

Stakeholders as Subjects: The Role of Historians in the Development of Australia's Find & Connect Web Resource

SHURLEE SWAIN

Abstract: This paper reflects on the methodological, academic, and ultimately personal challenges involved in constructing the Find & Connect web resource, a public history project funded by the Australian Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs in response to the 2009 apology to Forgotten Australians and Former Child Migrants. Central to these challenges is the relationship between the researchers and the key stakeholders: the Care Leavers and the organizations that ran the institutions in which they spent their childhoods. The paper explores the use of collaborative history in negotiating the conflicting hopes and expectations of the various parties to the project.

Keywords: collaborative history, child welfare history, digital history, official apologies, working with stakeholders

Introduction

WE LIVE, JEFFREY OLICK SUGGESTS, in an age of regret, as Western governments turn their attention to addressing the errors of the past.¹ By 2009 the Australian Federal Government had apologized to three separate groups of people who, as children, had been separated from their families, and offered a reparation package to each.² The national Find & Connect web resource, almost certainly the largest nonmilitary public history project in Australia to date, was funded by the Federal Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA, now Department of Social Services) as part of the reparation package offered to two of those groups: Forgotten Australians, the estimated 500,000 people who experienced institutional or other out-of-home care as children in the last century, and the Former Child Migrants brought to Australia from Britain and Malta during the same period. An apology, with its own reparations package, had been made in the previous year to the Stolen Generations, indigenous people who, as children, had been removed from their families.³ The 2009 apology was in response to two inquiries conducted by the Australian Senate that disclosed widespread abuse and neglect in both government and nongovernment out-of-home care facilities, and documented its harmful legacies in individual lives.⁴

Three major public history projects were funded in response to the apology. The first, the exhibition *Inside—Life in Children's Homes*, was shown at the National Museum in Canberra from 2011-12, and has since toured to the states of Victoria and Western Australia.⁵ The second was an oral history project that collected the testimonies of over two hundred former residents and staff of children's institutions. Stored in the National Library of Australia (NLA) the collection is now accessible through the library's

website.⁶ The third, a web resource, part of a suite of services designed to provide counseling and family tracing services to people who spent time as children in out-of-home care (known as Care Leavers)⁷ grouped under the label of Find & Connect, was charged with developing a "single online access point" to information about former care providers and their records holdings.⁸ The contract to develop the web resource was awarded to a multidisciplinary group comprising research archivists from the eScholarship Research Centre at the University of Melbourne,⁹ an academic from the Department of Social Work at that university, and historians from Australian Catholic University, who had over the previous three years developed Pathways, a web resource relating to the state of Victoria, which FaHCSIA judged as providing a suitable prototype.¹⁰

The Victorian Pathways web resource provided a gateway to connect people who had experienced institutional and out-of-home "care" as children to information and resources aimed at helping them make sense of the past, and to see where their own story fit into the broader social and historical context. Central to the methodology which the team applied was the concept of the Knowledge Diamond.¹¹ Recognizing that knowledge was held in multiple locations, this concept encouraged researchers to see practitioners, policy makers, and Care Leavers as well as archivists and historians as co-researchers, using mechanisms such as workshops, website usability testing, targeted feedback, and evaluation to engage them in the project.¹² Historians may recognize this approach as an application of the concept of shared authority developed particularly in relation to oral history projects.¹³ By applying this principle to the construction of a national web resource, Find & Connect constitutes a major experiment in writing history in the digital domain.

The FaHCSIA funding has allowed the research team to implement the methodology used for the construction of Pathways on a national scale. In addition to the archival, editorial, and technical team at the eScholarship Research Centre, the project provided for a full-time public historian in each of Australia's eight states and territories. The decision to approve this allocation of resources is evidence that, although Find & Connect is not described as a public history project on the funding body's website, it was funded to function as such. In Australia out-of-home care has always been a state rather than a federal responsibility, provided through a mix of government and nongovernment organizations distinctive to each jurisdiction. Working individually the role of the state-based historians was to liaise with Care Leavers and their support groups, records holders, former care providers, and government departments to construct a web resource specific to the location in which they were working, and to respond to queries that come through the site. The aim, by the end of the three year contract, was to have an entry for every organization which had provided care in Australia since the colonial period (1788-1900) with links to its predecessor and successor organizations, legislation governing child removal and placement, and importantly, listings of its records holdings and links to the organizations controlling records access.

Although this scope may appear to be wider than that required by the project's immediate target group of Care Leavers, it replicated the original Pathways model. This model was developed in response to the demands of Care Leavers to be given access to resources which both explained the long histories of the institutions within which they lived and the information through which they could explore their own family histories, which often involve multigenerational experiences of removal. Given the absence of comprehensive histories of child welfare in Australia, the state-based historians also

needed to undertake a considerable amount of original historical research. Under the terms of the contract, the web resource, based on pre-existing print and online directories, went live in November 2011, three months after the historians were appointed. Since that time they have been conducting their research and writing very much in a living and responsive public domain.¹⁴ Because the site is public these responses are not restricted to members of formal stakeholder groups, but rather draw on a wide range of Care Leavers and their families, as well as people who managed or worked in the homes and members of the communities in which they were located, each of whom brings a different notion of history. This article explores the challenges both professional and personal that such a very public form of public history involves.

Working in the digital domain

As Deborah Lines Andersen has observed, what is different in digital history from traditional historical scholarship "is not the sources but the way that digital scholars do their work."¹⁵ Working on a continually developing and changing web resource brings opportunities as well as challenges. The major challenge lies in the nature of the target audience, the Care Leavers, many of whom are not regular web users. The user feedback and accessibility testing built into the project has shown that many also struggle with low levels of literacy because of the disrupted and often low quality education they received while in care.¹⁶ To be of value the site has to be simple to navigate, avoid the use of complex language, and convey as much information as is possible in a visual form. Writing for a steadily evolving web resource is also a challenge for historians, who traditionally are used to carefully crafting their work, ensuring it is peer reviewed, and then sending it out, as an article or a book, to a small readership. By contrast Find & Connect historians, like others working in the public arena, can feel

quite naked at times—their mistakes and misunderstandings are very visible and open to immediate critique both through the website and in the course of their regular stakeholder interactions at the workshops and the public information sessions they attend.

An example of this vulnerability occurred early in the project in relation to the entry for the Pirra Girls' Home in Victoria. Official departmental sources provided a very positive story of a mansion in the country where young girls were able to participate in rural community life, an image which respondents through the website were quick to contest. The current entry reflects a long process of both negotiation and research, using the voices of former residents and staff, accessed through evidence presented to a range of inquiries, unpublished reminiscences, and published autobiographies as well as feedback to the website. It acknowledges both the contradictions and coalescences between these various accounts as evidence that there is no single way in which Pirra can be remembered.¹⁷

Such challenges also provided the project's greatest opportunity. The data reproduced when the resource went live in 2011 was dated, and often inaccurate, drawn from existing print and online state-based guides that varied widely in quality.¹⁸ Most of these guides have since been withdrawn from circulation but their contribution is in all cases acknowledged. The advantage of launching the web resource at this point was that the project was able to draw on knowledge and expertise already existing in the community. The site has a feedback form, which invites comments, questions, stories, facts, and, vitally, corrections, and each email received galvanized the relevant state-based historian to go in pursuit of the answer. In this sense we are taking a small step in the direction of what Web 2.0 theorists have labeled "radical trust," ceding control of content and welcoming collaboration with users, although not without an

awareness of its limitations.¹⁹ With Find & Connect, the historians did not set themselves up as experts, controlling the information or its release, but rather as mediators, especially of the information flow. As mediators they did, however, move beyond the role of collection and curating, bringing their critical faculties to bear on the task of making meaning of the past, but did this in a collaborative and open manner. The biggest opportunity provided by an online presence was the ability to "crowdsource" information, both using the site itself and reaching out with social media such as Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, and History Pin, drawing on specialist knowledge to answer specific questions, a process which proved particularly fruitful in relation to the dating of pictorial material.²⁰ This project was developed at an exciting time in the digital world, with the NLA's Trove project making a wide range of newspapers and magazines available and searchable online.²¹ State and federal archival repositories were also moving into the online world, providing ready access to material that could then be linked to the web resource.

Problems of sustainability have haunted many digital history projects, but the networked digital environment also provides the means through which these challenges can be addressed. Although the continuance of maintenance and development funding beyond the three years of the current agreement will be dependent on the ability of the official stakeholder group, which includes representatives of care leaver organizations, records holders, and the Find & Connect support services to persuade government that the web resource is serving its purpose, the NLA's Pandora project guarantees to preserve (but not continue to develop) such web sites into the future.²² The Find & Connect web resource has been constructed in line with the principles established for public knowledge spaces, and its underlying system, the Online Heritage Resource

Manager (OHRM) ensures that the information is standards-based, resilient, and persistent with the goal of remaining meaningful across time.²³

Writing Collaborative History

The model of collaboration that this project uses forces historians to leave aside the assumption that their role is to evaluate all of the available evidence and determine the best way of conveying the story. Rather, they are challenged to consider the perspectives of those who experienced life in an institution, in contrast to those who administered them, and to balance the various viewpoints. The technology means that there can be no core narrative. People enter the site in many different ways and the paths that they follow are determined by the questions they bring with them, and the links that they identify as relevant. This means that history is being conveyed in pieces that each individual uses to construct or fill in their own narrative. This concept is particularly apparent in the ways in which Care Leavers and their descendants are using the web resource to assist in their genealogical research. Victorian care leaver Frank Golding, for example, is compiling the story of the thirty three members of his family institutionalized over the last 150 years, using the resources available on Find & Connect to provide context for the individual case files he has been able to locate, in order to document the history of one family's extended interactions with child welfare authorities.²⁴

Even at the level of each individual page, there is a challenge in working out the most effective ways to convey information. A scholar commissioned to write the history of an orphanage or children's home would usually study the available sources and then make decisions about which pieces of evidence should be crafted together in order to construct a coherent narrative. However, such an approach leaves little space for the

contestation that marks memories of out-of-home care. Here the idea of contrapuntal history informed our thinking.²⁵ The larger "truth" about an individual orphanage flows from the range of available perspectives that we tried to capture by presenting many voices: the good, the bad, the personal, and the institutional. Where these contributions contradicted each other we stepped back and allowed the various voices to speak, an approach which allowed us to build strong collaborative relationships across our range of stakeholders. Steven Noll has argued that "history, memory, remembrance and function stand side by side" in the telling of institutional history.²⁶ The contrapuntal approach allows all of these narrative threads to be visible, while admitting that they may never be reconciled.²⁷

Conflicting Hopes and Expectations

Each of our stakeholder groups brings different hopes and expectations to the site. Individual Care Leavers experienced "care" in different ways and the site needs to honor and reflect that diversity. Former care providers bring distinctive perspectives as well and the project needs their collaboration if it is to achieve its goal of making records more accessible. An organization's past does not reflect its present attitudes or practices, and often the degree of internal historical knowledge is limited. The archival records that survive commonly reflect a single viewpoint, usually adulatory, whereas the experiences of Care Leavers recounted to government inquiries and oral history programs tend to emphasize the negative impact of their institutionalization. The case records to which they have access further complicate the situation. Written from the point of view of someone in authority, and often focused on the negative, they distort life as those who lived it remember it.²⁸ In order to navigate this contested domain, state-based historians built strong collaborative relationships both with record holders,

many of who are former care providers, and Care Leavers, both individually and through their representative organizations.

A key task for the Find & Connect web resource was to develop archival listings of surviving records, accompanied by details of the records holder and conditions of access. The task was made more complex by the fact that the records are scattered and have rarely been subject to professional or consistent archiving. The records of an institution can be divided between private and public repositories, and exist under government and nongovernment control. In addition, the records relating to an individual resident are likely to extend well beyond whatever file was held in their name. The quality of government records varies between jurisdictions, with the states that have had inquiries and/or redress schemes (Queensland, South Australia, Western Australia and Tasmania), having a clearer sense of their holdings and better-established access pathways. The two largest states (New South Wales and Victoria) continue to struggle with the magnitude of their records holdings, many of which remain inaccessible to care leavers, although the recent establishment of a Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse with strong investigatory powers has led to some improvement in these areas. In the two territories (Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory) the situation is made more complex by the fact that, in the absence of substantial institutions for much of their history, most children were placed outside the jurisdiction, and hence are even more likely to have scattered records and to find it difficult to establish the process by which they were moved across state lines.

The archival resources held in the nongovernment sector can be more problematic, often relying on an enthusiastic volunteer for their survival, organization, and access. Although in most states nongovernment organizations provided the bulk of

the care, the quality of the material that has been preserved varies, and much of the contextual information a care leaver requires will need to be found elsewhere. Some of these institutional records have found their way into public repositories, but others remain in the custody of organizations strapped for space and resources. A major component of the Find & Connect Project is to work with such records holders in order to improve the ordering and accessibility of their collections and to alert them to other locations in which relevant records may be found. Newspaper reports, local histories, memoirs, and autobiographies all have the potential to enrich a Care Leaver's knowledge about the past, as do the submissions to past inquiries and the oral histories recorded through the National Library project. Linking all of these resources to organizational entries on the web resource extends the knowledge of both the Care Leaver and the records holder.

Working with Care Leavers

There are a range of organizations representing and providing support to Forgotten Australians and Former Child Migrants—national, state, and international organizations, as well as those with a more specific agenda, such as associations for former residents of a particular institution. These organizations, big and small, have played an important role both in campaigning for the Senate inquiries and in shaping the federal government's policy response to their reports. For many of these organizations, history and heritage are almost as important as their advocacy and support work. Like many similar groups, "rehabilitating their past is part and parcel of reaffirming their identity."²⁹ There are tensions between and within the various organizations that support Forgotten Australians and Former Child Migrants and the federal government's determination to see them as one "community," with one

allocation of funding, has often served to highlight the differences between the two groups, rather than the many experiences and characteristics that they do share.

In some ways, the politics and contestation in this space mirrors the inherent tensions between personal and collective memory. The concept of "collective memory" was discussed in the first half of the twentieth century,³⁰ but "memory studies" as a discipline did not emerge until the 1980s. Its arrival coincided with the rise of new forms of history, as a result of the identity politics of previous decades.³¹ The discourse of memory studies explores the uneasy if not contradictory relationships between "memory" and "history."³² In constructing the collective identity that has been central to their campaign for recognition and justice, Care Leavers have had to develop a narrative of the past that is based in history but does not transgress or devalue individual memories. Joy Damousi has observed that "for many marginalized groups, grief and injury have become the 'very condition' of their politics."³³ For Care Leaver organizations a victim/survivor identity provides the best model for conceptualizing their lived experience, but not all Care Leavers see themselves in this way.³⁴ The challenge for Find & Connect is to construct a historical fabric that is consonant with the growing collective memory but not captive to it, pointing users both to the many sources which validate experiences of abuse in care and to those which focus on less negative elements.

The delicate nature of this process was particularly apparent when state-based historians were working with individual Care Leavers. The web resource invites questions and feedback, and over six hundred people chose to respond in its first six months of operation. Care Leavers formed the largest single group of respondents. The fact that people disagreed with our description of an institution was both challenging and enriching. For the most part, however, it was not a disagreement with the

information presented on Find & Connect, but rather a lack of information, that brought about the contact. In such circumstances we were sometimes able to engage the respondents as co-researchers, contributing what they know to the building of the resource. Care Leavers want to tell their stories and they want to be believed. By engaging them in the process of constructing the web resource we were able to both benefit from the memories they brought, and help them place those experiences into a broader historical context. An example of this approach can be seen in the entry for Hopewood, New South Wales, a unique institution established by Leslie Owen Bailey in 1944 who took responsibility for a group of children of single mothers in order to test his theories of child rearing. The subject of much positive publicity at the time, the legacy of this institution is mixed, with some former residents retaining and celebrating the sense of family that they felt the institution had provided, whereas others bore witness to horrifying examples of abuse. By practicing a shared, but not completely ceded, authority, the state-based historian has been able to produce a multilayered entry which invites users to explore and develop their own conclusions rather than have a definitive interpretation imposed upon them.³⁵

Implications for Historians

The historians working on the Find & Connect project are, by definition, multi-taskers. As well as researching, writing and editing the web resource, they are engaged in stakeholder relations on multiple fronts, often with people with a heavy investment in the final product. They are at the very forefront of the task of making history, in Damousi's words, "messy and emotional."³⁶ But with that challenge comes risk, for each reacted to the challenges they encountered and the distressing stories they heard or read not only as historians but as human beings with their own emotional baggage and

reasons for working in this area. Canadian historian Michael Marrus writes of responding to the history of the Holocaust as an historian but also "as Canadian, as Jew, as spouse, as father."³⁷ Our historians too react as professionals, as parents, as children, as spouses, and as people with a social conscience and an idealistic desire to change the world. There is a need, however, to step away and to find a place beyond all these reactions and to try, as an historian, to "get it right."

"Getting it right" is not about finding the truth because the truth is a different story for everyone, and even more so for each person who has been part of the history of child welfare in Australia. It is about finding a way to research and write accessible history within all the constraints of a national, time limited, digitally based project. It is about finding the "right" voice to present history from multiple viewpoints in a way that can be easily understood and accepted by stakeholders but can also be something that as historians we can feel comfortable putting our names to. This process does not come without cost. Historians have been slow to address the risk of secondary or vicarious trauma. For too long Jo Stanley's plea to fellow oral historians to discuss "aftercare for the bruised one who has heard histories that were buried for good reason, who wants to help their interviewee cope with the uncovered hurt and who wants to cope with their own despair or rage about the injustice they have heard" was cited but ignored, or buried by claims that it was both unhelpful and unprofessional to become emotionally involved.³⁸

However, more recently it has been recognized that the impact of working in this area is cumulative; views can become skewed and sensitivities heightened. There is a need to admit these realities, take time out to recuperate, and seek support from colleagues or external professionals where necessary. The recent NLA oral history projects built debriefing and access to counseling into the project plans. Find & Connect,

where isolated state-based historians were exposed to potentially distressing material over a three-year period rather than a series of one-off interviews, provided such services where necessary. Primarily, however, it focused on developing a virtual peer-based network in which vulnerabilities could be shared and participants could support each other by discussing techniques for coping with stress and ways in which feelings could be mobilized to bring about change, techniques shown in the psychological literature to minimize the risk of long term damage from vicarious trauma.³⁹

Conclusion

John Tosh and Ludmilla Jordanova have independently asserted that public history is at its best when it eschews the comfortable, retaining its critical edge and upsetting the assumptions of popular memory.⁴⁰ Such assertions provide an apt categorization for the Find & Connect project. Operating on the principle of shared authority in a highly contested terrain, it is an experiment in publicly funded digital history. This article has sought to explore the methodological and academic challenges of working this space, and to acknowledge the impact on the historians who are undertaking this role.

Such concerns, however, are secondary to the project's main purpose. Forgotten Australians and Former Child Migrants live with the aftermath of their childhood experiences. The search for answers is an integral part of who they are. The Find & Connect project is playing a key role in articulating the ways in which the history of child welfare in Australia will be remembered and interpreted. If this task is done well, the act of remembering and reinterpreting this history may bring some closure for children of the past and influence future policy and practice for children in care today.

Shurlee Swain is professor of humanities at Australian Catholic University and the historian chief investigator on the Find & Connect web resource project. Her research has informed recent inquiries into Australia's history of forced adoption and abuse of children in care.

The author wishes to acknowledge the contribution of the Find & Connect state-based historians who worked collaboratively to develop the conference presentation on which this paper is based: Lee Butterworth, Caroline Evans, Rosemary Frances, Gary George, Karen George, Sarah Green, Megg Kelham, Naomi Parry and Debra Rosser.

¹ Jeffrey K. Olick, *The Politics of Regret: On Collective Memory and Historical Responsibility* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 12.

² Australian Government, Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, *Apology to the Forgotten Australians and Former Child Migrants*, <http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/our-responsibilities/families-and-children/programs-services/apology-to-the-forgotten-australians-and-former-child-migrants>, (accessed October 12, 2012).

³ Australian Government, *Apology to Australia's Indigenous Peoples*, <http://australia.gov.au/about-australia/our-country/our-people/apology-to-australias-indigenous-peoples> (accessed October 12, 2012).

⁴ Australian Senate Community Affairs References Committee, *Forgotten Australians: A Report on Australians who experienced institutional or out-of-home care as children* (Canberra: Senate Printing Unit, 2004); *Lost Innocents: Righting the record report on*

child migration (Canberra: Senate Printing Unit, 2001). Also available at http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Community_Affairs/Completed_inquiries/2004-07/inst_care/index, and http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Community_Affairs/Completed_inquiries/1999-02/child_migrat/index (accessed September 2, 2014).

The reluctance of the Liberal Government which was in power until 2007 to fully implement the recommendations of the reports led to a third inquiry: Senate Community Affairs References Committee, *Lost Innocents and Forgotten Australians revisited: Report on the progress with the implementation of the recommendations of the Lost Innocents and Forgotten Australians reports* (Canberra: Senate Printing Unit, 2009). Also available at, <http://www.forgottenaustralians.com/pdf/FARvisitedreport.pdf>

⁵ National Museum of Australia, *Inside—Life in Children's Homes and Institutions*, http://www.nma.gov.au/exhibitions/inside_life_in_childrens_homes_and_institutions/home (accessed October 12, 2012). For a reflection from the curator responsible for this exhibition see: Adele Chynoweth, "'Let our histories be visible': Human Rights Museology and the National Museum of Australia's Inside: Life in Children's Homes and Institutions," *reCollections* 7, no. 1, http://recollections.nma.gov.au/issues/volume_7_number_1/commentary/let_our_histories_be_visible

⁶ National Library of Australia, *Forgotten Australians and Former Child Migrants Oral History Project* website, <http://www.nla.gov.au/oral-history/forgotten-australians-and-former-child-migrants-oral-history-project> (October 12, 2012). Conditions of access to the collection vary in accordance with the wishes of the interviewees. The methodology underlying this oral history project is explained in Joanna Sassoon, "'Memory for justice'

or 'justice for memories': Remembering forgotten Australians and former child migrants," *Archifacts* (October 2010), 25-34.

⁷ The term Care Leaver is widely used in both Australia and the United Kingdom as a neutral descriptor that encompasses the wide range of people who spent time in care as children and have since left care. For a definition see:

<http://www.careleavers.com/careleaver> (May 5, 2014).

⁸ Australian Government, Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, *Find and Connect Services and Projects* website,

<http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/our-responsibilities/families-and-children/programs-services/find-and-connect-services-and-projects> (October 12, 2012).

⁹ Research Archivists at the eSRC are expected to draw on their experiences as members of project teams to address research questions and produce research outputs (conference papers, journal articles, etc.) in the areas of archival science, cultural informatics and related domains.

¹⁰ Encompass Family and Community Pty Ltd, *Find and Connect Service Scoping Study*,

(Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia, 2010), 32. Also available at,

http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/find_connect_scoping_study.pdf

¹¹ For an explanation of how the concept of the Knowledge Diamond was applied in relation to this project see Cathy Humphreys and Margaret Kertesz, "'Putting the Heart Back into the Record': Personal Records to Support Young People in Care," *Adoption and Fostering* 36, no. 1 (2012): 30-2.

¹² The findings of the research project underlying the Pathways web resource are reported in a series of articles in *Archives and Manuscripts* 40, no.1 (2012).

¹³ For the concept of shared authority see Michael Frisch, *A Shared Authority: Essays on the Craft and Meaning of Oral and Public History* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990), and Katharine T. Corbett and Howard S. Miller, "A Shared Inquiry into Shared Inquiry," *The Public Historian* 28, no. 1 (2006): 20.

¹⁴ The Find & Connect homepage can be found at: <http://www.findandconnect.gov.au/>. In addition to the historical information which provides the subject matter of this article the web resource also provides information about archival holdings, links to support services, assistance for records holders and a guide which prepares Care Leavers for the experience of accessing records.

¹⁵ Deborah Lines Andersen, "Defining Digital History," *Journal of the Association for History and Computing* 5, no. 1, 2002, <http://hdl.handle.net/2027/spo.3310410.0005.103> (accessed October 18, 2012).

¹⁶ The accessibility testing, conducted by an independent consultant reporting direct to the funding body, has resulted in a dramatic redesign of the site that went live in 2013. The key feature of this redesign is a simplified entry point that directs users quickly to the part of the site that responds to their initial query.

¹⁷ Pirra Girls" Home: <http://www.findandconnect.gov.au/ref/vic/biogs/E000193b.htm> (accessed May 5, 2014).

¹⁸ Pre-existing guides existed in New South Wales (Connecting Kin, a print only document developed by the then Department of Community Services), Queensland (Missing Pieces, an online guide developed by the Department of Families), Victoria (James Jenkinson, *Guide to Out-of-Home Care Services*, an unpublished print only document developed for the Department of Community Services) and Western Australia (Information Services, Department for Community Development, *Signposts: A Guide for*

Children and Young People in Care in WA from 1920, an online guide developed by the Department for Community Development). For South Australia the web resource drew upon *Finding your own way*, Nunkuwarrin Yunti of South Australia Inc., 2005, a print and online guide prepared by Karen George for Link-up to assist in reuniting Indigenous families. While no documentary sources existed in Tasmania, the Northern Territory or the Australian Capital Territory guides prepared by religious organizations in response to the recommendations of the *Bringing Them Home* inquiry provided basic information.

¹⁹ For a discussion of this concept, see Tim Grove, "History Bytes: Grappling with the Concept of Radical Trust," *History News*, Spring 2010: pp 5-6 (Online). Available: <http://aashcommunity.org/historynews/files/2010/07/spring2010-history-bytes.pdf> [accessed 18 October 2012] and James B. Gardner, "Trust, Risk and Public History: A View from the United States," *Public History Review* 17: 52-61.

²⁰ This practice is more fully explored in Nick Poyntz, "New Worlds for Old," *History Today* 60, no. 11 (November 2010): 52.

²¹ Trove is a digital gateway established by the National Library of Australia to provide access to Australian and online resources. Trove Digitised Newspapers and More: <http://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper> [accessed October 18, 2012].

²² Pandora, established by the National Library of Australia, is a digital archive of historic online publications relating to Australia and Australians. Pandora: Australia's Web Archive: <http://pandora.nla.gov.au/> (accessed October 18, 2012).

²³ For a fuller discussion of the principles underlying the web resource see: Gavan J. McCarthy and Joanne Evans, "Principles for Archival Information Services in the Public Domain," *Archives and Manuscripts* 40, no. 1 (April: 2012): 54-67.

²⁴ Frank Golding, Cate O'Neill, and Natasha Story, "Improving Access to Victoria's Historical Child Welfare Records," *Provenance: The Journal of the Public Record Office Victoria* 12 (2013),

<http://prov.vic.gov.au/publications/provenance/provenance2013/child-welfare-records> (accessed May 5, 2014).

²⁵ Charles Maier, "Overcoming the Past? Narrative and Negotiation, Remembering and Reparation: Issues at the Interface of History and the Law," in *Politics and the Past: On Repairing Historical Injustices*, ed. John Torpey (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2003), 301.

²⁶ Stephen Noll, "The Public Face of Southern Institutes for the 'Feeble Minded'," *The Public Historian* 27, no. 2 (Spring2005): 37.

²⁷ An example of such a multilayered account can be found at:

<http://www.findandconnect.gov.au/ref/tas/biogs/TE00038b.htm#tab5>. This account of the history of Weeroona Girls' Training Centre was initially informed by official publications, but developed in response to feedback from both former staff and former residents to produce an account that reflects, but does not resolve, the institution's very troubled history.

²⁸ For a fuller explanation of the importance of records to Care Leavers and the ways in which existing records fail to reflect their lived experience see Shurlee Swain and Nell Musgrove, "We are the Stories We Tell About Ourselves: Child Welfare Records and the Construction of Identity among Australians who, as Children, Experienced Out-of-home Care," *Archives and Manuscripts* 40, no. 1 (April: 2012): 4-14.

²⁹ Pierre Nora, quoted in Mary Stevens, "Public Policy and the Public Historian: The Changing Place of Historians in Public Life in France and the UK," *The Public Historian* 32, no. 2 (May 2010): 135.

³⁰ See for example Maurice Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992).

³¹ John Gillis, "Memory and Identity: The History of a Relationship," in *Commemorations: The Politics of National Identity*, ed. John Gillis (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 3-24.

³² For an overview see: Kerwin Lee Klein, "On the Emergence of *Memory* in Historical Discourse," *Representations* 69 (Winter 2000): 127-150.

³³ Joy Damousi, "History Matters: The Politics of Grief and Injury in Australian History," *Australian Historical Studies* 33, no. 118 (March 2002): 102.

³⁴ A book published in 2009 based on oral history interviews demonstrates the wide range of experiences of a group of people who grew up in Catholic Homes in Victoria, and their different responses to the emerging public discourse about "care" in Australia. See Suellen Murray, John Murphy, Elizabeth Branigan, and Jenny Malone, *After the Orphanage: Life Beyond the Children's Home* (Sydney: UNSW Press, 2009).

³⁵ The Hopewood entry can be found at:

<http://www.findandconnect.gov.au/ref/nsw/biogs/NE00330b.htm>

³⁶ Damousi, "History Matters," 112.

³⁷ Michael R. Marrus, "Getting It Right," *The Reference Librarian* 29, nos. 61-62, (1998): 148-9.

³⁸ Jo Stanley, "Letters," *Oral History* 24, no. 2 (Autumn 1996): 25; Nigel Hunt, *Memory, War and Trauma* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 48; David W. Jones,

"Distressing Histories and Unhappy Interviewing," *Oral History Review* 26, no. 2 (Summer/Fall, 1998), 44.

³⁹ Holly Bell, "Strengths and Secondary Trauma in Family Violence Work," *Social Work* 48, no. 4 (October 2003): 520; Keren Cohen and Paula Collens, "The Impact of Trauma Work on Trauma Workers: A Metasynthesis on Vicarious Trauma and Vicarious Posttraumatic Growth" *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy* 5, no. 6 (November 2013), 572;

⁴⁰ John Tosh, *Why History Matters* (Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 922-4, 100; Ludmilla Jordanova, *History in Practice*, 2nd ed. (London: Hodder Arnold, 2006), 149.