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Labour biography on screen: the case of Freda Brown

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The biographies and memoirs of political leaders and activists have long been core components of labour history. The inclusion of biography at the top of many best-seller lists attests to its popularity as a literary format. However we must remember that biography is not only a literary format – it is also a type of film and television work. Because the importance, interpretation and implications of screen productions as biographies is, as yet, a little explored area of Australian labour history, we offer a case study of a short television program, in order to point out some important connections between various forms of biography and their relevance to the labour history project.

Freda Brown

Freda Brown (1919-2009) was a political activist in the communist, cultural, women's and anti-apartheid movements, both in Australia and overseas. Her life was filled with action and organisation. Some of her greatest achievements can be seen in her work in helping to establish and lead pioneering women's organisations, notably the New Housewives Association, the Union of Australian Women (UAW), and the Women's International Democratic Federation (WIDF). She stood for parliament three times (once for the New South Wales Legislative Assembly and twice for the Australian Senate) as a candidate representing the Communist Party of Australia (CPA), one of only twenty women to do so. She travelled widely in the service of many women's, peace and anti-racism organisations, and is the only Australian woman to be awarded the Lenin Peace Prize. Towards the end of her life she took up service to older people's organisations. In between her political activity, Freda raised a daughter and nursed her husband through years of Alzheimer's disease, worked as a journalist and theatre director, and served on the Central Committee of the CPA. She was a widely respected activist in Australia through the twentieth century, and led an absorbing and very busy life. She never found the time, or possibly the inclination, to write her memoirs, unlike other prominent Australian communists,¹ and although her political career is mentioned in some histories, no detailed work has been achieved on documenting her life; however one of the authors has been commissioned by Freda's daughter, Senator Lee Rhiannon, to undertake the task.

The Australian Biography program

Australian Biography (AB) was an award-winning, and particularly long-running, Australian television series from Film Australia (renamed Screen Australia in 2008), the government screen production corporation, with eleven series produced between 1992 and 2007. Each series has seven programs of twenty-five minutes. The scope for subjects was quite wide, and delved into many areas of Australian public life: just a few of the other subjects of the series were Donald Horne, Faith Bandler, H.C.

'Nugget' Coombs, Margaret Fulton, and Don Burrows. The major longitudinal project of *AB* came out of Film Australia's National Interest Program (NIP), and was funded through this program, which began in 1989 and continues today through Screen Australia. Since 2002, the NIP has been extended from film productions to an on-line biographical resource, *Australian Biography Online*, in a collaborative effort with the National Library of Australia,² with selected episodes appearing (but not the Freda Brown episode).

The *AB* series focused on over sixty Australians who have contributed significantly to society in the twentieth century. Publicity material for the series reads:

This well-established series profiles some of the most extraordinary Australians of our time. Many have had a major impact on the nation's cultural, political and social life. All are remarkable and inspiring people who have reached a stage in their lives where they can look back and reflect. Through revealing in-depth interviews, they share their stories— of beginnings and challenges, landmarks and turning points. In so doing, they provide us with an invaluable archival record and a unique perspective on the roads we, as a country, have travelled.³

The series has been well received, with the History Teachers Association writing that '*AB* is well known as a national treasure [and] shows the critical role institutions like Film Australia play in preserving our historical memory'.⁴

The writer and director of the Freda Brown episode (part of Series 4) was Frank Heimans, an oral historian and producer, who was the maker of many of the *AB* episodes. Heimans was the originator of the concept for the series and also selected candidates for interviews for most of the series. The program aired on SBS-TV in 2000 and then again in 2001, and has been screened in other countries. The interviewer was filmmaker Robin Hughes, who was the former CEO of Film Australia. Hughes believed that the series was begun 'for the very good reason that the lives of many significant twentieth century Australians were not being recorded on either video or film ... the purpose was primarily archival and involved interviewing selected people at length about their lives'.⁵ She said about the people chosen for interviews that they all 'capitalise on this very strong, implicit culture in Australia, the thing that makes us recognise them as Australian'.⁶ Frank Heimans conducted a preliminary audio interview with Freda on 5 December 1994. From this interview he set about narrowing the focus that the filmed interview was to take. Robin Hughes made up her own questions from the research and transcript of the preliminary interview provided by Heimans.

Rhiannon was present on the day that Frank worked with Freda, and recalls that Freda 'came to be very impressed with how he worked, and she thought that he made a great effort to be sensitive in how he handled the material ... she was very pleased with how Frank handled what has a complexity because of how fractious the Cold War was ... [although Freda] probably would have given different emphasis to different things'.⁷

After Frank and Freda spent the day together for the preliminary interview, about eight hours of interview material was shot, with Robin Hughes, at Freda's Bondi home on 2 and 3 February 1995; Heimans also arranged filming of Freda at a yoga class. He edited down to the 25-minute finished production, and recalls that as a normal part of the editing process, he:

had to leave out a whole lot of interesting stuff, as you have to when editing a 25-min program from an interview lasting many hours. I'm pretty savage when wearing my editor's hat as you have to be. The choices I had to make were which bits illustrated her life and I found the early stuff, such as the New Theatre stories most interesting.⁸

In the publicity material for this episode, Freda is described as a 'political activist and women's leader'. The program covers her whole life, from early memories of her childhood in Sydney during the Depression, and focuses on events and stories throughout her adulthood, with a final section that concentrates on Freda's recent years of nursing her husband Bill through Alzheimer's disease to his death. Apart from the footage shot by Heimans in 1995, the program also contains stock footage. These sequences were sourced from Brown's own archives as well as from ABC-TV, Film Australia, and the Seven Network.⁹ Most of the on-screen time is taken up with footage from Robin Hughes' interview of Freda, with selected still photographs and archival footage interspersed to illustrate Freda's various stories. The viewer hears Hughes' questions and comments, but never sees her. There are no contributions to the telling of Freda's story from other people, and for the purposes of this paper it is interesting to consider whether the program should have been titled 'Australian Autobiography'. It is purely built on her own reminiscences and anecdotes.

In a discussion of the series, Hughes identified a 'distinctive pattern' that emerged from these many long interviews with older Australians that together made up the *AB* project: 'Somehow or other it's the unspoken spirit that underpins their activities and their attitudes. These unspoken matters are what you might call our cultural assumptions. And when you look at these cultural assumptions, the ones that underlie the life stories ... in the television series, you get a kind of cultural cohesion that is really quite striking'.¹⁰ Hughes, a passionate believer in the power of documentary, said in a 2009 interview that 'the right documentary, made and promoted in the right way, without insulting the intelligence of the audience, but reaching out to the audience in ways to make the work really accessible, can deal with really big subjects, and deal with them very effectively, and rate very well'.¹¹

The biography within labour women's historiography

Notwithstanding its seemingly having come in from the cold as a scholarly genre, biography has always been significant to the history and culture of labour and of the left. It creates a tidy context for the knowledge base on individual and collective contributions to the labour movement. The lives of labour activists and leaders are critical touch-points. In the context of this conference, and regarding our paper, those touch-points are not only a genre, they are part of a movement.

That genre must be addressed by historians of labour women, throwing light on women's networks and their impact by referring to diverse activities, friendships, and collaborations. And for this conference session, we add that film as documentary has long been used by the labour movement towards that understanding - to trace events, to convey collectives. Accordingly, documentary is a key resource for labour biography research: film augments gaps in the written record and in perspective through its different lens. As Taksa noted in the lead-up to New South Wales Bicentennial projects, 'the anger and frustration felt by workers in response to their

socio-economic situation may be projected much easier from the screen than from a page in a book'.¹²

Biography is not new in the recording of women of the left. With their presence minimised in official documents, minutes and institutional histories, there have had to be other ways to locate information about their lives and work. Published bios of women differ from bios of men in that the subjects are often not 'great persons' or even acknowledged leaders. So, in print we have many biographies and autobiographies for Labor men, for example, Jack Lang - his own – W. M. Hughes, John Curtin, and Lionel Murphy.¹³

But for women? In labour history, biographical research has fulfilled an important function, addressing and to a degree overcoming that earlier neglect, even invisibility, of women's role in left and labour institutions. Nonetheless, labour historiography has until recently produced relatively few dedicated biographies on Australian women. Zelda D'Aprano on Kath Williams, Verna Coleman on Adela Pankhurst-Walsh and Peter Sekules on Jessie Street are typical examples.¹⁴ Carole Ferrier takes Jean Devanny's writing as a resource and offers an extraordinary narrative of a life consciously constrained by institutional communism.¹⁵ Heather Radi's collected documents on Jessie Street include insightful essays.¹⁶ Lenore Coltheart edited Street's autobiography, the outcome being quasi-biography and a more informed work than the Sekules; Radi's *200 Australian Women* is an invaluable source for detail on women. Joy Damousi offered collective lives of socialist women with *Women Come Rally* (for Britain Karen Hunt did similar work with *Equivocal Feminists*).¹⁷ D'Aprano's biography of ALP, union and equal-pay activist and UAW member Kath Williams explores a working-class and union environment for women. In Williams' case this meant union involvement during and after World War II, when she organised for the Liquor Trades Union. That is, several of these women were active in the labour movement in the same period as Freda Brown was active for the CPA, the Housewives Association/UAW, and they were very likely connected through networks. Writing about Williams, D'Aprano shows how persistent women needed to be if they were to participate fully in public life despite social expectations that they also embody the domestic sphere. It helped if, as the film illustrates for Freda with Bill Brown, the domestic partner was also an activist in the same movement, part of aligned debates.

Other biographies of Australian women activists include *Exit Left* by Oriel Gray, which parallels Freda Brown's memories of a strong left-wing father figure and a stimulating period of activity within the New Theatre.¹⁸ *A Proletarian Life* by Audrey Blake also introduces readers to life in the left milieu and amongst Australian proletarian internationalists of the twentieth century.¹⁹ Ralph Gibson's lyrical memoir of his wife Dorothy, *One Woman's Life*, helps to expand the literature here, and the partnership of Ralph and Dorothy as related in this book parallels Brown's comments on her relationship with her husband Bill in the *AB* program.²⁰ More recently, Sandra Bloodworth's and Tom O'Lincoln's collection *Rebel Women in Australian Working Class History* makes an important contribution to the telling of lives of women on the left.²¹

Of particular interest for a labour history explication of the *AB* series is *Taking the Revolution Home: Work among Women in the Communist Party of Australia 1920-1945*.²² This is a collection of interviews with Australian women communists that

Joyce Stevens conducted and published, where we see many of the important themes outlined in Freda Brown's story replicated. Similarly, Audrey Johnson's 1990 *Bread and Roses*, which offers the biographies of three communist women – and friends – describes left activism for the generation of communist women before Freda, and illustrates the collaborative nature of effective political and industrial work.²³ One great strength of Stevens' book is that the women are connected by virtue of the collective 'created' by the book – a feature that is also common to the *AB* television series of filmed interviews. These works demonstrate that written biography, in the process of recording and critiquing women's activism, can show how the domestic and the public worlds connect. We ask whether film biography also achieves this – and indeed, whether labour film has yet overcome the neglect of female activists that for so long was typical of written labour history.

This film tracks Freda Brown's life chronologically, a common approach in television biography. The difficulty is that this approach doesn't allow for an extended development of themes. This paper has earlier highlighted the drivers, in both public and personal spheres, that drove Freda's activism. At the start of the film she insists on her status as 'ordinary'. Whatever this might mean, the film makes it clear that her 'ordinariness' encompassed far more than the social task of witnessing. Inasmuch as the film depicts it, her life emphasised:

- communism and the status of the CPA, and as contested within the state;
- internationalism;
- theatre and entertainment as personal enrichment, community, and activism;
- paid work;
- networks of women central to her activism, especially the UAW;
- the peace movement;
- family, childhood, class and leisure (learning to surf with Bill illustrated companionship and respect in their marriage).

Considering all this, frustratingly for a historian and to a degree inevitably, because this is a short film, there are important public sphere and community themes not developed in the film that might, for example, have contributed to an understanding of Freda Brown's networks. There's a real irony in that a film about a woman who gave her life to working for communism, the ultimate collective, and for the people's causes, she is not shown with her collective except in archival news footage. Regarding the Housewives Association/UAW for example: this was the significant popular CPA organisation for women. Freda was part of the group behind *More than a Hat and Glove Brigade*, the 1996 publication on the organisation.²⁴ The interview only briefly notes Menzies' 1951 referendum on the legality of the CPA - even though the referendum was a watershed in civil rights and for the left, in the context of USA McCarthyism - and this is a major theme in Brown's life that her daughter notes Brown would have made more of, if she had had any editorial input. She recalls:

Mum probably would have given different emphasis to different things ... I know that she was happy with how they handled her early life [but] the latter period of conflict in the Left, she may have wanted to expand on that slightly differently. But again, I really want to give emphasis to – she said it a number of times – she was very pleased with how Frank [Heimans] handled what has a complexity because of how fractious the Cold War was.²⁵

Researchers using written records - documents, institutional minutes, manuscripts, personal papers - can be painfully aware of their limitations, because their content has been defined by the person creating the record or collating the papers, often the subject of a biography themselves. The historian translates as far as possible from the record, but cannot create that which is not there, and which was often deliberately omitted. The research methodology involves interpretation, relating of records, cross-referencing, hypothesising; the reader becomes a partner in interpreting the evidence.

On the other hand, with film, the life subject is both translated and presented to the audience already interpreted, for understanding and illustration. The filmmaker's responsibility is very much out there. Milner has analysed the structure of the film – including aspects of Freda Brown's life not included, or given lesser priority that she might have chosen. Returning to Webb's earlier comments on labour biography and women, we could ask whether, although Freda was such a significant activist of the left, the film inappropriately emphasises gender and allows gender considerations to drive analysis of her work.

To comment on this matter of film and interpretation: documentary biographies on screen generally bear little resemblance to written histories, or to the discipline as it has been traditionally understood. Firstly, academic rigour suffers. But countering this are the benefits of reaching a much larger audience, with divergent aims to the traditional historian. There is a general search, in the production of filmed biographies, not for the detailed blow-by-blow elicitation of a life's details, but for general understanding of a life and what has made it, aiming for empathy of the viewer with the subject. Indeed, as Jürgen Kocka describes, '*explanation* has become less obvious, less self-evident, less desirable or less manageable for many historians. *Understanding* has regained centre-stage'.²⁶ Secondly, the demands of narrative within a half-hour window are too great. Freda Brown's life, as presented in the *AB* program, relates her story through an uncontested representation of her memories, as told by her and her alone. Inevitably, it accords her an exceptional status in using this technique. And also inevitably, there are only a certain number of sub-topics that can be explored in such a short time: Heimans, the producer, 'had to leave out a whole lot of interesting stuff'. Given that it is the function of a classical documentary narrative system to contain and suppress contradictory features, it is inevitable that the collective nature of Brown's activism is not highlighted.

We would now like to expand on some concepts which feed historical biography, and apply equally to the written and filmed record of a life. John Tosh in his classic *The Pursuit of History* asserts that historical biography was initially 'frankly didactic' and commemorative.²⁷ He also observes how biography is challenged by sceptics who doubt its 'place' in 'serious history'. He records Cowling's argument that because it encourages a bias or a focus on one person, biography skews the record. Cowling asserts that in 'abstracting' the subject, it wrongly implies linear connections, that is, connections in time and from place to place that are chronological and ordered, even predictable: he presents the implication as wrong: that the connections are not predictable, are disordered - that, rather, a shift in one life shifts others.²⁸ We noted earlier how that chronological treatment of Freda's life in the filmed biography disturbs an understanding of themes. These arguments relate to traditional written

biography only, however, and we must now enlarge the oeuvre to include screen biographies.

Tosh also observes what for a manuscript researcher should seem self-evident - that 'a critical use of primary sources requires systematic biographical research' and that research is 'indispensable to the understanding of motive and intention'.²⁹ Clearly this applies to film as well, even noting the time-bound nature of the media. We do know that solid research went into this film, and it is worth reminding us that the producer of this film, as well as most others in the filmed biography genre, did considerable research into their subject. Heiman's brief was to 'illustrate or interpret aspects of Australia or of the life and activities of the Australian people',³⁰ and he recalls that he 'really had a dream run with little interference in how I produced and directed the program'.³¹

Moving to a biographical genre which relates to our own work and also, we argue, to the imperatives of historical political film documentary, Tosh acknowledges collective biography, which he defines, appropriately, as prosopography. This underpins Webb's comments on networks: prosopography is relational. Given that criterion, a prosopographical approach works well for 'women's history' because so much of our analysis has to come from what is known of people our 'subjects' knew personally. How did they relate, to whom, and how did that affect their work? Even, whom did they name in their bequests? So, for example, women working in Sydney's Trades Hall in the interwar years developed networks with other Trades Hall female activists: the building facilitated their effectiveness for women, and for women workers, union members, and for their input to union policy. As Johnson's *Bread and Roses* illustrates, friendship and personal networks were and are core to women's activism.

Collective biography is a way of tracking generational change including, say, between mature labour women and feminists, and young women.³² Increasingly, historians of labour community interpret intergenerational community by drawing on insights from prosopography, that is of generational and collective bonds, or 'relationships of mutual obligation' or reciprocity, in society and politics.³³ The strategy isn't new. Karl Ferdinand Werner dates it from the sixteenth-century idea of collective, but individual, biography.³⁴ Digital historian Alastair Dunning wrote

The concept of prosopographical study, where an historian examines, particularly through naming conventions, an historical character's position within his family, has been in existence since the sixteenth century.³⁵

Close to our themes, and as Lawrence Stone puts it, 'Prosopography is the investigation of the common background characteristics of a group of actors in history by means of a collective study of their lives'.³⁶ Thus a group of Manchester and Liverpool historians collaborated on the Communist Party Biographical Project, a major prosopographical project on British communists.³⁷ It is in this sense of exploring the collective through the lives of its individuals, and particularly through identifying common links in their biographies, that Webb draws on prosopography in her later paper. We suggest that it can be applied to the analysis of filmed biography. Certainly, the organisations noted by Freda – the Movement against War and Fascism, the Union of Australian Women, and post-WWII peace movements – might

be researched using prosopography as a conscious tool. Arguably, in the presentation of such research, film, more than manuscript and written works, has the capacity to illustrate movingly personal relationships. This is something we can reasonably seek in filmed biography.

Critical to collective biography though, and an aspect we can only allude to in the confines of this paper, is the role of place and space. A particular strength of filmed biography is its capacity to illustrate the role of place in activist identity. For example, in the *AB* program, the New Theatre, Newtown, and Bondi are shown as core to Freda's life and work in the CPA. In another paper for this conference, Webb offers a collective biography/social movement analysis drawing on the lives of several female union organisers and activists. One of these women, long-term Printers Union organiser Mel Cashman, used theatre, drama and music to enhance her industrial organising. In Mel's case, Sydney's Trades Hall was the central and connecting location.³⁸

Conclusions

The Freda Brown program is a classic piece of contemporary television. It sets out to present a particular, individual, partial story of one woman's life, and this, in itself, presents a fundamental difference from the classic labour-history biography as we have been discussing it in this conference. Historian and television producer David Cannadine discusses this difference between historical writing and documentary making: 'work being undertaken by historians today tries to present many voices and different viewpoints; but as written and presented, media history is still largely confined to linear narrative'.³⁹ Anything that interrupts the flow of the story is rejected in conventional filmed biography; and this extends, in our case study, to an explanation of Freda's network of activists: problematically for the historian, prosopography and filmed biography conflict.

Further, one of the significant differences between written biography and filmed biography is the interposition of that most human feature, emotion. For almost the whole of the 25-minute program, the camera stays on Freda's face, changing slightly from a mid-shot to a close-up, and in the later stages of the program, where she discusses her feelings about her husband Bill's death, an extreme close-up. The television audience feels Freda's enthusiasm for her time in the New Theatre and the CPA, her love of working for people's organisations, her distress at memories of the recent death of Bill. In fact, the movement of the camera on Freda's face comprises most of the visual action of the film. Apart from the gradual pans and zooms of the camera across the still photographs and small excerpts of archival footage, this in effect makes the program a biography, or autobiography, that operates as an oral history with a few illustrations. The emphasis in this program on emotion is not unusual, or coincidental. Noted American history-filmmaker Ken Burns recognises the strength of emotional effect in the production and reception of historical television. Film, he argues, 'is not equipped to do what a book does, which is to attain profound levels of meaning and texture. But film has the power to reach profound levels of emotion'.⁴⁰ It's clear that the talking-head model as employed in this film has significant limitations; but it also has a strong emotional effect on the viewer.

Our contemporary culture is a post-literate one, where we take so much information from audio-visual sources. We need to take seriously debates about the relationship of visual media to historical representations. The screen studies scholar Hayden White proposed the term 'historiophoty' to describe the representation of history in visual discourse. Visual discourse, White reminds traditional historians, is 'capable of telling us things about its referents that are both different from what can be told in verbal discourse but also of a kind that can only be told by visual images'.⁴¹

Biography on television can never achieve the same outcomes, or serve the same functions, as written biography. It has a different purpose. As Tristram Hunt explains:

A history programme is not competing on the same terrain as a book, seminar or lecture. It is purposefully designed for a mass audience, using a judicious edit of sound and vision to make an argument or offer a depiction of aspects of the past. The purpose of television history is to entertain, educate and excite. If it can throw some intelligent light on the past through an engaging narrative while encouraging viewers to think more deeply about the subject, then it's doing the job.⁴²

The popularity of social history on television has been growing rapidly through the past two decades, and learning from television programs is an accepted part of our cultural understanding. Ken Burns has called television the 'electronic campfire',⁴³ and we all sit around in our lounges being entertained, and also being educated, being reminded of our past, and being encouraged to contemplate and discuss the social history presented to us. The strong personal narrative that comprises the *AB* episode is one of the strongest ways to connect to viewers – it offers a visceral power that no printed biography can match. Television is nowadays a significant history teacher. A recent Australian study suggests that film and television is where the majority of the population gains their knowledge about the past. When respondents were asked about historical activities they had participated in over the past twelve months, 84 per cent said they had watched movies or television.⁴⁴

There is, then, a space for the consideration of filmed biographies within the oeuvre, as a different outlet for preserving historical memory. Although, as we have pointed out, the *AB* program elides some important aspects of Freda's life as an Australian activist, it brings her story to many people. It tells of her feelings, connects her life to the viewers in a way that a written, bound, academic text can never do. Its contribution to the biographical family cannot be discounted in our media-saturated twenty-first century world. Biographical screen productions have the potential to act as common sites for the documentary demands of the academy and the reasons why we all watch television and film. The *AB* series enacted upon filmed biography's ability to move its subjects into the popular imagination. It serves its own purposes of education alongside entertainment, giving its audiences a visceral and often emotive way of engaging with its subjects.

¹ See Peter Beilharz, 'Elegies of Australian communism', *Australian Historical Studies*, vol.23, 1989, 293.

² Film Australia, *Energetic and optimistic year end for Film Australia*, Media Release, 2002.

³ Darren Smith, *Australian Biography Study Guide: Neville Bonner*, Film Australia, 1992.

⁴ Cited in Film Australia, *Review of Australian Government Film Funding Support*, Submission, 2006.

⁵ Robin Hughes, 'The history in Australian lives' (Address to The Sydney Institute, 2 December 1996), *Sydney Papers*, vol.9, no.44, 1997, 45.

⁶ *ibid.*, 49.

⁷ Lisa Milner, interview with Lee Rhiannon, 6 April 2011.

⁸ Frank Heimans, personal communication with Lisa Milner, 12 May 2011.

⁹ Frank Heimans, 'Freda Brown- Stock Footage Sources'. np.

¹⁰ Hughes, 'The history in Australian lives', 44.

¹¹ Ray Argall, interview with Robin Hughes, 3 June 2009; available online at http://aso.gov.au/people/Robin_Hughes/interview/

¹² Lucy Taksa, 'Labour History and the Visual Medium: 'Strike-bound' and 'Kemira'' *The Hummer*, No 8 1985, Sydney Branch, Australian Society for the Study of Labour History, <http://asslh.org.au/hummer/no-8/visual-medium/>

¹³ For example, Jack Lang, *I Remember: Autobiography* (Sydney: Invincible Press, 1956); L. F. Fitzhardinge, *William Morris Hughes: a political biography* vols 1-2 (Sydney: Angus and Robertson, 1964, 1979); David Day, *John Curtin.: A Life* (Sydney: Harper Collins, 1999); Jenny Hocking, *Lionel Murphy. A Political Biography*, (Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

¹⁴ Zelda D'Aprano, *Kath Williams: The Unions and the Fight for Equal Pay* (Melbourne: Spinifex Press, 2001); Verna Coleman, *Adela Pankhurst: the Wayward Suffragette 1885-1961* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1996); Peter Sekules, *Jessie Street, A Rewarding but Unrewarded Life* (Brisbane: University of Queensland Press, 1978).

¹⁵ Carole Ferrier (ed.), *Point of Departure: The Autobiography of Dean Devanny* (Brisbane: University of Queensland Press, 1984), 108-9.

¹⁶ Heather Radi (ed.), *Jessie Street: Documents and Essays* (Sydney: Women's Redress Press, 1990).

¹⁷ Joy Damousi, *Women Come Rally: Socialism Communism and Gender in Australia 1890-1955* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1994); Karen Hunt *Equivocal Feminists: The Social Democratic Federation and the Woman Question 1884-1911* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

¹⁸ Oriel Gray, *Exit left: memoirs of a scarlet woman* (Melbourne: Penguin, 1985).

¹⁹ Audrey Blake, *A Proletarian Life* (Malmsbury, Kibble, 1984).

²⁰ Ralph Gibson, *One woman's life: a memoir of Dorothy Gibson* (Sydney: Hale & Iremonger, 1980).

²¹ Sandra Bloodworth and Tom O'Lincoln (eds). *Rebel women: in Australian Working Class History* (Melbourne: Interventions, 1998).

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- ²² Joyce Stevens, *Taking the Revolution Home: Work among Women in the Communist Party of Australia 1920-1945* (Melbourne: Sybylla Feminist Press, 1987).
- ²³ Audrey Johnson, *Bread and Roses: A personal history of three militant women and their friends 1902-1988* (Sydney: Left Book Club, 1990).
- ²⁴ Barbara Curthoys and Audrey McDonald, *More Than a Hat and Glove Brigade: The Story of the Union of Australian Women* (Sydney: Bookpress, 1996).
- ²⁵ Lisa Milner, interview with Lee Rhiannon, 6 April 2011.
- ²⁶ Jürgen Kocka, 'Losses, Gains, and Opportunities: Social History Today', *Journal of Social History*, 2003, 23–4.
- ²⁷ John Tosh *The Pursuit of History* (London: Longman, 1987), 71-2.
- ²⁸ Tosh, *Pursuit of History*, 72, quoting Maurice Cowling *The Impact of Labour, 1920-1924* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971), 6.
- ²⁹ Tosh, *Pursuit of History*, p 73 (So, we have all indulged our time in archives with a pleasant wander in personal papers, not obviously relevant to our 'themes', but that nonetheless inform our understanding of the context for those themes.)
- ³⁰ Film Australia, *National Interest Program*, information leaflet, February 2008, 1.
- ³¹ Frank Heimans, personal communication with Lisa Milner, 12 May 2011.
- ³² Susan Magarey, 'History, Cultural Studies and another Look at First-Wave Feminism in Australia', *Australian Historical Studies*, no.106, April 1996, 104.
- ³³ See for example Matthias Gelzer, *The Roman Nobility* (1932), translated by Robin Seager (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1969), 62-7.
- ³⁴ Karl Ferdinand Werner, 'L'apport de la prosopographie à l'histoire', in K.S.B. Keats-Rohan (ed.) *Family Trees and the Roots of Politics: The Prosopography of Britain and France from the Tenth to the Twelfth Century* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1997), 1-21.
- ³⁵ Alastair Dunning, *Developing a Database Interface: The Continental Origins of English Landholders*, content published July 2000, < http://ahds.ac.uk/_print_/creating/case-studies/coel/index.htm >, accessed 2 February 2004, 20 June 2011. (In fact, prosopography goes back much further than Dunning suggests, being an important tool for ancient historians.)
- ³⁶ Usefully for our purposes, Keats-Rohan notes of prosopography that 'Claude Nicolet defined its aim as the history of groups as elements in political and social history, achieved by isolating series of persons having certain political or social characteristics in common and then analyzing each series in terms of multiple criteria, in order both to obtain information'. Katherine Keats-Rohan, introductory definition for the Modern History Research Unit, University of Oxford, 2011, <http://prosopography.modhist.ox.ac.uk/prosopdefinition.htm>
- ³⁷ See *Communist Party Biographical Project: Communism and the British Labour Movement: a prosopographical analysis*. Economic and Social Research Council, and Manchester University. Project coordinators: Kevin Morgan, John McIlroy, Alan Campbell, Andre Flinn, Gidon Cohen. Project interviews at British Library, Recordings, C1049.
- ³⁸ Rosemary Webb (ASSLH 2011 paper citation) See also *The Printer*, 12 October 1934, 101, 18 October 1935, 100.

³⁹ David Cannadine, 'Introduction', *History and the Media*, (Houndmills, Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 4.

⁴⁰ Ken Burns, cited in Thomas Cripps, 'Historical Truth: An Interview with Ken Burns', *American Historical Review*, vol.100, no.3, 1995, 741.

⁴¹ Hayden White, 'Historiography and Historiophoty', *American Historical Review*, vol.93, no.5, 1988, 1193-9.

⁴² Tristram Hunt, 'Reality, Identity and Empathy: The Changing Face of Social History Television', *Journal of Social History*, vol.39, no.3, 2006, 847.

⁴³ Ken Burns, cited in Thomas Cripps, 'Historical Truth: An Interview with Ken Burns', *American Historical Review*, vol.100, no.3, 1995, 741.

⁴⁴ Paul Ashton and Paula Hamilton, 'At Home with the Past: Background and Initial Findings from the National Survey', in Paula Hamilton and Paul Ashton (eds.), *Australians and the Past: A National Survey*, special issue of *Australian Cultural History*, vol. 22, 2003, 11.