vessels best suited to carry these themes was the language of citizenship, which was utilised to convey both the major political ideas and issues of the time, as well as wrapping them in a form that reinforced their identification with the people of the new Australian Commonwealth. Through much of this discourse generated by Federation, ran the theme of ‘the people’ being seated at the heart of democracy in this new nation. When one reads reports of Charles Kingston addressing a luncheon at the Sydney Town Hall with the words,

"...I have had the opportunity and honour of addressing an audience in this Town Hall before as president of the National Convention. I reflect also that I have a higher claim to your consideration in that I speak from the platform of the common citizens of Australia. (Loud cheers.)"⁶

it becomes clear that the key role of the people was predicated on their status as ‘citizens’. This perception that the Australian people were integral to the foundation of the nation became a defining motif of the Federation process. Indeed, Kingston pronounced himself to have a “higher claim to the consideration” of the crowd at Sydney Town Hall, because of his right to speak “from the platform of the common citizens of Australia”.

These references to the involvement of the Australian people in the Federation process illustrated the keen intent of the politicians of the time to promote this perception. Kingston’s acknowledgments reflected several of the characteristic features of ‘vernacular citizenship’ which may be traced to earlier days. He recognised the importance of addressing the people as citizens and cited their primary importance in the

⁶ *Sydney Morning Herald*, January 4, 1901, p. 4.

scheme of national political affairs. These perceptions fitted into the outline of the modern, pluralistic democratic system that was being constructed in Australia. One may also observe how these informal values that moulded this perception of a 'people's Commonwealth' accorded with the characteristics of 'vernacular citizenship'.

One can gauge the importance of representing the people of Australia as 'citizens', and how essential this element was in promoting this 'sense of unity' that was extensively aired over the course of the Commonwealth's inauguration. The full extent of this becomes apparent when one reads the innumerable references made to these notions of unity, co-operation and mutual purpose. More often than not, these notions were implicitly associated with references to informal citizenship and perfectly suited the dimensions of 'vernacular citizenship'. This illustrates the almost subliminal presence of notions of informal 'citizenship' that were expressed during the time of Federation. These conceptualisations may be observed in the events of Federation in two ways. Firstly, in the events of Federation and the range of reactions that it inspired, it is possible to detect a plethora of implicit references to citizenship. No the least being the repetitious connections drawn between the identity of the general population as 'citizens', and their place at the heart of the coming Federal Commonwealth.

It may also be argued that this theme, of the 'people' at the epicentre of the new nation, was being acted out in the widespread participation of the public in the events of Federation. The populism inherent in the earlier calls for democratic advance was contingent upon the notions of universality of rights and opportunity. 'Everyman' was to be accorded the same rights and opportunities as any other, with no concessions or infringements based on the old evils of racial division, religious bigotry, or disparities in wealth and class. These propositions reinforce the instrumental role that 'vernacular citizenship' played during this time. For not only were 'the people', or 'the citizens', hailed by the politicians of this heady time as being both instrumental in the arrival of Federation, as well as the survival of the Commonwealth ideal. They were also to be observed in large numbers actively participating in the pageant of Federation. It may be contended that in a symbolic, and in some respects shallow fashion, the events of Federation graphically fulfilled these ideals.

It is possible to delineate some of these central ideas of 'vernacular citizenship', as they were advanced by politicians in the political sphere during the celebrations. Some of these same conceptions may also be observed reverberating through the public domain, in the correspondence published in the contemporary press. It will be argued that the often congruent nature of this relationship between the political and public spheres, and the interplay of pervasive ideas between them, represented the popularity of these ideas themselves, as well as their broad appeal. It also showed the manner in which an implicit level of 'mainstream' consensus was generated by them. Some of these characteristic features of the relationship between the political sphere and the public of that era, carry several features that have endured to the present day.

THE DAWN OF FEDERATION

Federation provoked a potent mix of aspirations, ambitions and emotions. These response show the pivotal role which the arrival of the Australian Commonwealth played in shaping many levels of development within the nation. With this in mind it is easier to understand the influence of the thematic refrain which reinforced the identification of the Australian people as 'citizens'. Their involvement was an essential ingredient which validated the claims of Federation to represent a truly democratic model, based on the rights and privileges of the people. In the same fashion, it provided authentic grounds for claiming special qualities that differentiated it from the rest of the world.

Consider these reflections:

On the last day of 1900 I sat at my writing window to watch the drops of the time-ball that regulates all the Government clocks- the clocks which the morning papers had warned us to set our time-pieces by at 1 p.m., so as not to be a second out, if we could help it, when the midnight hour should strike. I cannot describe the state of tension we were in, the sense of fateful happenings that possessed us that day. The New Year and the New Century were coming to all peoples, but we could not think of them save as satellites of our New Commonwealth,

arranged for the purpose of fitly inaugurating the New Nation. Australia believed herself on the threshold of the Golden Age.⁷

This excerpt presents an example of the excitement and expectation that were attached to Federation at this time. For many people Federation represented an occurrence of such magnitude that it was associated with the halcyon notions of a coming 'golden age'. As one ruminates over this rich image, it is possible to grasp an understanding of the almost limitless dimensions of expectations and aspirations, which were conjured by the promise of Federation.

In drawing upon examples from the contemporary metropolitan press, it is possible to comprehend both the depth of these hopes and aspirations, as well as the breadth of their appeal across the mainstream population. One of the most vivid themes permeating Federation was that it was an event of almost millennial significance. In the *Town and Country Journal* the inauguration was welcomed with the headlines, "A New Nation And A New Century, Australia's Greatest Day".⁸ This quotation reveals the potency of the timing which combined the arrival of a new Commonwealth⁹ with the accompanying spirit of *fin de siecle*.¹⁰ In a now quite famous cartoon in the *Bulletin* titled, "Australia Faces the Dawn",¹¹ the arrival of Federation was depicted as a rising sun¹² with its rays bathing the fledgling nation, represented by a statue standing facing into the morning light of a new century. This cartoon depiction perfectly encapsulated the sentiments of Federation equating to a fresh beginning, or more literally, the dawning of a new nation.

The union of the Australian colonies was lauded for several reasons. One of the strongest of these was the belief that the collection of formally disparate states was now

⁷ Ada Cambridge, *Thirty Years in Australia*; with an introduction by, M. Bradstock and L. K. Wakeling, p. 244. This excerpt is also discussed in, Bradstock & Wakeling, *Rattling the Orthodoxies: A Life of Ada Cambridge*, p. 168.

⁸ *Town and Country Journal*, January, 12, 1901, p. 12

⁹ The excitement of this time is mentioned also in, Bradstock & Wakeling, *Rattling the Orthodoxies: A Life of Ada Cambridge*, p. 168.

¹⁰ Irving, *To Constitute a Nation: A Cultural History of Australia's Constitution*, Cambridge University Press, U.K., 1997, p. 8.

¹¹ *Bulletin*, January 2, 1901, p. 17.

¹² White discusses the significance of the rising sun as a symbol of new beginnings see, "Symbols of Australia", in, Lyons & Russell, *Australia's History: Themes and Debates*, p. 122.

entering an advanced state of development as a national body. There was a popular belief that the Commonwealth of Australia¹³ was fit to enter the pantheon of superior development and civilisation that was reserved for nations.¹⁴ One of the most prominent expressions aired during this time involved the ambition that Federation would satisfy the needs of the incipient nation to feel worthy of a prominent position in world affairs. These ambitions reflected the influence of the prevailing intellectual orthodoxies of the day. Foremost among these was the European Enlightenment's high regard for material progress and national development.¹⁵

John Hirst has cited some of the primary influences driving the movement towards Federation as being, "Evolutionary social thinking, with authority borrowed from Darwin's biology, was strong among both orthodox and heterodox believers. God and evolution were an irresistible mix."¹⁶ If it is accepted that the events of Federation equated to the culmination of a sequence of ideas and theories,¹⁷ then the place of 'popular notions of citizenship', is even more significant. Even more so, if this moment was celebrated in the context of world affairs,

It is one of the primary contentions of this thesis that these popular notions of citizenship, lay as an inherent foundation stone of the intellectual processes which shaped the founding of the Australian Commonwealth. While they may not have been explicitly acknowledged, nor clearly defined, they formed an influential part of the sub-structure of political thought which influenced the dimensions of Federation. Proof of this is evident

¹³ Rod Dixon introduces the intellectual milieu which shaped expectations that the development of Australia might follow the path of 'classic' historical development and match the heights of empire, see *The Course Of Empire: Neo-Classical Culture in New South Wales 1788-1860*, pp. 1-5.

¹⁴ Hirst summarised some of the primary forces of impetus in these terms, "Federation itself- the means by which Australia was to become a nation-wore a progressive air. It represented so clearly a stage in social evolution from simple to complex forms. It was by Federation that men envisaged that the British Empire, the Anglo-Saxon race, the English speaking peoples, and finally the world would be united.", *The Sentimental Nation: the making of the Australian Commonwealth*, p. 14.

¹⁵ Gascoigne, *The Enlightenment and the Origins of European Australia*, p. 13 and p. 69. Dixon refers to the "...social and economic progress, normally associated with the Scottish Enlightenment of the eighteenth century...", in *The Course Of Empire: Neo-Classical Culture in New South Wales 1788-1860*, p. 1.

¹⁶ Hirst, *The Sentimental Nation: the making of the Australian Commonwealth*, p. 6.

¹⁷ Irving makes similar salient points in regard to the dominance of 'teleological thinking' in this era, and how this contributed to the widely held belief in the destiny of progress inevitably delivering Federation, in, *To Constitute a Nation: A Cultural History of Australia's Constitution*, p. 28.

in the widespread celebration of the franchise as well as other key themes that pervaded the Federation processes. In the public and informal celebrations of what were notionally formalised political events, lay the clues which indicate that the place of this sense of 'popular citizenship' should not be underestimated. It is evident that many of the informal and popular ideas associated with 'vernacular citizenship' featured prominently during the time of Federation.

Some of these were expressed in this letter sent to the *Sydney Morning Herald* by E.W. O'Sullivan¹⁸:

The Dawn of Federation.

Sir,-

On January 1 next one of the most momentous events in human history will transpire, namely, the establishment of the Australian Commonwealth. It is the approach of the Commonwealth of Australia- destined to be the greatest power in the Southern world, the leader of liberty and progress, and the creator of a state of civilisation that all the world will be glad to follow. Neither the reign of Napoleon, with its transient conquests, or the diplomacy of Bismarck has affected the world so powerfully as will the starting of this new nation beneath the Southern Cross. Visions of future greatness... With large and prosperous cities, and with the great interests of agriculture, grazing, mining, and horticulture enormously enlarged- Australia will then present a scene of activity not surpassed in any part of the world..." It is a picture worthy of the poet, the patriot and the philosopher.

E.W. O'Sullivan.¹⁹

The author of this contribution, Edward William O'Sullivan was one of Federation's staunchest supporters. Throughout a vibrant public life, O'Sullivan was a tireless campaigner in a variety of guises which included stints in journalism, politics, trade

¹⁸ B. E. Mansfield, *Australian Democrat; The Career of Edward William O'Sullivan*, p. 274.

¹⁹ *Sydney Morning Herald*, December 25, 1900, p. 8.

unionism, as well as involvement in sporting and theatrical circles.²⁰ Aside from his prodigious reserves of energy, possibly the defining characteristic of O'Sullivan's career involved his faith in the country of his birth and its potential to transcend its humble beginnings.

Within this letter, one can sense the excitement that was at large as the Federation of the Commonwealth approached. The formal advent of a unified nation allowed people the opportunity to compare themselves with the pre-eminent historical examples of national development as existed in Europe and beyond. And within these expressions of confidence it is evident that they hoped that, "this new nation beneath the Southern Cross" might indeed be capable of surpassing the achievements of other nations.

The final line is especially noteworthy as it exhibits how, in the imagination of its writer, the coming of the Commonwealth presented a "picture worthy of the poet, the patriot and the philosopher." This line encapsulated several of the characteristics that the Federation of the Commonwealth of Australia signified for many people of this era. Firstly, the romantic appeal of the Commonwealth, that was 'worthy of the poet'.²¹ It was also a nation worthy of the patriot, generating a deep sense of nationalistic pride. And it was also worthy of the philosopher. At the risk of overly simplifying matters, the new nation boasted sufficient riches to satisfy the mind, heart and soul of its people. And there was also the suggestion that there were sufficient riches to nourish all three personas. Together these characteristics demonstrated the extent of progress, as well as limitless potential for high achievement that were represented by Federation.

²⁰ Headon, "On the Side of the Angels: E.W. O'Sullivan as Republican, Feminist and Federationist", see, p.142, in Headon & Williams, (eds), *Makers of Miracles: The Cast of the Federation Story*, pp. 141-152.

²¹ As Hirst discusses, the use of poetry was a feature of Federation. In his words, "Because Federation was a sacred cause, poetry was considered the most appropriate medium to express its rationale and purposes. The nation was born in a festival of poetry." For a further discussion see *The Sentimental Nation: the making of the Australian Commonwealth*, p. 15. It is interesting to note that Hirst also refers to the role of poetry in the push for political reform advocated by Deniehy, Harpur, Parkes, Ironside, and Hawksley in New South Wales during the late 1840s and the 1850s. See, *The Strange Birth of Colonial Democracy: New South Wales 1848-1884*, pp. 6-9. Dixon has also examined what he has described as the rise of 'literary nationalism in Australia' and in particular the role of poetry as a literary form that captured the grander aspirations of national development see, *The Course Of Empire: Neo-Classical Culture in New South Wales 1788-1860*, pp. 120-153. Roberts picks up on some of these themes concerning the place of poetry in Federation history, and explores some of the wider issues involving the role of poetry, as well as other literary and cultural artefacts and their influence in the processes of nation building, see, "Reading the Peoples Stories: Tales of Trial and Toil, and Australia's Federal Republic", pp. 95-103.

Although the sentiments frequently linked with Federation were of a laudatory nature, as the symbolism of the letter of O'Sullivan attested, the type of vision it celebrated at its core was often grounded in more fundamental values. They were commonly based on the robust productive capacity of the Commonwealth. While the letter was penned brimming with poetic sentiments, its aspirations were substantially based on more rational ambitions which bore the ancestral stamp of the European Enlightenment.²² In another sense the letter was also a harbinger, serving as an example of the mass of hopes, and the at times extraordinary dimensions of aspiration that were inspired by Federation.²³ The extent of the expectations extended from political concerns to a mass of social issues, including the individual aspirations of the community's members. In this context, the importance of this connection between the political formation of the new nation and the depth of feeling it inspired within the community, are evident.

THE UNIQUE QUALITIES OF THE AUSTRALIAN COMMONWEALTH

Acceptance into the realm of higher development, represented by the established order of the western world, and in particular the yardstick of the Enlightenment, posed several hurdles. In response to the prevailing standards of intellectual and material aspiration, several themes were widely espoused across the national community. Amongst these were the frequent refrains which trumpeted the belief that something of great and profound historical significance was occurring. This stream of thought saturated the Federation's inauguration. In this vein several features of the new Commonwealth²⁴ were lauded, including the magnitude of the celebrations, as well as the qualities of the 'new' political system being established. Even the geographical dimensions of the continent of

²² Gascoigne, *The Enlightenment and the Origins of European Australia*, p. 13.

²³ This situation whereby a range of issues and interests not traditionally considered to constitute matters relevant to the political sphere entered the political domain has continued to be a feature of the Australian polity. Consider these comments made by Irving in regard to the contemporary era, "These days, however, we increasingly regard the political as a sphere in which our own individual identities, built around gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, region, youth, and so on, must be directly represented and the interests that are assumed to arise from our identity must be met.", p. 217, "Australia's Constitutional Identity", in Irving, (ed.), *Unity and Diversity: A National Conversation*, pp. 194-220.

²⁴ Dixon has examined the intellectual milieu in which the advance of ideas within Australia involved the notion that the nature of this progression formed a part of a larger cycle of historical development in which empires rose and fell, and civilisations prospered and then floundered. In this context, the colonial experiment was imbued with the sense that it represented the dawn of an age of development and progress, *The Course Of Empire: Neo-Classical Culture in New South Wales 1788-1860*, p. 2.

Australia were presented as proof of the unique and extraordinary qualities of the Australian Commonwealth.

For instance, Sir Samuel Griffith announced at the 'State Banquet' which heralded Federation that:

This was an occasion unprecedented in the history of the world- a historical event to be remembered. There could be no comparison with this union. The Canadian federation was no comparison, because it was merely the absorption of some smaller states by two practically united provinces. In the Federation of the German Empire, also, the people had no say. But in Australia it was the people who, after much thought and struggling had decided for union. The area of country possessed by the new nation was something lost sight of. It was great indeed. You could not tell what greatness a new country with so vast an area would achieve in the future.²⁵

The oration of Griffith contained several of the themes apparent in O'Sullivan's letter, and encapsulated many of the key aspects that Federation was widely celebrated as representing. Firstly, he evaluated the place of the Federation of the Australian colonies in the context of world historical events, claiming that it was an occasion superior in size and magnitude to similar political events in other parts of the world. In support of this proposition, the size of the continent itself was celebrated as being representative of the unique qualities of the Commonwealth, illustrating the unbounded possibilities and the potential riches that presently lay beyond extraction, but not the reaches of the imagination.

Within Griffith's allocution it is also possible to trace one of the most pervasive ideas that featured in the response to Federation. As he mentioned, the role of 'the people' was celebrated as being pivotal to the political processes that delivered Federation. The involvement of the people in the Commonwealth process was frequently hailed as a feature that set it apart from others in the world. This conceptualisation of the Australian people as citizens played a pivotal role in fulfilling many of the most important symbolic aspects associated with Federation.

²⁵ *Town and Country Journal*, January 12, 1901, p. 12.

One can trace the lines of thought that connected these ambitions with the sentiments of Spence and Deniehy within the domain of 'vernacular citizenship'. Their appeals were based on the dual imperatives of modernity and progressive political reform, but also their belief in the potential for national advancement and material progress. It also reflected the desire of the Australian people of the time to measure themselves against the rest of the world and eclipse existing standards of national development. This signalled the engagement of mainstream consciousness within a nationalist perspective in regard to the demands and expectations of the greater world. The founding of the Federated nation served as an important factor in cementing nationalistically inspired notions of identity. One of the chief criteria for evaluating national identity within this schema entailed the pursuit of economic benchmarks set by the standards of contemporary Western civilisation. If we accept that Federation played an instrumental role in guiding and moulding this nationalistic perspective, one can understand how these aims and objectives directed national sentiment towards embracing notions of prosperity and development in ways that could preclude a more broad and nuanced world view.²⁶

Many believed that Federation would prove to be one of the most prominent examples exhibiting the capacities of the new nation of Australia. The formation of the Commonwealth, with its constitutional document and attendant institutions, was one that was at least the equal, and in the convictions of many, superior to most other examples in the world. One newspaper introduced its pictorial Federation, "Souvenir Edition", with the by-line, "...certain pictures ...of what political philosophers of today admit to be the freest and most liberal written Constitution which any nation of the world enjoys."²⁷

Another similar exemplar of the confidence and optimism expressed by the people of the new Commonwealth in the Constitution may be observed in the following poem:

Australia! An Anthem

²⁶ The point I am trying to make is that Federation served as part of the process whereby the conceptualisation of political and moral obligations was set within what developed into an increasingly rigid framework of national boundaries and local interests. Similar points are made by Melleuish in his article, "Universal Obligations: Liberalism, Religion and National Identity" pp. 50-60, in G. Stokes, (ed.), *The Politics of Identity in Australia*. Of particular interest is the reference to this nationalistic perspective impinging upon the capacity of the Australian mind to, "...plead the cause of humanity...", p. 51.

²⁷ *Town and Country Journal*, January 5, 1901, p. 20.

O Lord, our God! Thy love in all its strength
 Give to this land, my land, its breadth and length.
 O Lord, our God! Let songs of praise accord,
 And justice rule with legislative word
 The splendid dawn which breaks upon our day, And wakes Ambition to a larger
 sway!
 The flags of this South Continent shall rise, And bear the cross seen in her starry
 skies;
 And as we found our Austral Commonwealth
 And as we pray for guidance, strength, and years of health!
 O Lord our God! Inspire our heads of state
 With wisdom and forbearance in debate;
 Weave through halls of legislative flowers
 Of noble manhood's intellectual power's!
 Our future stands now graven in to-day,
 Fraught with the weight of national array-
 For brotherhood the peoples will prevailed,
 And falsehood's serpent tongue in trial failed!

Molong, N.S.W.

C.28

This poem expressed many influential sentiments associated with the foundation of the Australian Commonwealth.²⁹ The celebratory tone of the verse reflected the excitement that many people felt, and were willing to express as Federation was inaugurated. The poem revealed the hopes and aspirations many Australians invested in the establishment

²⁸ *ibid*, May 25, 1901, p. 11.

²⁹ As was referred to previously, Hirst has explored the place of poetry in the arrival of Federation, for further discussion see, *The Sentimental Nation: the making of the Australian Commonwealth*, pp. 11-25

of a national Commonwealth.³⁰ The heralding of a new nation was infused with ideals and ambitions of more substance than the mere expressions of excitement generated by the festivities associated with celebrating the birth of the Commonwealth.³¹ This accounts for the coupling of concepts such as 'justice' with the 'legislative word' in the poem. Denoting the close association that was made between the ideal of 'justice', and their faith in the capacity of the 'legislative word', formulated by the political institutions of the new Commonwealth, to deliver this 'justice'. This also bore testimony to the symbolic importance of the constitution to the Australian public. The Constitution and the democratic ideals it represented equated to being a symbolic receptacle holding many of the ideals and dreams of a mythic Australia.

There were examples of similar sentiments in the next stanza that read:

Weave through halls of legislative flowers

Of noble manhood's intellectual powers,

These expressed confidence in the capacity of parliamentary democracy to deliver the range and depth of ideals presented in the poem. Reinforcing the confidence in the capacity of "noble manhood's intellectual powers" to flourish in the setting of the parliamentary system. This linked Federation with the hopes that intellectual thought and political action would combine to enable the attainment of levels of human achievement befitting the heroic verse that was chosen to present them. This optimistic belief in the capacity of the human mind harks back to the intellectual milieu of the mid to late 1840s. The eloquent expression of these ideals in a poem celebrating these values, (accentuated by their appearance in the form of legislative 'flowers'), exhibited the manner in which these sources of political aspiration, previously espoused by the *Citizen* and the *People's Advocate*, were surfacing within the guise of the contemporary political nation.

SHARED IDEALS AND AMBITIONS

If we revisit Griffith's oration it is possible to trace the influence of some of the most

³⁰ Galligan & Roberts, *Australian Citizenship*, p. 106

³¹ Roberts discusses the place of poetry in the Federation era, pp. 97-98, "Reading the People's Stories: Tales of Trial and Toil, and Australia's Federal Republic", pp. 95-103.

pervasive ideas that featured in the triumphal responses to Federation. As Griffith had declared, the role of 'the people' was celebrated as being pivotal to the political and institutional processes that delivered Federation. Also, their involvement was hailed as one of the features representing the unique qualities that set the Australian union apart from others in the world. In the following address he reiterated some of the familiar themes that surrounded the celebration of Federation, commenting on its role in encouraging 'unity' within the nation:

Last week witnessed the formal beginning of the greatest opportunity which any nation has been blessed with since the writing of the first page of the world's authentic history. Never before in any known period-not even if we go back to days before the first stone of the first pyramid was thought of- has a whole continent been peacefully united under one Government- united by the will of the people, and that a people almost wholly of one race and one language. The opening of the first Parliament of Australia was an event large enough to stand alone.³²

It is worth examining the recurring theme of 'unity' that appeared in this speech. The repetition of the word in a positive context reveals the importance attached to the condition at the time. Its popularity was evident across a vast range of discourse. To a significant degree they echo the thoughts of political figures such as Sir Alfred Deakin. In the context of Australian history, it is instructive to observe that this prefacing of the concept of the unity of the Australian nation, within the context of a national political system, was exemplified by it being populated by a, "...people almost wholly of one race and one language."

From this perspective, the following ideas of Deakin may be more fully appreciated:

This note of nationality is that which gives dignity and importance to this debate. The unity of Australia is nothing, if that does not imply a united race. A united race means not only that its members can intermix, intermarry and associate without degradation on either side, but implies one inspired by ideas, and an aspiration towards the same ideals, of a people possessing the same general cast

³² *Bulletin*, May 18, 1901, p. 6.

of character, tone of thought-the same constitutional training and traditions- a people qualified to live under this Constitution..."³³

One of the central planks in this construction of a shared national identity, was the, not quite fully understood or deeply developed sense of a 'common' and 'popular' citizenship, that appeared in this period. Many of these ideas and ideals that were attached to the theme of unity³⁴ of in the Australian nation, matched with themes that constituted 'vernacular citizenship'. These ideas of Deakin expressed in this quotation:

We must direct much of the loyalty which is now attached to individual colonies to a central idea of the national life of Australia, so that our countrymen shall exhibit their loyalty to the nation, and the nation only, and shall feel that what transpires in any part of the colonies has as much interest for them as events occurring in the particular spot in which they dwell.³⁵

whilst reflecting the nationalistic sentiments expressed by Wise and Kingston previously at the National Conventions, assist our understanding of how these predominant themes overflowed from the political sphere into the public domain during this time. Whilst the racist assumptions made by Deakin have drawn considerable attention, it is worth noting his preferred ideals as being, "A united race... inspired by ideas, and an aspiration towards the same ideals, of a people possessing the same general cast of character, tone of thought-the same constitutional training and traditions- a people qualified to live under this Constitution..."³⁶

Deakin prefaced his belief in the importance of ideas and ideals as being vital elements in the creation of a cohesive and unified new nation. When he referred to the Constitution, he explicitly acknowledged the essential role it might perform in promoting these 'ideas and ideals', and their integral role in the movement towards this goal of a 'united race'. His comments about, 'a sharing of ideals', captures the essence of many of

³³ La Nauze, *Alfred Deakin: A Biography, Part One*, pp. 279-280.

³⁴ The popularity of these notions involving 'unity' was widely expressed in this era, for another example read the opinions of E. W. O'Sullivan, in, Mansfield, *Australian Democrat; The Career of Edward William O'Sullivan*, pp. 264-265.

³⁵ *Debates of the Conferences*, Monday, February 10, 1890, p. 23.

³⁶ La Nauze, *Alfred Deakin: A Biography, Part One*, pp. 279-280.

the central themes which I have attempted to extract from this era and offer as evidence of the existence of 'vernacular citizenship'. In effect Deakin was outlining the central role that the Constitution, located at the heart of the Commonwealth, might ideally play in helping to facilitate the fulfilment of a variety of nationalistic goals that had previously featured as elements of 'vernacular citizenship', including the much coveted 'sense of unity'.

Edmund Barton bespoke of similar matters, when he was reported at a 'Commonwealth Press Dinner' as saying:

They had passed through a wonderful week of rejoicing, and for the order, regularity, and magnificence of the display, and the manifestation of Imperial strength it would be hard to outdo the celebrations of Sydney in any other part of the Empire. It seemed to him that not only the people of Sydney, but the tens of thousands who came from elsewhere, all realised that they themselves had entered upon a new era and that they had a Commonwealth which, while everyone did not originally long for it in its present form, everyone was now prepared to die for it." He was interrupted by applause before continuing, "The temper of the people, as already manifested at the inaugural celebrations, was already enough to show that there was more than a probability of the sacrifice of petty jealousies in favour of the great idea of co-operation, (more applause) and that it would be the aim of the Federal Ministry of Australia to cultivate that co-operation.³⁷

As well as prefacing his statement with the, by now familiar, favourable comparison with world affairs, Barton extolled the manner of the celebrations, and the involvement of the people in them. He believed these features spoke positively of the propensity for Federation to encourage a unification of energies, inspired by a sense of loyalty and co-operation.

'EVERYONE'S COMMONWEALTH'

When one recounts the celebrations which accompanied the inauguration of the

³⁷ *Sydney Morning Herald*, January 9, 1901, p. 7.

Commonwealth, it is possible to observe the manner in which these themes of unity and community involvement were being actively portrayed. The *Truth's* 'Critic' recorded their impressions of the state of Sydney during the celebrations, and noted that the volumes of people were so large that public transport struggled to cope with the masses. Amidst the crowds of people, these scenes were observed, "The trams were grossly mis-managed during the celebrations. The rank and file worked like heroes, but the officials were all at sea. The revenue thus lost thousands of pounds in fares which couldn't be collected."³⁸ Some estimates of the gathering at the centre piece of the celebrations considered that, "There were about 200,000 people in the Centennial Park...present to receive the blessed gift of a new nationhood."³⁹ Whilst elsewhere in the city and its surrounds were even more people, "Passing Hyde Park the people could be seen making human pyramids on the trams, roosting in the trees, and securing unsafe points of vantage by climbing the to the top of decorating polls."⁴⁰ Such was the throng of people, one correspondent recounted these impressions, "They waited and watched by the hundred thousand-it almost seemed by the million. There must have been a half-million people-some said more-..."⁴¹

A broad and varied mix of persons and organisations were involved in the spectacle.⁴² A wide cross-section of the community can be observed in the press accounts to be participating in the various events that marked the arrival of Federation. For instance it was duly noted that, "The order of Royal Forrester's made a goodly show yesterday in the Trades and Friendly Societies Procession."⁴³ It was also mentioned that in the Domain, "There the shearers-a fine workmen like body of men- and other trade societies were already masses, and behind them the splendid display of the Fire Brigades." The *Sydney Morning Herald* summarised proceedings saying, "Our merchants, our municipal representatives, our military forces and rifle associations, our friendly societies and trade-

³⁸ *Truth*, January 6, 1901, p. 1.

³⁹ *ibid*, p. 2.

⁴⁰ *ibid*, p. 8.

⁴¹ *Bulletin*, January 5, 1901, p. 24.

⁴² Irving presents an account of the range of persons and organization involved in the Federation celebrations, *To Constitute a Nation: A Cultural History of Australia's Constitution*, pp. 12-15.

⁴³ *Truth*, January 6, 1901, p. 2.

unions, held separate special celebrations in honour of the occasion in a spirit of concord and harmony."⁴⁴ While the manual labourers and artisans were well represented, occupational categories were not the only representatives in attendance. A correspondent also observed that, "The Jewish Church might be noticed sitting under a tree, awaiting the arrival of a chariot to convey it to the Centennial Park."⁴⁵

The popularity of the events was reflected by the large numbers who had flocked to Sydney. As one correspondent noted, "A sign of the crowded state of Sydney during the week was the announcement by Cardinal Moran that Roman Catholics might eat flesh meat on Friday. It was thought to be impossible for all the faithful to get fish."⁴⁶ This dispensation was illustrative of the appeal of Federation, which was able to, in significant portion, eclipse sectarian divides. This was apparent in the Catholic Church implicitly encouraging the participation of its parishioners, as well as the evidently large numbers of Catholics who had purchased existing fish stocks during the week. It is also apparent that it was not only the Catholics of Sydney gathering to witness the spectacle of Federation, judging by the vast crowds who occupied the city streets.

This is not to say that the Commonwealth ceremonies were completely free from ecclesiastical tensions. The heated tussle between Cardinal Moran and Archbishop Smith for precedence in the day's processions was widely discussed at the time.⁴⁷ It is noticeable that in the eyes of many, such disagreements cast unnecessary shadows over the inauguration. P. J. Lyons wrote to the *Sydney Morning Herald* to voice his disquiet in the following terms:

That anything of the nature of ecclesiastical strife should arise in the Commonwealth is to be greatly deprecated. The authorities of the Commonwealth have an instrument of government under which to administer their affairs...The Commonwealth Constitution expressly excludes all power to set up a state church. It ensures the freedom and equality of all forms of faith

⁴⁴ *Sydney Morning Herald*, January 9, 1901, p. 6.

⁴⁵ *Truth*, January 6, 1901, p. 8.

⁴⁶ *Truth*, January 6, 1901, p. 1.

⁴⁷ This incident is also examined by Irving, see, *To Constitute a Nation: A Cultural History of Australia's Constitution*, pp. 20-21.

and worship obtaining within its bounds. It is from beginning to end a people's charter. Its dominant characteristics are freedom, equality and justice for all. It is because of the enlightened principles which are expressed and guarded in it that it has been enthusiastically adopted by the people of the several states of Australia. Hence, under its new constitution- the most liberal yet given to any people- it is for Australia to create her own precedents and apply the principles of civil and religious liberty in all departments of her administration.⁴⁸

Lyons primarily based his concerns upon what he perceived as being the inappropriate setting for such a dispute to be conducted by the leaders of the largest religious groups in the land, amidst a celebration of national political Federation. In his opinion this infringed upon the principles which had been articulated in the Constitution with regard to the issues of individual freedom and religious expression. Any consternation created by this clash of wills was considered to be primarily a bone of contention best picked over by the respective church leaders. It seemed that the laity of the respective churches were eager to participate in Federation regardless of the disagreements being settled by their representatives.

A later editorial in the *Sydney Morning Herald*⁴⁹ seems to have placed the matter in an appropriate context, stating that what had become known as the "the precedence question" amounted to being "a small matter." Although it too commented on the controversy in similar terms to those expressed by Lyons, concluding that it was, "...to be regretted that a misunderstanding on this subject arose in connection with the Commonwealth celebrations."⁵⁰ Furthermore, it considered that the matter needed to be resolved "...in the interests of peace and good citizenship."⁵¹ For many, notions of 'good citizenship' were of more importance than matters of friction between church hierarchies.⁵² This episode also serves as a further exemplar of the high regard that was

⁴⁸ *Sydney Morning Herald*, January 12, 1901, p. 10.

⁴⁹ *Sydney Morning Herald*, January 12, 1901, p. 8.

⁵⁰ *ibid*, p. 8.

⁵¹ *ibid*, p. 8.

⁵² For a discussion which involves these issues of the place of religion in regard to Australian political matters, see, Galligan & Roberts, *Australian Citizenship*, pp. 215-217. Richard Ely's *Unto God and Caesar*, provides a deeper and more detailed study of these issues.

attached to peaceable conduct in the public domain, and how actions that transgressed these standards were perceived to represent infringements upon the liberties and freedoms associated with 'vernacular citizenship'.

In keeping with this theme of the broad representation of people and organisations being involved in the celebrations, are several other examples which exhibited the expansive sense of inclusion that Federation offered. Later in that week one could venture out to observe the, 'Aboriginal Day and Night Display at Botany', which featured a, 'Boomerang and NULLAH SHAM FIGHT' on Tuesday.⁵³ The inauguration of the Commonwealth had served to present a mantle which could be attached to a range of events that nominally traversed national, religious and cultural differences. These included, The Commonwealth Exhibition of Australian Art which could have been viewed at the 'Society Artists Galleries', located in Vickery's Building, 76 Pitt Street.⁵⁴ Also there were commemorative sporting events such as "Night Cycle Races", which were held on the following Saturday evening at the Sydney Cricket Ground- featuring 'a Great International Contest-Australia Against the World.'⁵⁵ If one felt the need, they might even slake their thirst generated whilst spectating, with King & Co.'s specially brewed 'Commonwealth Beer'.⁵⁶

THE PEOPLE'S RESPONSE: PATIENT AND PROPER OR BORED AND NONPLUSSED?

The *Sydney Morning Herald* filed the following conclusions on the 'Federation celebrations':

The subsequent demonstrations testified to the loyal acceptance of the Commonwealth by all orders and conditions of our citizens. Our merchants, our municipal representatives, our military forces and rifle associations, our friendly

⁵³ *Sydney Morning Herald*, January 10, 1901, p. 5.

⁵⁴ *Sydney Morning Herald*, January 10, 1901, p. 2

⁵⁵ *ibid*, p. 2.

⁵⁶ *Truth*, January 6, 1901, p. 2.

societies and trade-unions, held separate special celebrations in honour of the occasion in a spirit of concord and harmony.⁵⁷

This report reflects the eagerness of the mainstream press to relay the sense of inclusion that Federation was claimed to signify. One of the means to achieve this was by emphasising the heterogeneous variety of people and organisations who took place in the Federation parades, and referencing their involvement within the guise of a shared citizenship. These conclusions reflected the importance that was placed on emphasising these themes of ‘concord’ and ‘harmony’ within the context of Federation. One essential component in this presentation of the themes of unity and participation was the notion of loyalty within the context of national identification.

If we read the following summary recording impressions of the week’s events, it is possible to gauge just how important the celebration of Federation was considered to be. Most tellingly, the focus of the reports was directed towards evaluating the reaction of the people themselves, and assessing their involvement in the celebrations. Consider these views:

Let it go down to all posterity that through out the great Commonwealth celebrations, now relegated to the limbo of the past, Sydney and the visitors within her gates kept sober. Never in her history have such crowds thronged her streets and her public places; never, it is safe to say, has any great event in any country in the world been celebrated with less of the orgie element, less rowdiness, less of any objectionable feature, whatever, than the one just over. And this is a matter for us to be more proud than of all our miles of banners and illuminations and triumphal arches, or distinguished visitors. Taken full and by the capital for that past week resembled nothing so much as a huge picnic; everybody seemed pleased, and it showed on their faces; good humour reigned supreme...There were fears ...that we should lapse, and perhaps make more or less fools of ourselves...The ordeal has been safely, nay triumphantly, passed; and we have some reason for our pride.⁵⁸

⁵⁷ *Sydney Morning Herald*, January 9, 1901, p. 6.

⁵⁸ *Town and Country Journal*, January 26, 1901, p. 24.

These considerations express pride in the conduct of the people who had attended the celebrations. The author was eager to acknowledge the prevalence of ‘good humour’ and sense of equanimity that were considered to have personified the week, as well as the sobriety of the revellers. This pride in the civic conduct of the participants was accentuated by its favourable comparison with other world events, which was highlighted by the reference to the absence of the ‘orgie element’ and ‘rowdyism’. While these opinions reflected the eagerness of the people to compare themselves in a favourable light with the rest of the world, other issues were at hand. Within these accolades it is possible to trace an underlying sense of apprehension. For as the writer commented, there were fears that over the course of the inauguration, the people might ‘make fools’ of themselves. So significant were these concerns that the prospect of a week’s celebrations to welcome the Commonwealth was referred to as ‘The ordeal’. From these apprehensions emerges another predominant theme of ‘vernacular citizenship’. As we read further it will become clearer that a fundamental element of this category consisted of fears and equivocation in regard to the state of the polity, and the condition of democracy in Commonwealth Australia.

Some people expressed their concerns over what Federation entailed. Most noticeably, some were puzzled by the public’s response to Federation. Despite the throngs of people attending the civic functions, there was considered to be a sense of anti-climax in the air. One observer noted, “Yet among all of them there was not at any time a single spontaneous cheer.”⁵⁹ There was a suggestion that the absence of fervour represented Federation’s inability to ignite the passion of the people. It was noted that, “On Oxford Street, there was here, as elsewhere, no real enthusiasm, only good-humour and cheerfulness.”⁶⁰ Another concern was that this flaccid response might reflect the problematic engagement of the people within the scheme of national political development. These considerations were expressed further in this quotation, “Instead there was a great concourse of people- curious, orderly, apathetic- anxious, seemingly to

⁵⁹ *Truth*, January 6, 1901, p. 8.

⁶⁰ *ibid*, p. 8.

see the spectacle, but taking less interest in it than in a theatrical pageant...”⁶¹

There is an intriguing juxtaposition in presenting the sanguine assessments of Federation expressed in the *Town and Country Journal* with those of the *Truth*. In the former the success of the Federation gala was primarily based on the tempered and sober behaviour of the people and the restrained conduct of the celebrations which took place in what many likened to be a picnic like atmosphere. Conversely the *Truth* questioned whether these sedate, and rather ‘muted’, responses signified the disengagement of the people from the political events, and signalled their incomprehension of the full dimensions of what they were witnessing. These conflicting points of view introduced some of the major streams of debate in regard to the events which accompanied Federation. On the one hand, this time in history was widely lauded because of its sense of inclusion and the virtues of well natured civic participation it was perceived to have represented. On the other were the concerns of those who questioned whether these triumphal representations told the whole story. If we examine some of the other features that adorned the inauguration of the Commonwealth, it may be possible to further explore these themes, and their place within the schema of ‘vernacular citizenship’.

Further evidence of these themes may be observed in the appearances of the ‘commemorative arches’⁶² that adorned the streets of Sydney, described in one report that week as resembling, “A city of arches”. The form and appearance of the many large monuments and prominent display features, which decorated the city streets during the days of celebration, reflected some of the predominant themes that seemed to weave their way through the celebration of Federation.⁶³ One of these was the air of inclusion which seemed to offer welcoming arms seeking the involvement of as large a range of people, organisations and sources as possible. The other was the undercurrent of equivocation that seemed to underlie the proceedings. Many of these misgivings about the form of the Federation gala were voiced by people who sensed a lack of confidence within the body

⁶¹ *ibid*, p. 8.

⁶² Irving talks about the symbolism of the Federation arches also, see, *To Constitute a Nation: A Cultural History of Australia’s Constitution*, pp. 11-12.

⁶³ Duncan Waterson examines some aspects of the celebration of federation, see “Above and Behind the Arches: Aboriginals and the 1901 Federation Celebrations”, *The New Federalist: The Journal of Australian Federation History*, No. 6, December, 2000, pp. 40-48.

of the national community, and saw these inhibitions reflected in the form of many of the ornaments which festooned the city streets. The appearance of several of the arches which dominated Sydney's streets offers some substantial points of discussion in regard to these issues.

Some of the more prominent examples of the arches were described, with one recalled in this form, "First the arch in Bridge Street, white with wool, bearing, in gold letters, yellow curve, over which wheat and corn made a tender cover a "Ceres' welcome to the New Commonwealth."⁶⁴ This bucolic symbolisation exemplified the agricultural productive capacity of the new nation, neatly fulfilling the demands of contemporary iconic nationalism. It reflected the identity of the nation as a primary producer of wool and grain, at the forefront of world markets, symbolising the pastoral qualities of life lived beyond the metropolitan centres.⁶⁵

The descriptions of an earlier event that had been staged to announce the coming of Federation, contained features that might be considered to have borne similarly predictable features of symbolic representation. The, "...representation of the birth of the Commonwealth.", was described in this way, "Seated upon a car was Britannia, while at her feet rested a cradle containing the newly born infant, Federation, and round the typical emblem of the United Kingdom were the six colonies impersonated by young ladies charmingly costumed in white dresses trimmed with blue ribbon."⁶⁶ This example also conformed to the existing parameters of cultural and national identity within the Australian colonies of this time. It acknowledged the place of British heritage as a predominant figure, bearing maternal qualities and responsibilities, and presented the Federated nation as an infant. This accurately accorded with the milieu of that time, reflecting the ties between the colonial nation and its British ancestry.

If we proceed to observe further examples from the Federation festivities, the progression of representation is not so straight forward. For instance, if we read of the

⁶⁴ *Bulletin*, January 5, 1901, p. 12.

⁶⁵ Irving, *To Constitute a Nation: A Cultural History of Australia's Constitution*, pp. 13-15.

⁶⁵ *Bulletin*, January 5, 1901, p. 12.

⁶⁶ *Sydney Morning Herald*, October 2, 1900, p. 5.

following impressions, the complexities reflected by the appearances of the arch's are quite apparent:

The French arch next, at the Exchange corner, low and simple, yellow in color, and emblazoned with the stirring names of France. Extending from the Bridge Street intersection along Pitt Street to Bond Street is French Avenue. It is entered after passing under a handson arch..." On this apex is displayed the coat of arms of the French Republic, backed by French and Australian flags."⁶⁷

If we move on from this arch bearing its Gallic heritage, we learn of the presence of, "...the American arch, loud, scarlet and ornate, with a great white eagle spreading across it."⁶⁸ It is without question that these two examples serve as evidence of the eclectic nature of the symbolism that was utilised in the celebrations. They stand as irrefutable proof that the symbols and motifs of other countries and cultures were considered to appropriately represent and portray 'the coming of age' of the Commonwealth. In one sense this may suggest a degree of robust open mindedness on behalf of the organisers, who were not afraid to adopt these symbols from other nations and use them to decorate the Commonwealth processions and statues. And in like manner, it can be argued that this approach reflected the willingness of the colonial mind to embrace the diversities which underlay such symbols, and incorporate them within the Federation events. From this perspective one can claim also that this approach was representative of the understanding of the significance of these features and their places of origin, as well as comprehension of the various levels of meaning and cultural significance that they contained.

On the other hand this very sense of openness and inclusiveness could also be argued to demonstrate the inability of the organisers to locate appropriate symbols and materials from their local environment. And proof that they resorted to appropriating the iconography of other nations and their histories. By borrowing so readily from other sources, the organisers are open to accusations of lacking originality, and being representative of the dilettante nature of the celebrations and the ornamentation that was

⁶⁷ *ibid*, January, 2, 1901, p. 13.

⁶⁸ *Bulletin*, January 5, 1901, p. 12.

chosen to represent the arrival of a Federated Commonwealth. It is noticeable for instance that the descriptions of the floats and archways are characterised by their incorporation of a rich mixture of symbols and decorations, suggesting an underlying lack of confidence in utilising features that reflected their national origins and resources.⁶⁹ These concerns were expressed in these observations, “The decorations were not characteristic of Australia. Who saw any of our beautiful wild-flowers in any of the arches?”⁷⁰ In the minds of some, there was a prevailing sense that the trappings of Federation reflected elements borrowed too readily at the expense of the local.

If one reads about the appearance of the ‘Commonwealth Arch’, or ‘Citizen’s Arch’⁷¹ it is possible to speculate further about these issues. It was described in these terms, “...the Commonwealth arch stretching across the street between the city parks. A huge white structure, set out with pictures of our history.”⁷² These pictures consisted of what has been described as the, “...grand story of the dawn of civilisation in Australia, the rise of commerce, and the development of government. This was the context for Federation, which was represented by the names of the delegates to the 1891 and 1897 conventions (on the inside of the arch), scenes of the first Federal Parliament, epigrams from leading Federalists, and busts of Parkes, Barton, Reid-and Lyne.”⁷³

This arch accounted for the only display that explicitly represented the foundations of Federation,⁷⁴ the very occasion around which this entire event was based. Amongst the commemorative arches it was the solitary artefact that explicitly and exclusively commemorated the political processes as well as some of the leading figures who were instrumental to the founding of the Australian Commonwealth. Its presence as the lone example of commemoration lends support to the conclusion that local organisers were unable to find deep reservoirs of inspiration to utilise in their presentations. But then

⁶⁹ For a recent discussion see White, “Symbols of Australia”, in, Lyons & Russell, *Australia’s History: Themes and Debates*, pp. 122-124. .

⁷⁰ *Truth*, January 6 1901, p. 1

⁷¹ Hirst, *The Sentimental Nation: the making of the Australian Commonwealth*, pp. 300-302.

⁷² *Bulletin*, January 5, 1901, p. 12.

⁷³ Hirst, *The Sentimental Nation: the making of the Australian Commonwealth*, pp. 300-302.

⁷⁴ *ibid*, pp. 300-302.

again, as the examples of the French and Australian flags flying side by side next to the coat of arms of the French Republic suggests, there was also some type of awareness within these visual presentations that indicated an understanding of the Australian nation being founded on similar terrains, intellectually and culturally, as other nations from the Western European traditions.⁷⁵ It is not surprising in this context therefore, to denote that this reflected the intellectual heritage of these sources, that had promoted and sustained notions of citizenship in Australia through the avenues of ‘classical citizenship’.

In ruminating upon these contrary perceptions of the Federation celebrations, I find it impossible to ignore this report that was filed in the *Bulletin*:

It was tawdry, it was unworthy, it was magnificent, it was irresistible. Or its surroundings were magnificent and irresistible. Not the bravery of gaudy flag-, stuffs, or the trivialities of ornament which chiefly served to show how little we know of artistic decoration; but the magnificent, irresistible people. They waited and watched by the hundred thousand-it almost seemed by the million. There must have been a half-million people- some said more- pale city faces, brown bush faces, men and women and children, gathered to see the pageant pass, and (one hopes) to take home some spiritual element of kinship, some gleaning of patriotic emotion, to make them more worthy of the ideal to which we look for the making of Australia.⁷⁶

This copy encapsulates many of the ambiguities associated with these aspects of Federation. It vividly bears the excitement of the celebrations as well as the extent of the people’s involvement in the spectacle. And in recounting its impressions, it reinforced the widely expressed emphasis on the importance of the people’s involvement. At the same time it also expressed an understanding of the inherent clash between the ornamental aspects of these events, and their conflict with deeper issues, such as notions of spiritual kinship and national virtue. In doing so it uncovered the sense of ambivalence which seemed to run beneath these responses. These uncertainties or equivocations in regard to political matters, and in particular the response of the public to

⁷⁵ *ibid*, pp. 300-302.

⁷⁶ *Bulletin*, January 5, 1901, p. 24.

them, stand out as characteristics of ‘vernacular citizenship’.

It is this emphasis on the large numbers of people who participated in the Federation events which dominated the reports and assessments of Federation. Their orderly conduct, as well as their apparently muted response, demonstrated some of the ambiguities of Federation as well as ‘vernacular citizenship’ itself. As so many writers have commented, Federation arrived without blood shed or political upheaval. It is equally correct to say that its advent was not welcomed by any unanimous outpouring of joy, or overwhelming displays of noisy or demonstrative civic passion. In some ways the reactions of those in Centennial Park and elsewhere accurately represented the reality of the time. For in what other fashion might these people have been expected to celebrate? In many senses, the essence of the events they were celebrating was largely intangible. How could one accurately assess what the arrival of a Commonwealth would deliver, and how it may impact upon their lives, or influence their destinies? So in a sense what those people, thronging around the public parks of Sydney in the sticky heat of that summer morning in January 1901, were celebrating was their right to freely gather in that form, and participate in a fashion they believed appropriate, without coercion or any overbearing pressures of expectation. Possibly the strongest expectations related to standards of public order and civilised conduct during this busy time. In a way that might be considered quintessentially Australian. As willing participants in events they quite probably did not deeply understand, nor perhaps fully comprehend. In this context, these responses perfectly matched the undefined and informal nature of ‘vernacular citizenship’.

Nominally, as within the outlines of ‘vernacular citizenship’, ‘all’ were welcome to share in Federation, and in this same democratic spirit of inclusion, ‘all’ were ‘citizens’ of the new Commonwealth, or so it seemed. The spirit seemed to be at least as important as the detail. And this spirit of involvement⁷⁷ was reinforced by the proliferation of events encouraging participation, thereby complementing the notions of national identity that had been hinted at by persons such as Kingston, Wise and O’Connor at the Constitutional

⁷⁷ Irving refers to the participation of the people in the events of Federation as representing an example of civic involvement that was, “...described as citizenship.” See, *To Constitute a Nation: A Cultural History of Australia’s Constitution*, p. 13.

Conventions. These sentiments were being actively expressed through the events of Federation, personifying the sense that the Australian people of the newly created nation were all 'citizens', even though they may not have all directly considered themselves so. They actively expressed their rights as Australians within the new nation to participate in, and share the spectacle of Federation as 'citizens'. They gathered in droves these, "...pale city faces, brown bush faces, men and women and children..."⁷⁸ The official regalia may have formed the centre-piece of the inauguration, but the attendant celebrations, which were dependent on the contribution of the 'citizens' of Australia, proved to have been as important to the overall showpiece. It stands out as one of the most significant examples of this nexus that was forged between the germination of a general sense of national community, and the inauguration of a national parliament. And the budding of a 'popular' ethos of national belonging and mainstream identity.

Perhaps even the open-air setting of the celebrations, staged in one of the largest public parklands in Australia, was also significant. They personified the themes of informality and inclusiveness that were at the forefront of these civic celebrations. The inauguration of an infant nation was celebrated not within the forms of ceremonial architecture, or even the formalised surrounds of a building. But rather, in vast public grounds,⁷⁹ enthusiastically attended by large crowds participating in the accompanying parades, which in their size and diversity, attested to a spirit of community and celebration reigning over sombre and formalised seriousness.⁸⁰

And it is within this contextual setting of informality and universality that these 'popular' features could quite rightly be considered to represent characteristics which accorded with the identity of 'vernacular citizenship'. It is also the case that these examples of informal citizenship values, which adorned the inauguration of the Commonwealth, were being propagated in an environment that would encourage their influence to flourish. For instance the involvement of so many of the public in these events celebrating formal civic activities and national involvement, represented the

⁷⁸ *Bulletin*, January 5, 1901, p. 24.

⁷⁹ Galligan & Roberts, *Australian Citizenship*, 2004, pp. 126-127.

⁸⁰ Irving, *To Constitute a Nation: A Cultural History of Australia's Constitution*, pp. 9-10.

arrival of a historical yard-stick by which future involvement in these affairs might be considered. There was also a concurrent 'popular' sense generated by this fervour, which suggested this event was of such momentous importance that it was something that the members of the new Commonwealth ought to be proud to be involved in. One way of expressing their pride, and displaying this appreciation was by participating in the events that celebrated Federation.

CRITICAL PERSPECTIVES OF FEDERATION

Not everyone shared these positive perceptions of Federation. Amidst the voluble support for Federation there were, of course, dissenting opinions. In analysing some of these it is possible to argue that they represent another dimension of 'vernacular citizenship', as they involved the critical scrutiny of the democratic and social condition of the fledgling commonwealth polity. One of the more vociferous critics of Federation was the newspaper, the *Truth*.⁸¹ This publication, produced under the auspices of the acerbic and controversial John Norton, regularly carried copy that was hostile to Federation. One of the major areas of concern that the *Truth* raised involved the fear that the 'citizens' had not paid sufficient attention to the full ramifications of what Federation entailed. In particular they questioned the level of understanding of the Constitution within the community itself, and whether or not the people had even read it. For example:

Now that the Federal fever has subsided, and the people of New South Wales have had time to study the Constitution and its probable effect than they had before voting for it. It is pertinent to point out the nature of the dangers that loom large in the Federal foreground, and to mildly dogmatise on the duty of its citizens of New South Wales in the future Federal sphere. Primarily, it is to be pointed out that many thousands of those who voted for this crooked, cockeyed Constitution, had never read or even seen it, and the majority of those who had seen it, after reading, had failed to understand it.⁸²

⁸¹ Cannon, *That Damned Democrat: John Norton, an Australian Populist, 1858-1916*, pp. 11-15. Also see, Walker, *The Newspaper Press in New South Wales, 1803-1920*, pp. 119-125.

⁸² *Truth*, January 28, 1900, p. 1.

Another closely related concern was that the excitement stimulated by Federation was creating an environment in which it was even more difficult for due attention to be paid to the political ramifications. These fears were expressed in this sentence, “It is Australia’s misfortune that its Commonwealth begins at a time of feverish Jingoism, when the public is not quite in its right mind, and its head is swollen to more than ordinary dimensions.”⁸³ In these circumstances, critics considered it unlikely that the full implications of the Commonwealth inauguration would be comprehended. It was pessimistically concluded that, “The more the matter is discussed the less Australian citizens seem to know or care about the Federal Commonwealth Constitution into which they “referended” themselves by a big majority in June of last year.”⁸⁴

For some, the form as well as the nature of the planned celebrations was considered to be problematic. In typical bombastic fashion, the *Truth* derided the events as being, “...the Big Booze of the century.”⁸⁵ It continued to scathingly criticise the planned celebrations in these terms:

Booze, and Brummagem, brassy, garish display will be the keynotes of the farcical Federal festivities which are to usher in the Commonwealth. A combination of a free feed, and free drink riot, with a cheap pantomime, is the result of the colloquing of the committees, the portentous deliberations of politicians and the efforts of the Citizen’s Committee...”⁸⁶

While the uncompromising approach of the *Truth*, and its bellicose tone may have sometimes suggested that its opinions represented unbalanced points of view, it was capable of raising pertinent issues with a greater understanding of the implications than its blustery approach signalled. When it stated that in regard to Federation, “We were then all for popular control and sanctions by referendum, whereas now, Imperial Ministers and Australian delegates are calmly compromising away by cabals and cables constitutional right, privileges and guarantees, upon which had been placed the

⁸³ *Bulletin*, December 22, 1900, p. 6.

⁸⁴ *Truth*, June 17, 1900, p. 4.

⁸⁵ *ibid*, December 23, 1900, p. 1.

⁸⁶ *Truth*, December 23, 1900, p. 1.

imprimatur of popular approval.”⁸⁷, it introduced the fears involving the possible diminishment of vital constitutional rights, and questioned whether these events signalled the usurpation of the ‘peoples’ involvement in political matters by the politicians themselves. More pointedly it couched these concerns with reference to the iconic significance of ‘the imprimatur of popular approval.’ This demonstrated the *Truth*’s understanding of the weight that the moniker of a ‘popular’ involvement carried in regard to these political machinations.

Some of these issues were explored further in the article headed:

THE COMING COMMONWEALTH, which stated,

It can hardly be said that the leading men of Australia have risen to the occasion which the Federal movement gave to them. The movement was not theirs though they took credit for it. If it can be called theirs, it is only by right of robbery. Deep down in the hearts of the people the movement had its birth; it came to being because of the articulate aspirations of Australians to be of one people and one law as they were of one blood.⁸⁸

This paragraph contains a further extrapolation of the importance placed upon notions of popular involvement in the political Federation. The intentions of politicians were scrutinised with some suspicion. This represented the surfacing of the implicit conflict between the motivations of politicians, and the ‘public’ ownership of the democratic political processes symbolised by Federation. Politicians were charged with putting their own interests above the national community, and in effect hijacking the good intentions of the people. Manipulating circumstances to benefit their own ambitions at the expense of the people, and their nation’s interests. These accusations were expressed in these comments:

But coming to light it was straightaway seized by the politicians, exploited for their party ends, used as a stalking horse for the ambitions, and as a shield for the guilty. Even Mr. Barton, who comes now to New South Wales as the triumphant hero of the successful union, was not above, as a member of the

⁸⁷ *Truth*, June 17, 1900, p. 4.

⁸⁸ *Truth*, August 5, 1900, p. 4.

Dibbs Cabinet, preferring a continuation in office to a chivalric championship of the Commonwealth. It is the same with all the men of the union; they are tarred with the one brush; stained with the same selfishness, and capable only of holding up their heads without a brush before the supreme cynicism of George Reid.⁸⁹

The *Truth* associated the motivations of politicians with cynical self interest, and was castigating in its condemnation of this betrayal of the ideals symbolised by Federation. In the *Truth*'s reckoning, Federation emerged from the collective will of the people and was symbolised as representing an organic element that merged their political and national identities.

THE EXPECTATIONS FOR FEDERATED AUSTRALIA: PRACTICAL MATTERS

These examples from the *Truth* open up another area of discussion. Within these paragraphs there is evidence of the contrary qualities frequently associated with the coverage of political matters of the era. These stories share the characteristic motif of Federation equating to a fulfilment of a popular movement originating from within the heart of the national population. This positive representation of the genesis of Federation was reinforced by the claims that this popular campaign had exemplified the capacities of the people to express their ambitions for national political development. However, after initially lauding these positive elements, this story then launched into an angry critique of the roles played by the political leaders of the day. This climaxed with the questioning of whether, "...the people of this province have any pride of patriotism and strength of citizen resoluteness."⁹⁰

The strength of these critical assessments delivered by the popular press introduces another important aspect of the representations of the Commonwealth Federation and their place within the paradigm of 'vernacular' citizenship'. I draw attention to the story headed, THE GLORIOUS, GORE-IOUS COMMONWEALTH.⁹¹ In this account the writer commented that with Federation drawing near there was considerable attention

⁸⁹ *Truth*, August 5, 1900, p. 4.

⁹⁰ *ibid*, p. 4.

⁹¹ *ibid*, p. 1.

being lavished upon the looming spectacle at the expense of other matters of equal importance. These opinions aired by the *Truth* were less complimentary than many others published, and dismissed the events planned in these disparaging terms, “We are just verging on nationhood, and all Australia is looking forward to the big “common-drunk” with which we are to celebrate the birth of the Commonwealth.”⁹²

The writer contrasted this focus of national attention upon the imminent arrival of Federation, with the reported death of a prisoner that week, “On Tuesday night, in Biloela Gaol, a 64 year old man died in his cell. He was guilty of the awful crime of poverty.”⁹³ The *Truth* lamented the circumstances in which the death of this man occurred in prison whilst being incarcerated on a charge of vagrancy, at a time when so much energy and expense was being spent on the festivities to accompany Federation. The *Truth* also decried the irony of the situation whereby the nation was immersed in self congratulation and celebration and yet, “...our laws, which are so liberal, so progressive, so Democratic, could find nothing better to do than send him to gaol for six months as a pest to society.”⁹⁴

The significance of these stories which expressed critical views of the imminent arrival of Federation, took on several forms. On one level their exposition of existing social problems within the context of Commonwealth political developments illustrated the continuing propensity for critics to express their opinions through the free press. It was a continuation of the practices harking back to the pages of the *Citizen* and the *People's Advocate*, from which the origins of ‘vernacular citizenship’ emerged. The *Truth* expressed their own opinions with a degree of cynicism, voicing expectation that political means ought to be employed, to at the very least, ameliorate, or more preferably actively intervene in cases of social disadvantage and suffering.

This also reflected the connection that was drawn between national political developments and the wider social issues of the era. Within these, it is possible to view the process by which the implicit guidelines upon which the relationship between the

⁹² *ibid*, p. 1.

⁹³ *ibid*, November 18, 1900, p. 1.

⁹⁴ *ibid*, p. 1.

Commonwealth and its members, which had formed one of the major areas of 'vernacular citizenship', was being further shaped in this era. In particular this schema emphasised the burgeoning expectation that the dimensions of Federal resources should be actively engaged in the maintenance of the well being of its citizens. The expression of these statements through the popular press reveals the extent of these ideas's potential reach. Such opinions connected the Federal political scene with the welfare of individual citizens, and were closely related to the raft of popular ideas with a lengthy legacy in this era. These were most evident in the overtures towards egalitarianism, social justice, and individual rights, which also contained a great degree of populist appeal, and further demonstrated the irrepressible influence of 'vernacular citizenship'.

These examples also reflect the 'democratisation' of opinion that had flowered in this time. In this context, formal political developments would be evaluated upon their impacts and effects upon the well being of all strata's of society. Proof of this reasoning may be found in the popular press using someone as marginalised as the prisoner described in the *Truth*, as a yardstick by which the condition of the greater society may be measured.

This reference reflects some important characteristics that had been suggested by this type of journalistic appraisal. In drawing this connection between the establishment of a national parliament and the fortunes of one individual, one may observe how a nexus was drawn between the dimensions of national identity and the political developments of the Federation processes itself. By writing about the fortunes of the prisoner, the *Truth* revealed a concern for the well being of a marginalised individual. It nominated this singular person's fortunes as being of comparable importance in relation to the imposing picture of Federation. It was also indicative of the manner in which the political machinations of Federation were represented in a way that made them amenable to the interests of even the most humble individual. This too reflected a means whereby the possibility of an intimate relationship was suggested to exist between the gargantuan dimensions of the national parliament and the comparatively minute interests of its people. It was a suggestion based upon the implied propinquity of the relationship shared by the citizens and the Commonwealth, that was fostered by such critical scrutiny as was applied by organs like the *Truth*. This process served to verify the rights of individuals,

whilst concurrently legitimising the veracity of the implied relationship that might exist between them and the auspices of the federal Parliament.

A letter sent to the editor of the *Sydney Morning Herald* exhibited similar considerations:

Sir;- That which many have desired and looked forward to has arrived, and today we are no longer units of a community, but a nation; a small one it may be, yet a nation. The Commonwealth has been ushered in amidst scenes of splendour and rejoicing; of pomp and show. National rejoicing is very laudable in its own way; transient arches and miles of decorations and spangles and glitter and tinsel are all very well; and serve their purpose as far as they go; for do they not outwardly affirm our rejoicing in entering upon a new epoch, viz, Australian nationhood?

But a more practical way of demonstrating is now open before us. Amid our festivities many of us have forgotten possibly some of the sterner duties of life, and as a mark of gratitude and national rejoicing I would ask if a “Commonwealth hospitals fund” should not be started. I trust then, Sir, a “Commonwealth hospitals fund” will immediately be started and so make the sick and sad equally rejoice with us in our Commonwealth. I am,

Arthur Desmond Shaw⁹⁵

Arthur Shaw’s correspondence is another example of the concerns of those who saw the need for the attentions of the new nation, to be directed towards more substantial issues. Shaw considered that the ‘sick and sad’ were deserving of the attention of the powers available within the dimensions of Commonwealth Parliament. The Commonwealth was charged with the responsibility of providing for even the less able and less visible amongst the community. It is another incidence of the growing popular belief that the state was considered to bear responsibility for the health and welfare of its citizens. One aspect of this was Shaw’s claim that all of the tinsel and glamour of Federation did not equate to being particularly substantial or worthy factors, that justified pride in the

⁹⁵ *Sydney Morning Herald*, January 10, 1901, p. 6.

Commonwealth.

CRITICAL DISCUSSIONS EQUALS A HEALTHY POLITY?

It is within these contrasting examples, of explicit and concerted support for Federation, and the more critical scrutiny that was applied from other sources, that another important issue can be examined. Within the extremes of these views it is possible to explore the nuances relating to the perceptions expressed in regard to Federation. In particular, the essential role that the process of Federation played in consolidating issues of political and social importance at this time. For some persons Federation and its political machinations were considered to represent unsatisfactory features within the Commonwealth of Australia. Some of these concerns were freely expressed within the press, with the *Truth* producing some of the more virulent scrutiny.

However, even within its pages are examples bearing testimony to the popularity and magnitude of Federation, and its momentous status in the scheme of world affairs. It commented on Federation in these terms, “Not often in the history of the world has a nation thus come to a birth bloodlessly, peacefully, out of the mere desire of kindred men to come together in political and industrial unity.”⁹⁶ It appeared that even those who were prepared to cast a more jaundiced assessment of the Federation of the Commonwealth shared in this common belief that the event was of unique historical significance. As the copy from the *Truth* demonstrates, one of the most widely lauded features of Federation concerned the calm nature of its arrival, without bloodshed and celebrated in peace.

Another issue involved the place of the political union in the heart of nationalistic pride. Even amongst its most ardent critics there had been acknowledgement of the attributes of Federation, and the fact that it represented several features which had garnered almost universal acclaim. It speaks volumes that whilst vociferous opponents expressed their hostility to Federation, critiquing the political situation and the nuances of its actors, these features relating to the peaceful conduct of political processes and the civilised conduct of participants, still garnered earnest and almost universal praise. In some instances laurels had even been received from some of its most trenchant critics.

⁹⁶ *Truth*, August 5, 1900, p. 4.

Also, they represented the full range of ‘Enlightenment’ optimism which imbued these ideas based on political and social transformation. They stand as exemplars of these incipient ideas, visible in the pages of the *Citizen* and the *People’s Advocate*, and spread by the speeches of Deniehy and the texts of Spence and Boldrewood, and the way they consolidated their influence upon the public consciousness of the nation. In this manner the development of ‘vernacular citizenship’ may be seen to have played an elemental role in shaping the dimensions in which matters pertaining to democracy and politics were imagined in European Australia.

This situation exhibited the manner in which the ideas that made up ‘vernacular citizenship’ were able to bridge eras. It also reveals how the identity of these ideas gradually came to wear a particular familiarity that marked them as bearing ‘Australian’ qualities. Political ideas and social theories become embroiled within a less formal understanding and representation of ideas and conduct, and in the process became insolubly connected with citizenship. This vouches for the longevity of these particular ideas, but also the contention that such themes have indeed exerted a profound and enduring degree of influence upon Australian political thought and historical development.

Another element involves the manner in which the expression of conflicting ideas within the press represented the high levels of attention paid to political matters in general and to Federation itself. This represented not just the popularity of these issues, but also the manner in which they were widely and freely expressed. And regardless of the opinions expressed and their various divergences, it is apparent that they were popular enough to figure prominently in these national debates.

The popularity of these stories in the local press spread these deliberations about Federation, expanding the conceptualisations of citizenship and cementing its connection with social and political development. The form of these debates exhibited the capacity for these elements to reconcile points of antagonism. For every criticism raised, it seemed there was some type of countervailing opinion. This also accorded with the characteristics of ‘vernacular citizenship’. As did the critical appraisal of the Commonwealth on the basis of social policy, which reflected the concerns of the *Citizen*

and the *People's Advocate*, who had prefaced these matters in previous years and discussed them within the gambit of political matters.

These interests represented an 'altruistic' motivation that figured in the delivery of many of these policy prescriptions. One sound example of this is the policy for old age pensions which figured in Chapter Five. Perhaps the most influential of these concerned the eagerness to nurture a sense of unity within the fledgling Commonwealth. Central to this was the need to encourage a sense of co-operation between the people of the nascent Commonwealth. One of the most appealing ways of achieving this was to promote the ideals of equality and egalitarianism. These themes also coloured discussions concerning the selection of systems of governance appropriate to Colonial Australia. For example:

Wherever democratic institutions are most admirable, it will be found that the constitutional and franchise system tends to the elevation to power of men without extreme views, or men not making the furtherance of extreme views the object of their lives...⁹⁷

Within much of the discussion emanating from the political sphere at this time, was a continuous stream of reference which nominated the values of 'consensus' and co-operation as being preferential virtues for the conduct of political affairs. Entwined with these notions were the preferences for mores and institutions which favoured the medium rather than the extremes. With these considerations in mind, it is instructive to refer back to Aristotle's reasoning, and consider the similarities that emerge:

We have now to consider what is the best constitution and the best way of life for the majority of cities and the majority of mankind. In doing so we shall not employ a standard of excellence above the reach of ordinary people, or a standard of education requiring exceptional natural endowments and equipment, or the standard of a constitution which attains an ideal level. We shall be concerned only with the sort of life which most people are able to share and the sort of constitution which is possible for most cities to share.⁹⁸

⁹⁷ *Truth*, June 24, 1900, p. 1.

⁹⁸ Aristotle, *Politics*, translated by E. Barker, p. 157.

When one reads this it seems as if these words might have been delivered specifically to meet the dimensions of the Australian political settlement. For further shades in these propositions one can read:

The essence of democracy is not that majority rule over a minority on a certain single definitive issue, or that the warring representatives of every fad shall meet together in a parliamentary beer garden; but that the process of government shall be slow and not unnecessarily obtrusive; that laws shall represent the rules which practically the whole of the community has already found necessary for the regulation of public affairs; and that the representatives of the people shall be embodiments of the “corrected sense” of the community, not its impetuous conclusions, nor its hobby fads.⁹⁹

It is intriguing to read this quotation within the pages of the abrasive *Truth*. It serves as a further example of the popularity attached of these ideas surrounding the ethos of ‘the middle ground’¹⁰⁰ that championed ideas and conduct disavowing extremism or fanaticism. Furthermore they contained a sense of respect for public affairs, and their regulation by persons steeped in the customs and inclinations of the general community. They may also be cited as further evidence of the continuous stream of ideas, emanating from earlier publications such as the *Citizen* and the *People’s Advocate*, which had also argued passionately in favour of the qualities of equanimity and civility. As has been discussed, these were in large part inspired by the conservative political developments featured in the English Parliament, and personified in the models of democratic representation championed by Deniehy and others. To read of support for these within the radical pages of the *Truth* is to be granted an insight into the popularity of these ideas within the political consciousness of Australia at this time. It cannot be ignored that these thematic threads also contained traces of Mill’s utilitarianism, with its emphasis on providing the greatest good to the greatest number.¹⁰¹

⁹⁹ *Truth*, June 24, 1900, p. 1.

¹⁰⁰ Once more it is irresistible to quote from Aristotle, "...it is clear that the middle type of Constitution is best. Democracies are generally more secure and more permanent than oligarchies because of their middle class.", Aristotle, *Politics*, p. 159.

¹⁰¹ Comments of a similar shade in regard to the place of John Stuart Mill and utilitarian thought are made by Irving, *To Constitute a Nation: A Cultural History of Australia’s Constitution*, p. 168.

CONCLUSION

To garner a fuller understanding of how these predominant ideas, which filtered through the contents of ‘vernacular citizenship’, came to be strongly associated with Australian political matters, it is instructive to read the following sermon delivered at the time of Federation, titled:

Opening of the Twentieth Century

A Sermon By The Rev. T. De Witt Talmage

The old century inherited the wreck of the revolutions and the superstitions of the ages. Around the cradle stood the armed assassins of the old-world tyrannies; the “Reign of Terror”, bequeathing its horrors; Robespierre, plotting his diabolism; the Jacobin Club, with its wholesale massacre; the guillotine, with its beheadments. The old map was black with too many barbarisms. Let us see to it that on that new map, so far as possible, our country shall be a Christianised one, with schools, churches, colleges, and good homes.¹⁰²

Drawing upon his historical perspective Talmage delivered practical solutions to the dark features of recent Western history and in particular, the violence of political ferment and bloody upheaval that had blighted Europe. The Reverend’s answer to the brutalities of the age was to deliver schools, churches and good homes in the infant nation of Australia.¹⁰³

These remedies personified the entreaties expressed in previous years within the margins of ‘vernacular citizenship’, which called for the adoption of political systems and mores, based upon the imperatives of avoiding extremism as well as nurturing the qualities of cooperation and peaceable conduct. Talmage’s suggestions were a practical embodiment of the collection of ideas and beliefs that had been shaped in the pursuit of political systems and processes which encouraged the virtues of co operation and consensus over extremism and upheaval. The confidence in these measures reflected the belief in the power of education to enable the delivery of these ‘enlightened’ qualities of

¹⁰² *Town and Country Journal*, January 5, 1901, p. 11.

¹⁰³ Atkinson discusses the prevalence of these views also, *The Europeans in Australia: A History. Volume Two: Democracy*, p. 336.

thought and reasoning. An essential portion of this schema consisted of the concordant role that organised religion would play in nurturing an environment in which ‘good homes’ might thrive.

An editorial in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, in October of 1900 shows how popular the general thrust of these ‘progressive’ ideas and ‘enlightened’ attitudes were, and how the nub of their concerns pervaded several layers of the community. It was titled, “In Speaking Of the Eight Hour day”:

The demonstration of today will, it may be anticipated, show us the results of a general satisfaction with the state of things as they are. The happiness and well-being of the working classes are the best guarantee of progress, and the demonstration of Labour, today is expected to say a conclusive word on that point. It is our peculiar boast as Australian communities that by offering all of the facilities of education to all alike, the child of the humblest of the land is placed in command of the avenues to the gratification of any ambition. The radical differences between the lot of the worker here and in the old world consist in this.¹⁰⁴

The editorial carried concerns so similar to those previously expressed within the *Citizen* and the *People’s Advocate* that they could quite easily and unobtrusively switch eras. These included the virtues of equality of opportunity, as well as the people’s right to rally for the eight hour day. These were believed to be the fundamental elements which would shape a society superior to others in the course of Western history. They matched with Talmage’s solutions, further reinforcing the popularity of these ideas within the Australian community. Demonstrating that a deep and enduring stream of ‘vernacular citizenship’ ideas had permeated the Australian polity by the time of Federation.

Such was the popularity of these fundamental tenets, based on the principles of freedom of expression, political franchise, and equality of opportunity, that they formed an area of broad consensus. These ideas, summarised by Talmage, were popular in public opinion, as evidenced by the *Herald* article which indicated the existence of a significant ground

¹⁰⁴ *Sydney Morning Herald*, Monday, October 1, 1900, p. 4.

swell of support for these notions. .In many aspects, the foundation of the Federal Commonwealth equated to the practical manifestation of some of the most popular ideas associated with ‘vernacular citizenship’.

CHAPTER 7- CONCLUSION

The Aftermath of Federation: Disillusion and Disappointment or, Enduring Confidence amongst the Brickbats?

In concluding this thesis, it is important to underline the prevailing influence that ‘vernacular citizenship’ played in the aftermath of Federation. As previous chapters have discussed, the informal notions associated with ‘vernacular citizenship’ have played an integral role in fomenting many of the most positive and optimistic elements which had shaped the response of the general public to Federation. These expressions of hope echoed those expressed previously by organs such as the *Citizen* and the *People’s Advocate*, sharing the enduring confidence in the capacity of the ‘enlightened mind’ to establish institutions and mores that would progress the lot of mankind and human society.

It is equally important to note that despite the existence of a wave of consensus within colonial Australia at this time, most vividly apparent in the nationalistic flavour of Federation, buoyed by the popularity of shared values and aspirations, there remained vigorous and at times scathing assessments of the Australian polity. Despite the many and successes of Federation being widely lauded within the pages of the press, and the speeches of politicians, there were many who held more equivocal considerations.

Whilst the inauguration of the Commonwealth of Australia generated a vast surge in national awareness and patriotic pride, its arrival did not receive unconditional support. There were several shades of suspicion and many areas of dispute. Many of these involved the political dimensions of Federation, and the lacerating views expressed in the *Truth* were typical of the types of discursion which still rumbled on. The content and shape of these matched the more critical elements of ‘vernacular citizenship’ in which the citizen was accorded the right to scrutinise political matters, as well as the condition of society, and freely express their opinions. However in order to understand the nuances of ‘vernacular citizenship’ more fully, it is important to closely examine some of the critical opinions which were expressed in the wake of Federation.

For some, Federation proved to be an egregious disappointment. Ada Cambridge who had written of her excitement and jubilation on the eve of Federation at the close of 1900, was to write on September 18, 1902 that, “Federation, so far as we can see, has put back the Golden Age. The triumphant shout, “Advance, Australia!” has become a mockery in our ears.”¹ Cambridge had been stricken by the death of her eldest son Hugh² on the 6th of March 1902 from enteric fever at the Mt. Garnet District Hospital in Queensland.³ It is possible that this tragic event impacted on her view of the world at that time, however I feel it is still worthwhile pursuing her opinions of this period in Australian history. Her reflections stand as an important critique of this period in Australian history, particularly as she was an objective observer, watching from outside the political scene. They contrast with so many of the accounts of this epoch delivered by prominent figures intimately involved in contemporary politics. They serve not just as a source of first hand experience and impressions, but also deliver critical assessments of specific areas of the contemporary political scene.

Much of her dissatisfaction with the prevailing political situation emanated from her disillusion with what she perceived as being the shortcomings of the political system itself. One strand of disquiet stemmed from her view of the overbearing role of politicians in the new Commonwealth nation. In her opinion this was encapsulated by the existence of ‘fourteen Houses of Parliament, with over fifty members and little under a thousand members’, a situation considered to be an excessively disproportionate number in relation to the population of some four million Australians, leading her to lament the situation in which “The octopus of political rule holds the private citizen...”⁴

And it was not just the size and dimensions of parliamentary representation with which Cambridge expressed her disappointment. She was also critical of the policy decisions of the first Federal Government, commenting that, “The first act of the Federal ministry was one of sordid personal greed; every following act seems to have been worse. Federation,

¹ Ada Cambridge, *Thirty Years in Australia*; with an introduction by Bradstock & Wakeling, p. 246.

² Cambridge writes of her loss in, *Thirty Years in Australia*, p. 245.

³ The impact of this bereavement is also discussed in, Bradstock & Wakeling, *Rattling the Orthodoxies: A Life of Ada Cambridge*, p. 169.

⁴ Cambridge, *Thirty Years in Australia*, p. 247.

so far, has but riveted our chains at home and darkened our character abroad.”⁵

Cambridge yearned for a quality of leadership which might “...lead our young nation in more righteous paths, to nobler ends!”⁶

Cambridge was equally acerbic in her denunciation of the white Australia policy, lamenting the unoccupied spaces of the Australian landscape at a time when “...million and millions of our co-inheritors of the earth swarm upon little bits of land that do not give them room to move.”⁷ She labelled the new Commonwealth as being a ‘dog in the manger’ that through its insular policies would “...starve itself- it is starving itself- to keep the world out...”⁸ It is insightful that Cambridge yearned for the new nation to adopt what she describes as a ‘more righteous path, to nobler ends’. To meet these ideals, an approach personified by the catch cry ‘Australia for the World’ was presented as being a more desirable ambition than the prevailing directions. This criticism serves as further evidence of the extent to which the Federation of the Commonwealth nation was imbued with a quite profound range of hopes, ideals and emotions that transcended many of the more prosaic elements of political development. In particular it is evident that Cambridge believed that the nation ought to be striving for more humane ideals based upon the precept of all human beings to be accorded basic rights. It was a world view in which humanitarian ideals were in equal parts both embraced and inspired, by a sense of spiritual righteousness.

ENDURING CONFIDENCE AMONGST THE BRICKBATS

Whilst acknowledging the expressions of dissatisfaction that were levelled against the Federal Commonwealth and its policies, it is insightful to refer to some similar critical examples, so as to not overlook those areas of complexity and nuance which can be detected in the variety of debate prompted by Federation, and which formed a complementary aspect of ‘vernacular citizenship’. For instance if we reflect upon the following opinions, we can observe expressions of disappointment with the state of

⁵ Cambridge, *Thirty Years in Australia*, p. 248.

⁶ *ibid*, p. 246.

⁷ *ibid*, p. 246.

⁸ *ibid*, p. 246.

Federated Australia, and in particular similar types of disenchantment expressed by Ada Cambridge. Consider for example this statement:

In the deficiency of a stimulating sense of civic responsibility, in the disinclination to take political pains, in the sufferance of parliamentary incapacity or corruption for want of energy to find better men who will create a better system, Australians are probably no worse than a score of other nations. It can still be held that a large issue will rouse them to honest, if temporary, enthusiasm. Suppose the recent Federal vote had gone the other way- for provincialism and disunion- one might have despaired of Australia *then*. The Federal vote justifies some faith in the future. Pity it does not indicate more progress in the present- more active effort, more principled leading, and more intelligent following.⁹

This paragraph contains the essence of much of the critical discourse triggered by Federation, and which conforms to the shape of 'vernacular citizenship'. The quotation expresses similar frustration at the apathetic interest in political affairs exhibited by the public, and suggestions that this represented a deficiency in civic and political responsibility. Allied with this were the expressions of alarm tripped off by the perceived deficiencies of the political leadership held responsible for countenancing the incapacities of the parliamentary system. These sentiments were noteworthy not only because of their similarity with the types of concerns already canvassed across a variety of sources during this era, but also because they shared a familiar tone with the critical dimensions of 'vernacular citizenship'. Together these examples may be considered to have represented the healthy practice of critical scrutiny which has characterised the observation of political matters over the course of this country's short European history.

However, in reviewing such concerns it is also possible to trace an undercurrent which suggests that beside the ripples of disquiet prompted by the political situation within the new Commonwealth, there existed another element. Despite the vigorously expressed words of disdain and occasionally, the hostile condemnation of the local polity, there was very often an accompanying note of dogged optimism which signified that all hope was

⁹ *Bulletin*, January 20, 1900, p. 6.

not lost. It is of at least equal significance that these robustly expressed concerns of the Federation era were reconciled by the acceptance that the failings of the local community were in comparison probably no more acute than those elsewhere. Their equanimity entailed an implicit acknowledgement that despite the shortcomings of the local polity, there was still cause for hope and optimism in political as well as human affairs. It might seem that this very optimism and faith were drawn from the same well of hope that had driven the 'Enlightened' forms of 'vernacular citizenship' originally. And furthermore, the fact that the Federal Commonwealth did eventuate at all provided solace, as well as a further basis for optimistic confidence, to this critic. In support of these convictions, the author nominated the impetus that Federation had provided in enhancing notions of unity and common interest within the national community, which were of course elements that had formed central pillars within the initial construction of 'vernacular citizenship'.

This article might be summarised as expressing the opinion that while Federation may not have delivered on all of the expectations it had been encumbered with, and that the political condition of the new Commonwealth was not without its failings, it was none the less not entirely without its favourable points. And furthermore there was recognition that the act of Federation itself, still managed to inspire a range of positive responses, as it had in the time preceding its arrival. Most significantly, it was still discussed in conjunction with many of the most idealistic hopes and optimistic beliefs expressed in regard to the national community.

Another extract provides further reinforcement of many of these issues, it was penned in 1902 and began with:

Keep On!

The Australian Nationalist to-day needs, more than all else, courage. The times are out of joint to those who believe in Liberty. On every side looms cause for discouragement. Hardly perceivable is the glimmer of hope ahead. Federation, which promised to stimulate and re-create National sentiment, to cast in an indelible stamp a new nation, has so far shown a foiled purpose. The Constitution is twisted back towards the old-time fetishes of King-power and priest power. Those in authority bow the knee to Mammon and abandon the

democratic faith. Those from whom authority proceeds are careless of their rights, indifferent to their liberties, ungrateful to their patriots.¹⁰

While this passage began with a typically forthright and doom laden lamentation for the political state of the infant nation, it proceeded to express these misgivings through language redolent with imagery applied in much of the discourse which accompanied the inauguration of the Commonwealth. Much of this conformed to the textures of ‘vernacular citizenship’. For example, the terms ‘rights’ and ‘liberties’ were positively mingled with the evocative use of words such as, nationalist, liberty and patriotism, and these had figured as some of the predominant characteristics associated with the large quantities of optimism which had surrounded the inception of Federation. However, the passage went on to state:

But courage yet! If the idea, the aspiration of a free Australian People, is to be quelled by its first serious trouble, die out and fail on meeting its first struggle, then that idea, that aspiration is nothing- was from the first nothing. And *that* is impossible to believe. The sentiment which showed itself at Eureka, which was strong enough to shake off the shackles of convictism from the land, which sent back from the shores of a White Australia the Asiatic taint in the face of Imperial opposition, was not a weak impulse, such as could be strangled by the treachery of one man, or many men, or by the indifference of one generation.¹¹

Within this stanza one can appreciate the extent of optimism associated with Australian political matters. For despite the sombre tone of the opening paragraph, it is evident that this section exhibited the ample reserves of faith invested in the perceived power of influence wielded by the Australian public. It also served as a further example of the implied closeness of the relationship between the people and the political apparatus. For there was a clear insinuation that the spirit of the people, personified in the description ‘a free Australian People’, had played an instrumental role in the formation of the Commonwealth nation. Furthermore this spirit, or ‘sentiment’, was believed to be sufficiently robust as to be able to overcome whatever challenges it may be confronted

¹⁰ *Bulletin*, March 29, 1902, p. 6.

¹¹ *Bulletin*, March 29, 1902, p. 6.

with, and that this spirit would prevail over any adversities it encountered.

This piece concluded with an earnest expression of support in favour of Federation. In response to the types of criticism it had itself prefaced, the article declared,

Many blame Federation for the growth in Australia of militarism, of King power, of Conservative tyranny. But it is a matter of coincidence, rather than cause and effect. The race of sturdy miners, farmers, bushmen, was leavened with an element of financiers- mainly of foreign origin- princes in the shoddy trade of, lords of usury, barons of beer.¹²

These conclusions demonstrate once more that whilst many were not reluctant to criticise the political situation, there was an equally sturdy recognition of the positive elements it represented. It is also worthwhile noting how these considerations reinforced the pervasive sense that the Federation of the Commonwealth equated to an occurrence of vital significance figuring on many levels within the community. For as these conclusions indicated, Federation was not considered to have contributed to the sins of ‘militarism, King power, or Conservative tyranny’. These evils were perceived to be ‘foreign’ to Federation. The reference to, “The race of sturdy miners, farmers, bushmen...”, and their iconic status as representing uniquely Australian qualities, personified the manner in which Federation was imbued with similar hues of nationalistic pride and patriotic tones.

These perceptions indicated a sense that Federation was replete with qualities which marked it as being able to rise above what were perceived as being the grubbier aspects associated with the developing Australian political scene. These factors reinforce several of the considerations expressed throughout this thesis which have contended that the Australian Federation processes served to symbolise a range of mythical qualities which were believed to personify many of the new nation’s, as well as its people’s, essential and defining qualities. In considering the impact of these it is pertinent to recall the fundamental contribution that ‘vernacular citizenship’ made towards the development of these ideas and sentiments.

¹² *Bulletin*, March 29, 1902, p. 6.

For the final word it may be provident to allow Ada Cambridge to express her feelings, reflecting upon the thirty years she spent in the fledgling nation of Australia. She wrote:

It is indeed a good country, even as it stands. I can say with truth and gratitude, homesickness notwithstanding, that nowhere could I have been better off. And I am as sure as I am of anything that sooner or later- this year or next year, or after my time- the day of emancipation and enlightenment will come, to inevitably make it as great as it is good.¹³

I think it is possible to detect in Cambridge's parting impressions the strength of the enduring degrees of faith and hope that seemed to be so strongly associated with the young nation of Australia. As Ada herself said, she could not have been better off anywhere else during the thirty years she spent in Australia between the 1870s and Federation. She said this in spite of experiencing the at times harsh vicissitudes of colonial life, including the overwhelming pain suffered upon the loss of her eldest son Hugh.¹⁴

In considering the depths of Cambridge's grief as well as the dashing of the high hopes she had held for Federation, it is compelling to observe that she still maintained positive feelings for the country. Despite the extent and harshness of these various set-backs she could still find sufficient redemptive features to justify describing the infant nation as 'good'. Furthermore she asserted her belief that the day of 'emancipation and enlightenment' would come and that the country would finally fulfil its destiny to be 'great'. It would seem that the belief which held that the nation was somehow destined to become a beacon in a 'golden age' of possibilities was virulently pervasive.

These sanguine and considered reflections contrast starkly with Cambridge's disappointment with the political situation, expressed so earnestly in the aftermath of Federation. In comparing these responses it is possible to observe some of the defining features of 'vernacular citizenship'. Cambridge's feelings of disillusion mirrored similar criticism expressed within organs such as the *Bulletin* and the *Truth*. These points of

¹³ A. Cambridge, *Thirty Years in Australia*, p. 251.

¹⁴ Ada Cambridge writes of her loss in, *Thirty Years in Australia*, p. 245. The impact of this bereavement is also discussed in, Bradstock & Wakeling, *Rattling the Orthodoxies: A Life of Ada Cambridge*, p. 169.

view illustrated the frustration of the loftier hopes held for the new nation. In themselves, the expression of these views reflected the environment in which persons felt compelled, and free, to express their opinions in regard to the condition of the Australian Commonwealth and its polity. They also indicated the high stakes invested in the new nation. The Federation of the Commonwealth of Australia was driven by strong ambitions as well as equally high expectations for the conduct of its citizens as well as their representatives. It was also imbued with a vibrant sense of idealism, built on the belief that mankind should strive to create a world better than the one they inherited.

Within Cambridge's criticism of the failings of Federation, it is possible to observe the extent of this idealism, as well as the way that it merged with the outlook of private individuals. Her disappointment that the great possibilities she saw in this inchoate nation were not being fulfilled, stand as testimony to the intimate connection linking the private aspirations and expectations of the individual with the political machinations of Federation in Australian history. The combination of these factors illustrated the reasons why the political situation in Australia could arouse such extreme reactions, which might swing from ebullient criticism to an acquiescent acceptance of its shortcomings and an enduring faith in its redeeming qualities.

This prevailing optimism that Cambridge expressed seemed to echo the degree of faith that many people invested in the nation and its polity. Despite its many defects and in particular the shortfalls of the local political situation, and the fallibilities of its political representatives, people were still willing to express both a profound fondness for the nation as well as being able to invest considerable levels of confidence in the capacity for the political destiny of the country to transcend its perceived failings. This reinforces one of the most robust features of 'vernacular citizenship' in which the strength of these links between the individual and the nation existed at a quite profound and yet 'subterranean' level. In the face of sometimes fierce criticism of the Australian nation and its polity, this fraternal link shared between the citizen and their state maintained its enduring popularity. It represented the confidence held by the general population in the possibilities of political solutions answering the prevailing questions of the day, as well as the abiding faith 'ordinary people' had invested in their nation. This buoyant optimism represented the enduring confidence that had moulded 'vernacular citizenship'.

Cambridge's reflections stand as an example of the extent to which political matters had become entwined with the personal outlook of the individual within mainstream Australian society. The political formation of the Commonwealth of Australia had seeped into the consciousness of the broad population to such an extent, that political matters had assumed a 'vernacular quality'. The interests of the 'ordinary citizen and the Commonwealth intersected within the ideas and ideals of 'vernacular citizenship' in so many respects, that there was minimal division between political matters and broader issues involving the mainstream population. Matters political therefore became a considerable segment of the ways and manner in which Australians thought about politics, themselves and their country. To a very real extent, mainstream Australians continued to maintain and propagate a 'vernacular citizenship' whose origins stretched back into the previous century, but showed no signs of diminishment as the new century opened.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

The topics of citizenship and citizens constitute one of the most intriguing and popular areas of debate to have emerged in the academies of the humanities and social sciences over the last 40 years or so. I was initially drawn by the sheer volume of work and the range of views inspired by the subject, but then found that the gravity of the issues with which they have been commonly connected, raised some challenging questions that captured my attention. As I traced the predominant arguments articulated within Australian academia, I was struck by the concentration upon official definitions of citizenship and attendant matters pertaining to 'formal' and statutory material as set down within the Commonwealth Constitution as well as Federal and State Government legislation.

The absence of explicit definitions of citizenship matters from these official sources until the tabling of the *Australian Citizenship Act 1948*¹⁵ has instigated a discourse of critical analysis that can be labelled as the 'Davidson school'. This 'school of thought'

¹⁵ The "*Nationality and Citizenship Act of 1948 (Cth)*" came into force on Australia Day, 26 January 1949, and was later known as the "*Australian Citizenship Act 1948*", see Galligan & Roberts, *Australian Citizenship*, p. 32.

has seized upon the evidence offered by these official sources to argue about matters of prime political importance in contemporary Australia. Many of these raise calls for altering elements of the current polity, including, most popularly, changing the Constitution or attaching a bill of rights or some similar document stipulating the rights of citizenship.

The gravity of these ideas, which have engaged scholars in contemporary Australia, indicate the important bearing which citizenship carries in our times. With this in mind I searched back over Australian history and was fascinated to find an abundance of references to citizenship which clearly pre-dated the advent of the Commonwealth Constitution and the *Australian Citizenship Act 1948*¹⁶. Most of these featured within ‘unofficial sources’ such as newspapers and speeches, and were often implicit in nature, regularly alluding to aspects of ‘citizenship’ without explicitly spelling out definitions or clearly outlining modes of behaviour and conduct.

It soon became clear that the references to citizenship within this eclectic range of discourse represented a considerable collection of ideas bearing a thematic similarity. Amongst the most pervasive of these was the faith in intellect to improve the material and fraternal circumstances of mankind, built upon the rights to freedom of association as well as expression. Whilst these rights encouraged robust involvement in public and political affairs, they were tempered by the high value placed upon moderate behaviour and civilised conduct. A corollary of which was the importance invested in the individual directing their energies towards the wellbeing of the wider community, and the faith invested in the capacity of formal institutions to fulfil these ambitions.

Equally, it became obvious that these references equated to ideas which were representative of the intellectual landscape of this time. These references, and the notions they carried, constituted some of the most influential and emblematic ideas which characterised this age. I have labelled these ideas as being both pivotal to, and representative of, the development of ‘vernacular citizenship’. ‘Vernacular citizenship’ describes the processes by which this range of predominantly informal and unofficial ideas concerning citizenship and citizens figured prominently in discussions and

¹⁶ Galligan & Roberts, *Australian Citizenship*, p. 32.

discourse surrounding political matters in colonial Australia from the mid to late 1840s up to the infant years of Federation.

The burgeoning era of publishing, in which novels including *Such is Life* appeared during the later years, contributed to the groundswell of ideas that bolstered further the shape of 'vernacular citizenship' and played an elemental role in distributing these ideas amongst the mainstream population. In the main, the ideas of 'vernacular citizenship' were the progeny of the Enlightenment, and influential agents in the expansion of the colonial mind during this era, being imbued with the foremost ideas of the day, championing progressive social policies and democratic political advances.

The pervasive popularity of these ideas extended beyond informal and unofficial domains. It is possible to trace their influence within the discussions of some of the pre-eminent politicians of the day during the Constitutional Conferences of the 1890s as well as within the policy discussions which delivered the 'Commonwealth Invalid and Old age Pensions Bill'. Such examples exemplified the manner in which the ideas which comprised 'vernacular citizenship' proved to be instrumental in also influencing formal and official matters.

Another example of this involves the shape and form of the celebrations which marked the official foundations of Federation. In examining these, it is possible to observe the influence of the ideas which constituted 'vernacular citizenship' shaping the ornamental and symbolic elements accompanying the ceremonies as well as the way and manner in which 'ordinary' Australians responded to these events. In this sense the arrival of Federation serves as an example which reflects the deep influence of the ideas, as well as the pervasiveness of 'vernacular citizenship'. Amidst the crowds of spectators eagerly thronging the streets of Sydney to observe official ceremonies, or catch a glimpse of the many processions and ornamentations, can be observed the elements of the 'formal' and the 'informal' freely intermingling, and the people actively engaging in events of monumental political and historical importance.

This thesis has been driven by the aim of explicating the importance of these ideas and values that constitute 'vernacular citizenship', and the role they played in shaping the way that Australians have imagined their political destiny. To this end it has presented

the category of 'vernacular citizenship' to outline the processes by which these ideas have exerted their hold on the mainstream of the Australian population. In pursuing these lines of argument it has become apparent that several areas of contrast exist between the contents of these informal ideas and their origins, and the focus of most contemporary academic studies.

The presentation of 'vernacular citizenship' with its focus upon implicit ideas expressed within largely informal domains during the time preceding Federation, challenges the overwhelming focus of contemporary academic debates on citizenship, that are based upon the material produced within formal and official government legislation, which leads them to concentrate upon the time from 1949 onward. Within this latter sphere, the understandings of citizenship have been predicated upon the contents of government legislation and official definitions.

On the other hand, 'vernacular citizenship' consists of a raft of ideas and ideals whose identity can be spotted amongst an eclectic and diverse range of informal material. In considering these contrasting perspectives it is possible to comprehend the gap that exists between these two broad areas of thought and understanding. The marrow of this theoretical divergence involves the fact that 'vernacular citizenship' argues that the understanding of 'citizenship' held within the 'mainstream' of the Australian population differs in some fundamental respects from that held within academic circles.

The potential challenges that are posed by these differences in perspective and understanding emerge most clearly when one considers the predominant direction of current academic discursions that are driven by the aim of instigating changes to the Australian polity via the medium of citizenship. To an overwhelming extent these approaches entail using sources of official material to argue in favour of changing political institutions and current political practices. In light of the popular conceptualisations associated with 'vernacular citizenship' and their contrast with formal definitions, it is apparent that there are considerable differences in understanding that exist in regard to citizenship in Australia. The implications of this dislocation between perspectives emerge most clearly when one considers the efforts of significant numbers in the intellectual sphere to convince the public of the merits of change. To engage the

attention of fellow citizens and convince them of the value of their suggestions in order to facilitate change, it is essential that both parties share some common understanding of the topics and issues they are dealing with.

Over the course of presenting ‘vernacular citizenship’ and its place within Australian history and politics, this thesis has explored the nature of these differences of opinion, and contemplated their meaning within contemporary Australia. This has entailed depicting the expansive dimensions of the citizenship debates in contemporary Australia, and outlining their theoretical elements, as well as raising some of the major questions and issues connected with them. It has also, in a much broader sense, aimed to depict the differences prevailing within the predominant views of many contemporary studies of citizenship and the various strands of understanding which exist within the mainstream population. This thesis has strived to do this in a manner that also outlines the thematic similarities which underlay many of these lines of thought, and highlight the areas of common understanding and shared intellectual and cultural history that exist between these spheres, extracting the commonalities in themes and ideas, as well as processes, which each in some way shares.

In concluding this thesis, it is apparent that the groundswell of interest in the topics of citizens and citizenship which first piqued my curiosity does represent a profoundly important topic in contemporary study. In order to grasp the full extent of the importance of citizenship and its current implications within the context of Australian history and politics, it is necessary to hold some awareness of the historical dimensions which have shaped the ‘popular’ and ‘informal’ perceptions of citizenship within Australia. This necessitates recognising the instrumental role that informal levels of implicit understanding have played in shaping the ways in which political matters have been imagined over the course of European Australia’s history.

It is equally important to remember, as ‘vernacular citizenship’ shows, that within these imaginings, formal and official versions of citizenship have contributed to the development of a rich and pervasive culture of political ideas and social understandings. The category of ‘vernacular citizenship’ presented within this thesis offers one route by which these complexities can be accessed and examined, thereby providing a means

whereby a fuller understanding of these topics and the many challenging issues they raise in contemporary Australia can be reached.

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