MAKING THE NEW MUSEOLOGY WORK:

A Critical Review of Exhibition Development
at the Australian Museum, Sydney

by

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ABSTRACT

Australian museums, encouraged to promote the value of cultural diversity by Australian government multiculturalism policies and the many critics calling for change in museums, are re-evaluating many of their cultural programs and introducing new initiatives. They are implementing community participation schemes, improving access to their collections and programs and becoming more responsive to the needs, demands and desires of their constituencies. But are these new programs and changes in museums really meeting the lofty objectives of fostering equality and promoting the benefits of diversity? This thesis will analyse the impact and potential long-term effects of community-oriented museum programs and access strategies by focusing on the interaction between policy and practice in exhibition development at the Australian Museum, a large museum in Sydney devoted to the natural environment and cultural heritage of Australia. A case study of two cultural exhibitions and their development reveals the problematic nature of museum and "community" relationships and the wide gulf that exists between exhibition objectives and their final outcome.
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Introduction

Museums are increasingly seen as institutions able to communicate powerful social and political messages. With equal opportunities an over-arching issue in many countries (Pearce 1993:25), museums as public institutions are encouraged to help eliminate social, economic and political injustices in the societies that they represent and serve (Garfield 1989). Theorists of what has been labelled The New Museology (Stam 1993) have been particularly vocal in challenging traditional museum practices they feel entrench the status quo of unequal social relations. The New Museology literature calls for change in museums, wanting them to be less elitist and more accessible and relevant to the general public. Emphasizing the "extraordinary power of the museum experience to frame and shape thinking on the major concerns of the day" (Bloom 1993:48), these critics want museums to abandon their "privileged interpretation of knowledge" (Shelton 1992:25), and share their power with marginalised, under-represented and disadvantaged people (Weil 1990:55).

According to New Museology theorists, information is the basic museum resource to be shared with the public (Stam 1993:280). Museums apply this concept using a framework of "access" to make information more available. Access—to collections, knowledge, archives, programs, interpretations, exhibition-making, exhibition presentation and so forth—is, at present, the most popular strategy chosen by museums to promote
diversity and meet the demands of empowerment. In Australia, calls for public institutions to promote cultural diversity, and government initiatives to better understand and manage Australia's diverse population\(^3\) have echoed and reinforced the New Museology critiques and demands for access. As a result, many Australian museums are implementing community participation schemes, improving access to their collections and programs and becoming more responsive to the needs, demands and desires of their constituencies\(^4\).

But are these new programs and changes in museums really meeting the lofty objectives of fostering equality and promoting the benefits of diversity? Many Australian museums have thrown themselves enthusiastically—if often uncritically—into new programs, exhibitions and events which appear to answer to the many and varied criticisms of museum values, meanings, interpretations, representations and presentations. Neither the government, instructing museums to reflect Australia's total cultural diversity (DASET \^{1990}:5), nor the New Museologists, urging museums to concentrate on issues of meaning and purpose (Vergo \^{1989}:3; Weil \^{1990}:46), offer any direction for change or practical advice on how to meet their criticisms.

Theorists can afford to be critical and demand overnight change, but museums run the risk of putting all their resources into short-term programs which may not stand up to critical analysis or public review. There has been very little analysis of the concept of access in museums (Anderson \^{1992}:6): to whom
is access granted, for what reasons, with what conditions attached and with what results. Another disturbing trend is the seemingly ubiquitous tendency to attempt to make supposedly passive museum audiences active by redefining them as "communities" (see Karp 1992:12). Many Australian museums now see their constituencies not as individuals but as members of groups, usually defined by ethnicity, gender or sexual preference. Often, their attempts to cater to these groups are as much motivated by economic factors as by political and social ideals. With some exceptions, these "communities" do not demand or even request access to museums or exhibition development, although many are happy to become involved once invited.

This thesis will analyse the impact and potential long-term effects of community-oriented museum programs and access strategies by focusing on the interaction between policy and practice at the Australian Museum, a large museum in Sydney devoted to the natural environment and cultural heritage of Australia. Bolstered by a good background knowledge of the Museum and it's programs from the three and a half years I worked in the anthropology division, I began research on this thesis in July 1993. For 11 months, I have interviewed numerous staff members, volunteered on two exhibition project teams and observed, from the "inside", the recent cultural initiatives of the Museum. This thesis will explore as a "case study" the development of two cultural exhibitions: a semi-permanent gallery Our Place: Australian People, Australian Identity
featuring computer interactives, audio-visuals, performances and a community exhibition area; and Art of the Himalayas: Treasures from Nepal and Tibet an international touring "art" exhibition.

Although very different in content and style, these exhibitions both involved members of the general public in their development and implementation. With its Community Access Program, Our Place is an attempt to create a new and innovative, more collaborative approach to exhibitions. Art of the Himalayas, following a series of similar temporary exhibitions, represents a more conventional and tested approach to "community involvement" in exhibition development. These exhibitions, both opened in 1994, are worth considering in some detail as they illustrate two very different "community access" strategies of the Australian Museum. Together they reflect the Museum's general response to New Museology critics and government multicultural directives.

This thesis will look at how the Australian Museum arrived at these exhibitions by considering it's history, the Australian multiculturalism debate, the general criticisms of museums in the New Museology literature and how the Museum has responded to these pressures. I will detail the process of exhibition development for Our Place and Art of the Himalayas as they happened inside the Museum, and evaluate the end products as an "outsider" visiting each exhibition.

These exhibitions represent a fundamental problem faced by many museums that museum exhibitions rarely completely meet the
(often) idealistic objectives set for them at their inception. In the case of these two exhibitions, the community participation programs and access strategies used in their development only partially work towards the empowerment of disadvantaged and marginalised peoples and foster tolerance and the benefits of diversity. While it may seem self-apparent to a museum "insider" that exhibitions combine what is desired with what is practical, the general museum-going public, and especially "outsiders" involved in exhibition development, are unaware of this compromise. A critical review of exhibition development, looking at both the process and product, is essential to understanding why this gap between policy and practice is so wide in museums and what can be done to narrow it.

A brief history of the Australian Museum

The Australian Museum was established by the British colony of New South Wales in 1827 as a depot for newly discovered scientific specimens just as the real inland exploration of the Australian continent was beginning. It enjoys the distinction of being one of the oldest museums in Australia, as well as an early scholarly meeting place "in a land which possessed no university, no scientific academy and no valuable public library of scientific works" (Blainey 1979:i). The Australian Museum was officially named in 1836 and placed under the management of Trustees (Strahan 1979:15). The first permanent building, built
in 1846 on its present site, opened its public galleries in 1852 (ibid:20). By mid-century, the Australian Museum had developed into a professional institution devoted to zoology, geology and anthropology with some international reputation for research in these areas (Strahan 1979:37). By 1920, what began as a colonial scientific depot had become a respected natural history museum specializing in the acquisition, research and public presentation of the natural world and of anthropological artifacts from Australia and the Pacific.

Over the next thirty years from the 1920s until the mid-1950s, the Museum "became caught in an eddy of popularization" (Strahan 1979:63), concerned with the views of the general public. Museum personnel remained in quarrelsome limbo over whether the Museum should be a popular 'show' place, ie. "Americanised", or a serious institution for scientific research. In July, 1926, this inner turmoil was summed up in the Daily Telegraph, which noted:

The modernists have won a partial victory. But they have won it at a cost. Some complain that the institution has been 'Americanised'. Others are certain that it has not been Americanised enough (quoted in Strahan 1979:68).

During this period, however, the early foundations were established for many future public programs that are now a significant part of the Museum's activities and services. For example, the publication which would eventually become the popular Australian Natural History Magazine was established and public lectures increased in number and frequency.
Another important development was a Public Service Board inspection of the Museum in 1929, after which Museum staff became members of the government public service for the first time (Strahan 1979:68-70). As museums are radically different from government departments this has, at times, been a difficult alliance. Indeed, in this first Public Service inspection, Strahan notes that "the inspectors displayed a less than adequate understanding of the nature and function of the activities of the Museum" (1979:70). Inclusion in the public service has, however, had far reaching implications in staffing, funding and the Museum's response to government policies and programs. Equally, the popular public programs introduced during this "stagnant" time, have become integral to the internal structuring of the Museum and its staff.

The twenty years from 1954 to 1975 saw the Australian Museum concentrating on upgrading the quality of its scientific information, the qualifications of its curatorial personnel, and its role as a scientific institution. With a new wing, a dynamic exhibitions policy and a considerable staff increase, the Museum "became a significant scientific institution of undeniable professional standard" (Strahan 1979:75). Through the 1970s, the curatorial staff became estranged from public activities, spending more time on research, grant applications and environmental impact projects. Staff growth from 45 in 1954 to 150 in 1976 was largely in exhibitions, attendants, security and cleaning, education, scientific support, administrative and
By 1975, the Australian Museum was an established scientific body concerned with communicating its expertise on various levels to the public. Several significant initiatives during this period continue to affect the Museum today: the emphasis on changing and updating exhibitions and the introduction of quality temporary exhibitions; the separation of research activities from public programs; and increased personnel in non-scientific sections responsible for public programs.

The Museum's current director, Dr. Des Griffin, was appointed in 1976 and three years later wrote:

Even in bad times, an entrepreneurial director with the support of the trust achieves results: a director prepared to accept the status quo does not, whatever the quality of the trust (1979:102).

He displayed an overriding concern for public support of the Museum and the Museum's image in the wider community (ibid). Even then, Griffin felt the Museum needed more diverse programs to cater to people with different attitudes, ethnic backgrounds and ages. "Attempts to meet these various requirements", he wrote, "will be a principle concern of the Australian Museum over the next few years" (Griffin 1979:104).

Beginning with the 1976 ten year Corporate Plan, and continuing until the present, the Museum's focus has been on the public. As stated in the Corporate Plan's 1979 review:

If the Museum is to succeed in the next ten years everyone associated with it will need to devote themselves to the task...community support must be in
the forefront of the mind and actions of everyone every day (Annual Report 1979/80:8).

"Community support" has given way, in more recent years, to community participation and access strategies. The nature of most programs which attempt to elicit this cultural involvement has posed a number of different challenges for the Museum\(^5\). And as Sydney has continued to grow and develop into a metropolitan region of great size and diversity, the Australian Museum's audience is now almost undefinable in its diversity, and the complexity of its so-called "communities". How to gain the support of such a diverse constituency—as audiences, participants and equal partners—is a major on-going concern and challenge facing the Museum today.

Australian Cultural Diversity

After displacing much of the Aboriginal population, the Australian colonies developed during the 19th century as white settler societies. Following Federation in 1901, the Immigration Restriction Act of 1901 and the 1925 Immigration Act, unofficially unknown as the "White Australia Policy", enforced the government's desire to keep Australia a British nation. In the post-war period from 1945, a 'populate or perish' mentality (Castles 1992:8; Grimes 1992:114) brought, rather unintentionally, great ethnic diversity to Australia (Castles 1992:12). With the United Kingdom only able to supply around 30% of Australia's labor needs (Grimes 1992:115), the majority of "New Australians" in the 1950s and 1960s came from Mediterranean
countries, especially Italy, Greece, Malta, Egypt and Yugoslavia. These migrants, largely from rural peasant backgrounds, created a new unskilled working class in metropolitan areas (ibid.). They were generally treated as second class citizens and expected to assimilate into Anglo-Australian culture.

By the 1970s, it was apparent that new immigrants were not necessarily entering into mainstream society. Racially-based discriminatory immigration policies were abolished in 1972, opening the country to immigrants from the Middle East, South East Asia, the Indian subcontinent, and South and Central America (Collins and Henry 1993:10). Following the Canadian lead, a points system was also introduced to link immigration to the increasing need in Australia for skilled and professional labour (Collins and Henry 1993:10; Castles 1992:9).

However, the unintentional shift from a monocultural Anglo-Australia to one of great diversity following post-war immigration meant that Australia was not only unprepared for the special needs of immigrants, but also that Australians themselves were not prepared to accept many of the differences newcomers brought with them. After decades of exclusion, these new migrants and those to follow "entered a society with a clear and persistent history of racism and xenophobia" (ibid.)^10.

The 1991 National Inquiry into Racist Violence in Australia reported that racist violence and harassment was a fact of life for many Aboriginal and immigrant people^11. The 1992 ABC
television documentary *Cop It Sweet*, for example, documented appalling police racism and violence toward Aboriginal people in the inner-Sydney suburb of Redfern (Collins 1993:3). A 1981 opinion poll reported that 45% of Australians felt immigration levels were too high, while 48% of Australians thought Asian immigration levels specifically were too high (Grimes 1992:118). Subsequently an acrimonious debate in the media over the supposedly negative effects of Asian immigration soon became destructive with widespread fear of "Asianisation" and "Asians Out!" and "Stop the Asian Invasion!" slogans sprayed around Sydney\textsuperscript{12}. Most Asian immigrants now live in concentrated areas of high unemployment, especially in Sydney's west and inner-western suburbs (Grimes 1992:120), preferring to stay close together to provide support in an atmosphere of prejudice and xenophobia (Collins 1993:12). Ironically, the 1991 National Inquiry stressed that this racism co-existed with tolerance and compassion, was not as severe as in most other countries, and did not have widespread popular or public support (Collins and Henry 1993:16).

Today, Australia is often described as a classic immigrant society because its planned program of mass immigration since 1945 has brought an estimated 5 million settlers from almost 200 countries (Castles 1992:8). Second only to Israel as a destination for international migrants (Grimes 1992:123), Australia is one of only five countries of large-scale permanent immigration in the western world\textsuperscript{13} (Collins and Henry 1993:1).
In 1980, for example, 21.6% of Australians were first generation immigrants\(^4\) (Collins 1993:1), and in the first six months of 1990, Australia granted citizenship to 130,312 persons of 180 different nationalities (Nedeljkovic 1992:30).

**Government Policies to Manage Cultural Diversity**

By the 1970s, migrant groups and their activities were beginning to be "an integral part of the texture of contemporary Australian life" (Zubrzycki 1984:41). Yet, the legacy of assimilation policies meant that many of these groups had become socially and economically disadvantaged. In an attempt to address this problem, Australia adopted a multiculturalism policy modeled on the Canadian multiculturalism counterpart in 1973 (Collins 1993:13). Over 20 years and 4 governments, the model of multiculturalism has emerged as a way of shaping social policy and national identity in an increasingly diverse society (Castles 1992:7). Despite remaining a bi-partisan political issue in Australian federal politics (Collins 1993:9)\(^5\), the definition and implementation of multiculturalism policies has changed radically over that time.

In 1973, Al Grassby, then Minister for Immigration, officially recognized the importance of immigrants' cultural heritage and traditions for the first time (Collins 1993:13). The conservative Liberal Party government (1975-1983) then adopted a multiculturalism policy in an attempt to win the support of ethnic leaders and introduced a number of special
services (Castles 1992:13). Their definition of multiculturalism emphasized cultural pluralism and the role of ethnic organizations, removing immigrant welfare from the mainstream social system (Castles 1992:14). During the Asian immigration debates of the mid-1980s, the Hawke and Keating Labor government (1983-1992) briefly abolished several of these special services, although they were soon reinstated (Castles 1992:14; Collins 1993:14).

In July 1989, the same government again redefined the multiculturalism policy. The major policy document, National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia...Sharing our Future, represented a shift away from the earlier Liberal government's emphasis on ethnic organizations, and expressed:

...the goals, priorities and strategies that the Government considers necessary in order to promote respect for individual identity, to ensure social cohesion and to enhance social justice (OMA 1989).

Building on eight goals of equity and access for all Australians (OMA 1989:1), the National Agenda emphasized the cultural, social and economic rights of all citizens in a democratic state rather than cultural pluralism and minority rights (Castles 1992:15). It hoped to achieve this by attempting to "modify Australia's institutional structures" to serve the community as a whole (OMA 1989:1).

The National Agenda defines multiculturalism policies as those "which will help to better manage diversity in the interests of social cohesion and justice and harness the skills, education and entrepreneurial ability of all Australians for the
national good" (OMA 1989:1). It also defines multiculturalism as a description of a culturally diverse society. Its current implementation is, therefore, ambiguous and contradictory. The word "multicultural", describing programs and events celebrating cultural diversity or signifying membership in an "ethnic" community, implies a promotion of cultural pluralism. This is often confused with "multiculturalism" which describes a government policy dealing with equity and access for all citizens. Most of the Museum staff interviewed did not understand this distinction in meaning between the two terms. This contradiction of meaning is further muddied by a government which supports "multicultural" programs while backing its "multiculturalism" policy. Museums and other public cultural institutions, urged to become more "multicultural" by the government's "multiculturalism" policy, may soon find themselves caught in the cross-fire of debates over this tension between national unity and cultural diversity.

New Museology and Multiculturalism at the Australian Museum

The Federal government's A Plan for Cultural Institutions to Reflect Australia's Cultural Diversity issued in 1991 charged that museums, galleries and libraries, while "constituting an form of national consciousness", did not "represent the explosion of cultural diversity in the Australian population" (DASETT 1991:5). This was further reinforced on a local level by
the New South Wales Charter for a Culturally Diverse Society in February 1993, which held that "all NSW public institutions should recognize the linguistic and cultural assets in the NSW population as a valuable resource and utilize and promote this resource". Traditionally very much a part of the Anglo cultural establishment, the Australian Museum has responded with a review of its policies and practices regarding multicultural issues.

These directives have been accompanied by severe Public Service funding cuts caused by government recession policies. Increased self-funding, cost recovery and commercialisation projects (eg. admission charges introduced in February 1992, scientific consulting, corporate sponsorship and venue rental) have therefore become necessary. These new financial pressures, forcing the Museum to compete on the consumer market, run contrary to its traditional "public" functions, still mandated by the minimal government funding it receives. This "commodification" bind also appears in the New Museology literature. The push for museums to be "more accountable to and reflexive of a broader segment of the public" (Gaither 1992:57) is often as much a search for "relevant", popular programs, as a responsibility to taxpayers. The Australian Museum's need to expand its visitor profile is given definition by government multiculturalism policies which specifically target under-represented groups. This simplistic 'if you represent them, they will come' attitude is accompanied by a genuine staff enthusiasm for collaborative projects inviting public participation. Recent
cultural initiatives seem, therefore, motivated by goodwill and economic necessity, by the desire to improve the Museum's services and the need to follow government orders.

After reading Deidre Stam's (1993) review of New Museology literature, it appears that, by accident or by design, most of the more dramatic changes on the policy level at the Australian Museum parallel recommendations of these writers. I have therefore organized my review of these developments under four general concepts of New Museology as defined by Stam (1993:269-275): museum missions, visitors' experiences, communication and the identity of museum constituents.

1. Museum Missions

Many current museum theorists strongly advocate a museum mission which serves "society by helping to provide the knowledge its members need to survive and progress" (MacDonald and Alsford 1991:305). This approach emphasizes how museums, through the information they present, can influence the social behaviour of individuals in the wider community. This is not a new idea. The American Museum of Natural History in New York, for example, was founded in part to "uplift and educate" the lower classes and poor immigrants who, without such socializing education, could become disruptive (Jonaitis 1988:59). Current theorists want museums to recognize the impact of the social ideas that they articulate (Karp 1992:6), and to use this to set a positive rolemodel for society (Fernandez 1991:94). The idea that museums can and should have a lasting impact on the
subsequent social behaviour of its visitors remains a pervasive, if somewhat naive, ideal for museum missions.

The Australian Museum's mission up to 1989 had been "to increase and communicate knowledge and encourage understanding of the Australian natural environment and cultural heritage" (Annual Report 1988/89). Amended to reflect a more pro-active approach as the Museum sought to become "first and foremost an educational institution" (Annual Report 1989/1990:8), the Museum's mission is now:

...to increase understanding of our natural environment and cultural heritage and to be a catalyst in changing public attitudes and actions [emphasis mine] (Annual Report 1992/93).

This accompanied a concentration on issues of popular concern such as the environment and the multicultural nature of Australian society. As stated in the 1989/90 Annual Report

The Australian Museum sees its future in being more concerned with the community, with its visitors and with the future of Australian cultural life and its natural and social environment (p.8).

A member of the Education division at the Australian Museum felt these policy changes are among the most important made by the Museum in recent years, because they lead to programs in which visitors "have to move forward, they have to take things into their experience and hopefully think differently".

2. Visitors' Experiences

A mission to change public attitudes and actions necessitates an awareness of visitors' experiences. Visitor
reactions are often surveyed to increase the educational potential of exhibitions (Screven 1993:12). Some museums take this further and attempt to establish a dialogue with their publics when interpreting exhibitions (Bott 1990:28). Steven Lavine and Ivan Karp go so far as to suggest that "few serious museum practitioners would claim that a museum could be anything but a forum" for visitor participation (1990:3). Most critics agree that the nature and quality of visitors' experience should be of central concern, and many suggest that visitors and other clients should be more important to museums than their collections (Stam 1993:273; Weil 1990:56).

The Australian Museum has certainly become increasingly concerned with the services it provides for its visitors, with a special Visitor Services section created within its Education division and increased attention paid to front-of-house staff and activities in the galleries. According to Carolyn MacLulich, now acting Head of the Education division, the expansion and support of this section reflects the Museum's commitment to public programs and to providing "a context to facilitate public access and interpretation" (1990:202-203). The Education division, employing 9% of the total Museum staff, provides training for volunteer guides, security attendants and other staff dealing with the public. The Museum has become increasingly 'client-oriented', an approach advocated by many New Museology theorists to deliver improved 'product quality' (Stam 1993:279). As stated in the Australian Museum's Statement
of Philosophy: "We intend to be market responsive without compromising the integrity of our mission".

3. Communication

Focusing on visitors' experiences incorporates a concern about the messages and information visitors receive during their time in the museum. On one level, improved communication can lead to more effective education, as museums attend to "both making information readily available and ensuring that its users have the ability to comprehend it" (MacDonald and Alsford 1991:307). This not only makes museums more accountable for messages received (Bott 1990:28), but also requires that they have a good understanding of, and are responsive to, the needs, interests, tastes and learning styles of their audiences (MacDonald and Alsford 1991:307). As a result, a whole new field of "Audience Advocacy" has arisen in the museum world to ensure audience input through market research and exhibition evaluation (Duffy 1991:31). The Australian Museum has introduced a wide-ranging and thorough program of market research and evaluation though the Community Relations and Education divisions. Exhibition subjects are often decided by public survey; exhibition concepts and display techniques are tested on focus groups; and visitors are interviewed about the success or failure of the final product. The Director has also encouraged the research staff "to be visible in the community, addressing issues of importance and interest, not just talking to their professional journals" (Griffin 1992:38).
A successful museum-audience relationship, however, requires more than popular programs and staff who are in touch with their constituency. Drawing on mass communications studies, Hooper-Greenhill suggests that museums are still largely ignorant of how their messages are interpreted (1993). Perin agrees and argues that traditional exhibition formats break down the museum-audience "communication circle" (1992:183). Visitor reaction surveys only superficially address the issue of how people decode museum messages. New Museology encourages museums to allow people to decode exhibitions actively according to their personal experience and particular history (Hooper-Greenhill 1993; Stam 1993:273) by abandoning the hierarchy of western intellectual and aesthetic values present in conventional exhibition formats (Pearce 1993:25). A relativistic approach, "in which all things are seen as equal and no firm footing of value or understanding can be established" (ibid.), dismantles museums' monopoly over the exhibited knowledge by removing the "pedagogic authority that establishes an impeccable and unquestionable expertise" (Shelton 1990:98). Ideally, this would result in an information flow between the museum and its audience.

The Australian Museum has, to some extent, adopted this approach. The decision in the 1989/1990 Annual Report to be "concerned with ideas rather than things" (p.8) somewhat simplistically implies an emphasis on information and its public dissemination over old-fashioned taxonomy. More importantly, Our
Place, the experimental new gallery on Contemporary Australia, relies heavily on a two-way communication flow between the Museum and its visitors.

4. The Identity of Museum Constituents
Writers concerned with communication issues suggest that museums should consider "representation and reception as cultural processes" (Perin 1992:183), which vary according to personal experience and history—namely race, ethnicity, gender and cultural background (Hooper-Greenhill 1993). Understanding how an audience will react to an exhibition requires an understanding of the cultural make-up of that audience. This has seen the museum audience redefined in terms of group identity. There is a growing understanding that people from different cultural backgrounds take different messages away from exhibitions and want to see different things in exhibitions.

In Australia, a profusion of culturally-specific "blockbuster" exhibitions has resulted. Museums seem to have special expectations of the "communities" represented in these exhibitions: not only will community members be more interested in coming to (and paying for) exhibitions relevant to themselves, their direct involvement as performers, guides, speakers and demonstrators will also lend a certain authenticity to the exhibition. Through this participation museums presumably (i) portray positive images of culture to the larger public, (ii) implicitly champion specific cultural interpretations as valid, and (iii) endorse the value of diversity within the wider
community (see Garfield 1989). Museums appear "open" and "accessible", providing opportunities for community participation and self-expression, and even, some would suggest, fostering social justice (Stam 1993:275).

The New Museology literature, interwoven as it is with other social and political trends in Australia, has clearly influenced programs, staffing and exhibitions at the Australian Museum. There has been a string of cultural exhibitions from 1989 involving people from various local communities. The Museum included "multicultural representation" as a Corporate Strategic Plan objective and appointed a Cultural Diversity Coordinator in 1991. "Sydney's Kids", the Museum's first "big multicultural event" in January 1992, featured over 20 local cultural communities and attracted almost 70,000 people. This month-long event was considered an "outstanding success" by the Museum (Annual Report 1991/1992:28), and encouraged further "community" oriented exhibitions, most notably the semi-permanent gallery Our Place: Australian People, Australian Identity.

Aside from Public Programs, the Anthropology division continued its involvement with the peoples represented in the Australian Museum's collections (especially Aboriginal Australia, the Pacific and South East Asia) with increasing support and local community consultation. The Pacific collections staff, for example, long associated with the Vanuatu Cultural Centre, have recently extended resources toward
establishing good relations with the Sydney Maori community. Likewise, a Balinese Gamelan orchestra has been commissioned by the Museum in collaboration with, and for the use of, the Sydney Balinese community. An Aboriginal Cultural and Heritage Officer works with two Aboriginal Collection Management Trainees to establish links with Aboriginal cultural centres, museums and keeping places throughout NSW via training programs, loans and repatriations.

While the Australian Museum's cultural Public Programs and the Anthropology division both tend to classify people in terms of "communities", their practical focus differs. The Public Programs sector provides what could be called "community participation schemes" through collaborative exhibition development, while the Anthropology division offers what could be called "community access schemes" through collaborative collection management. Obviously, these two can overlap, but overall the Museum is focusing its resources on community involvement in exhibitions and Public Programs. This means that the responsibility for establishing links between the Museum and communities is largely in the more "externally" focused divisions, such as Education, Community Relations and Exhibitions. Anthropology staff are involved when exhibitions involve the collections, or when a community member expresses an interest in being involved in the collections from their area. Long-term "internal" collection-oriented opportunities for community access to the Museum are passively accepted when they
occur, but are not actively encouraged (especially in terms of resources). Resources are directed instead to short-term, visibly public programs which involve communities only for the length of an exhibition and its development.

Case Study: Two Exhibitions

Both "New Museology" and Australian government multiculturalism policies give museums enormous power (and great responsibility) to shape public opinion. Yet, how can any single exhibition or public program effectively change the way people think and act about social, political or economic issues? Most museums do not evaluate the socio-political outcome of their exhibits because change at this level is so difficult to assess. Many changes to the exhibition development process at the Australian Museum in the last 3-5 years address idealistic objectives promoting diversity, tolerance and cultural understanding as well as more pragmatic goals of popularity and increased attendance. Multi-disciplinary exhibition project teams, a move to visual media (computer interactives, performances, an interpretive theatre program) over traditional textual information, Aboriginal and multicultural representation, evaluation strategies and more aggressive publicity and marketing all address these goals. Of these, community participation and access through Aboriginal and multicultural representation has been the most applauded, yet most ambiguous, new initiative. The following will analyse its
impact on the development of Our Place and Art of the Himalayas.

Our Place: Australian People, Australian Identity

This semi-permanent gallery celebrating Australia's cultural diversity opened on March 30, 1994. One of ten galleries in the Museum designed for a duration of eight to ten years, it required a substantial commitment of resources. It is the only gallery in the Museum with its own staff—a Program Manager to run the community exhibition area and three part-time Explainers. Our Place, replacing a more traditional anthropological gallery on Papua New Guinea, also represents a significant part of the Museum's cultural Public Programs. Along with Aboriginal Australia, Our Place will soon be one of only two cultural galleries in the Museum.

Objectives

The Museum set four main objectives for Our Place. The first, "to provide a friendly, stimulating and interactive space and to challenge visitors to explore the cultural diversity of Australia through the use of appropriate interpretive strategies" (Australian Museum 1993b:5), establishes a high level of visitor interaction. The second, "to attract visitors from cultures at present under-represented in the Museum's visitor profile by providing exciting relevant programs and inviting active contribution" (ibid.), targets potential audiences. The third objective focuses on active "communities":

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"to consult with a wide range of community groups...[and] to maintain this participation at every stage of project development and implementation", especially non-English speaking and Aboriginal groups (ibid.). With the forth objective, the Museum hopes to increase its public visibility by "participat[ing] in Sydney's cultural and community events" (Australian Museum 1993b:5).

Processes

Our Place, an extremely labour-intensive exhibition to develop, presents a subject--contemporary Australian culture and communities--outside the Museum's traditional expertise. After a long period of research and development of the concept behind the gallery, an exhibition Project Team, responsible for its complete development and implementation, was formed more than a year before the gallery opened. This included eight staff members: two from Exhibitions, two from Anthropology (including the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Officer), and one each from Education, Community Relations (the Cultural Diversity Coordinator), Information Science and Corporate Services.

A day-long Community Discussion meeting was held in 1993 a little over a year before the gallery opened. Seventy people, the vast majority associated with ethnic communities or community organizations, attended to learn about the proposed exhibition and contribute their own ideas, comments and reactions. Discussions and suggestions from this meeting were
recorded for future reference to ensure that the gallery reflected community issues and concerns (Australian Museum 1993a). Few, in any, of these participants ever became directly involved in the exhibition's development.

The Project Team incorporated two general suggestions from the Community Discussion meeting into the gallery's design. In response to the statement that:

"diversity does not mean disunity. Within the unity of 'we are all Australians' there is much diversity" (Australian Museum 1993a), a permanent exhibition focusing on shared Australian experiences takes up half of the gallery space. In the absence of a curator, or indeed any staff specializing in Australian social identity, the Project Team relied heavily on two lecturers in social history from a local university for this section. Three major themes--Land, Citizenship and Cultural Diversity--were developed using a range of media: a slide show, quotes and photographs, computer interactives and reaction areas. Each presents a range of people's experiences or feelings about the issues involved, rather than the more traditional explanatory text. Visitors are invited to have their say by filling out Reaction Cards which ask people to give their opinions on issues raised in the exhibition. These will be compiled and exhibited so that future visitors can see what others thought.

The rest of the gallery is devoted to the Community Access Program, following suggestions that the Museum should provide "access to space where communities can demonstrate and share
their own cultures and exhibit cultural treasures" (Australian Museum 1993a). A central stage, a dressing room, five text panels and four showcases are all available for temporary community programs. A Program Manager in the Education division coordinates the programs and a three-member mini-project team from Exhibitions, Conservation and Community Relations assists with the exhibitions. The Community Access Program is designed "to allow the exploration of cultural pluralism by providing the opportunity for community groups to present their perspectives on aspects of contemporary Australia" (Australian Museum 1993b:43). Access was initially limited to "communities", defined as "a group, recognized in the wider community, which operates with aim/objectives, constitution, affiliation, incorporation etc." (ibid.). This strict definition was considerably broadened by the Program Manager as soon as the gallery opened. Programs must focus on contemporary Australia, abide by libel and discrimination legislation, foster tolerance and not cause distress to another group19. A Community Access Program Kit will be sent to community organisations inviting their participation. Opening with a temporary program on youth called "Youth Identikit", future programs include a revised exhibition previously displayed through an arts organization by the Laotian community and an exhibition and performance program by the NSW African Communities Council.

Evaluation
Our Place provides endless opportunities for people to be heard in the exhibition, and has the potential to give marginalised and disadvantaged communities a powerful tool for self-expression and therefore work toward their own empowerment. Despite this, or perhaps because of this, it is difficult to say exactly what impression visitors will take with them from the gallery. Designed to be flexible and respond to visitor reactions, the permanent section of the gallery seems hesitant and unwilling to commit to a central message or theme. Perhaps this is because it implemented, uncritically, three basic tenants of the New Museology literature: do not teach dominant values, use interpretive material to raise questions, and allow people to control presentation of themselves by exhibiting multiple perspectives. While the quotes do represent people from a wide range of ages and cultural backgrounds (many of them Museum staff), and certainly offer multiple perspectives, it is questionable whether reading them will encourage the Museum visitor to celebrate the benefits of diversity or think about multicultural issues in a new way. If anything, the Reaction Cards, combined with the quotes, seem to encourage a "whatever I think is okay" attitude.

In attempting to forge ties across the full spectrum of Sydney's diversity for Our Place, the Australian Museum also went beyond its own information resources. Even if a shift to community focus justifies abandoning objects (which is doubtful), cultural knowledge and understanding is still
essential for meaningful exhibition content (Galla 1993:7). Our
Place suffered from a lack of information sources about the
deeper and more fundamental issues of multiculturalism, cultural
diversity and national unity, and therefore failed to
communicate what was really needed to understand the social
complexities of contemporary Australia.

The Community Access Program, although limited to
"communities" who want to portray their life in "contemporary"
Australia, is a unique space within the Museum. While other
cultural exhibitions involve outside groups only peripherally--
unless they have the "expertise" to become consultants--this
program allows communities direct access to what is displayed,
how it is displayed, and, within limits, what is said in the
exhibition. Museum staff felt that this was the most important
aspect of the gallery. Community members have the opportunity to
gain valuable skills in organising and implementing cultural
programs and exhibitions with the help of Museum staff. The NSW
African Communities Council's temporary program, for example, is
a trial-run for a future annual cultural festival. By using the
Museum's African collections for their display, they are also
learning about exhibition techniques. This process, however,
makes the Community Access Program (with a budget of only $500
per event) very resource intensive in terms of staff time,
especially if the collections are used. I am uncertain that the
Museum, in its current financial situation, will continue to
support such a demanding, if successful, program.
Community Access Program's emphasis on "cultural pluralism", however, seems out of step with the current multiculturalism debate. Despite positive benefits for communities, the final exhibition or program has the potential to communicate messages of separatism and pluralism, negating the intended promotion of tolerance and diversity. Visitors may walk through a temporary exhibit put on by the Sydney Laotian community, for example, and feel positive about the diversity that people from this culture bring to Australia. However, they could equally feel resentful about special privileges given to refugees who then appear to separate themselves and promote their own distinctiveness. With one section focusing on the aspects that all Australians share and another on what they don't, Our Place is mirroring the government's simplistic visions of diversity within unity, without exploring the more fundamental issues of how a multicultural and multiracial society can function. The opening night promise by the NSW Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs' of $50,000 in grants for community exhibitions in the Access Program, further reinforced the government's emphasis on cultural aspects which fail to address pressing issues of economic inequality and racism.

Theoretically at least, the Access Program has the potential to successfully empower communities by giving them a voice in a mainstream museum. Whether these exhibitions will foster tolerance and convince the viewing public of the benefits
of diversity is more difficult to judge.

Art of the Himalayas: Treasures from Nepal and Tibet

This exhibition, organised and circulated by the American Federation of Arts (AFA), opened at the Australian Museum on April 24, 1994 as the first temporary exhibition in the new temporary exhibition space, one of two galleries devoted to rapidly changing temporary exhibitions. The exhibition's three venue tour of Australia (National Gallery of Victoria, The Australian Museum and the Art Gallery of Western Australia) was organised by the Australian Museum, through its Touring Exhibitions Manager in the Exhibitions division. The exhibition contains 115 works of sculpture, paintings, textiles and drawings dating from the seventh to the nineteenth century, and was originally curated by Dr. Patapaditya Pal, Senior Curator of Asian Art at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

Objectives

The objectives set for Art of the Himalayas show the Museum's very high expectations for this exhibition. The Museum stated that the exhibition would "give visitors an opportunity to see the art of Tibet and Nepal from both Buddhist and Hindu sources and through this to gain an awareness and understanding of other cultures" (Australian Museum 1994:4). At the same time, the Museum aimed to "make contact with Sydney's Nepalese and Tibetan communities and invite them to use the exhibition as a
forum to discuss issues relating to their countries' current history" (ibid). Another objective was to "forge new links with the state art museum in Victoria and Western Australia by bringing the exhibition to Australia", as well as "reinforce and build on the Australian Museum's reputation as a presenter of high quality exhibitions" (ibid.). Finally, it hoped to "recover costs" through "increase[d] attendance to the Museum by attracting visitors from the adult audience segment" (ibid.).

Processes

The Project Team, formed in January 1994 to work on this incoming exhibition, consisted of six staff members from Anthropology, Community Relations, Corporate Services, Education, and Exhibitions. As the accompanying AFA exhibition text was considered "highly academic, with the expectation that the visitor would have vast prior knowledge of the subject" (Australian Museum 1994:4), a special "Content Team", (the Anthropology representative and an outside specialist) was formed to rework all text labels and provide an "intermediate level of textual information to assist the viewer interpret the complex cultural content" of the exhibition (ibid.).

A preliminary discussion meeting with interested members of the Tibetan Community Association representing the 28 Tibetans currently living in Sydney and several cultural, political and artistic societies concerned with Tibet was held in December 1993. While those attending this meeting only marginally
influenced the presentation of the exhibition, a previously planned lecture series was held at the Museum and featured a Tibetan lunch. Members of the Nepalese and Tibetan communities were invited to become involved in the exhibition as performers and guides. A small group of Tibetans gave a performance of singing and dancing at the opening, and one Tibetan, Dorje Dolma, spoke about the exhibition and the current situation in Tibet. Beyond this, neither community felt they had the time for any further involvement.

Evaluation

Art of the Himalayas, a stunning collection of Buddhist and Hindu art, makes a strong visual impression. Text, photographs and artifacts weave a story of artistic, social and religious complexity and achievement, creating an environment of respect and appreciation for the peoples and cultures of Nepal and Tibet. Visitors can leave the exhibition with a much greater understanding and appreciation of these cultures, and by extension, for the peoples in Australia who come from those regions.

Apart from performances by the Tibetan community at the opening, there is no visible community involvement in Art of the Himalayas. More community participation would have strengthened the overall exhibition and made it more relevant to the current concerns facing people from those countries. With the exception of a few minor references, information about the situation of
modern Tibet is completely absent from the exhibition. The objects displayed date from the 7th to the 19th century when Tibet was a sovereign nation. Without the "voice" of Nepalese and Tibetan people living in Australia, visitors could easily leave the exhibition believing that everything in those countries is as it was in the 19th century. If they are aware of the current political circumstances in Tibet, they may believe that the religious paintings and sculpture of previous centuries are all that remain of Tibetan culture. The sadness so eloquently expressed by Dorje Dolma in her opening speech that these powerful mediational pieces, so much a part of Tibet's spiritual history, should be on display in a foreign museum instead of in a Tibetan temple is missing in the exhibition itself.

This case highlights a major problem with trying to make "community involvement" a major part of exhibitions, especially large "block-busters" imported from overseas. These exhibitions are often only marginally relevant to the larger Sydney population. Drawing connections between the content of these exhibitions and a local Sydney community through visible community participation seems the only strategy the Museum has yet developed to increase their general appeal. Many communities do not, however, have the time, numbers or inclination to volunteer their services in this way. As "community participation" schemes are implemented by Sydney's other major museums, competition over people's time and community's
resources increases. During the development of this exhibition, the Tibetan community, with only 28 members, was approached by three different institutions and invited to be heavily involved in up-coming programs.

The Australian Museum needed to find an alternative to intensive community involvement which would express the concerns and experiences of Himalayan peoples today, such as the Tibetan self-determination movement. Without this, *Art of the Himalayas*, while successfully communicating messages of intercultural tolerance and the benefits of diversity, does not provide a forum for current issues facing the people of Nepal and Tibet (as stated in the objectives for the exhibition).

**Discussion**

Undeniably, the greatest benefit of the Australian Museum's "community participation" schemes is giving members of Aboriginal, immigrant and other communities a public forum within a large and respected museum. Many people value this opportunity to explore and/or publicly exhibit their cultural heritage and identity. "Communities", Ivan Karp observes, "often feel that they live or die to the degree that they are accorded or denied social space" (1992:14). While many community groups in Sydney already have their own "social space", whether through local community museums, festivals or other events, the Australian Museum can offer them a different kind of space. Here a much larger audience can learn about other cultural
communities living in Australia. Most of the staff interviewed agreed that this was the main contribution the Museum could make toward fostering intercultural tolerance and understanding.

Neither exhibition was completely successful in meeting the Australian Museum's overall exhibitions goals: firstly, addressing larger issues of intercultural tolerance, multicultural diversity and community empowerment, and secondly increased popularity and attendance. This is certainly partly due to a naive, short-term and rather simplistic approach to implementing new cultural programs. Two pervasive myths seem prevalent among senior Museum staff: that Aboriginal and multicultural representation can be achieved quickly and easily with few resources, and that when this representation is clearly visible, more people will want to come to the Museum and pay at the door. In reality, Community involvement on any level requires complex negotiation and a lot of give and take on both sides. The Australian Museum is not ready (although it is taking the first steps) to really give much of anything to the communities it wants visible in its programs, such as a commitment to their cultural development through access to, and generation of, their material heritage. Complaints that community exhibitions are too time consuming, that they do not meet the design standards of the Museum, and that performances interfere with "paying clients" hiring Museum space; the program-by-program approach to community involvement and the lack of resources for long-term services to those communities;
the attitude that just being allowed to be involved is reward enough: all these indicate an incomplete commitment to the interests of local communities and their own cultural development.

In my opinion, the Australian Museum's Access Program and other community-oriented cultural initiatives are caught in the same dilemma as the government multiculturalism policy: how to celebrate cultural diversity within a socially, and particularly economically, divided nation when the ultimate goal is social cohesion and national unity. While Steven Lavine wonders whether museums should "encourage the celebration and retention of difference" or work toward creating shared cultures (1992:143), I believe the issue is far more complex. In Australia at present, the whole issue of multiculturalism, cultural diversity and national identity is clouded and distorted by misinformation, ignorance, emotion and short-term political objectives. As Jock Collins observes

small budgets and a vision dominated by a celebration of cultural diversity have limited the ability of multiculturalism to significantly reduce ethnic inequality and racism (1993:15).

Adding community involvement to the list of ingredients that make up a successful museum program or exhibition does little to address these more fundamental issues.

The Australian government's multiculturalism policy directs museums to better represent those groups "whose history, traditions, contribution to Australia or experiences are under-represented...this includes Aboriginal and Torres Strait
Ilander people and people from non-English speaking backgrounds" (DASET 1991:6). The Australian Museum is the only museum in Sydney with significant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island, Pacific Island and Southeast Asian collections, and a history of involvement with communities from these areas. Following Macdonald and Alsford’s (1991:307) argument, the primary cultural "commodity" of the Australian Museum, with which it could negotiate a new kind of communication with its public, is the information it houses in its collections about these cultures. These communities in Sydney are also among those most needing the support which can achieved through institutional promotion of tolerance, diversity and empowerment.

I suggest that the primary focus of the Australian Museum’s cultural programs and initiatives should be better management and communication of this information. Joining in the general rivalry with other Sydney museums over cultural community allegiances may be in the museum’s short term self-interest, as it visibly fulfils the government’s overall multiculturalism directives. However, it does little to address the real needs of these communities. This diffuse approach drains funds, energy and attention into duplicate programs which are all necessarily simplistic and superficial. Meaningful, long-term, museum-community relationships are most effective, and have the most chance of influencing public attitudes, when collections and staff expertise combine with community interest and involvement to
create an environment of mutual exchange and benefit.

Conclusion

Australia is an extremely diverse and (many feel) successful multicultural nation\textsuperscript{20}. Yet, a general and pervasive ignorance about the nature of the government's multiculturalism policy threatens to undermine this claim. Too many people believe that multiculturalism is about ethnic separatism and privilege. Far more associate a promotion of multiculturalism with an open-door immigration policy, which, in Australia's case, couldn't be further from the truth. All of this often leads to general resentment of newcomers and a reluctance, even after many generations, to call those from non-Anglo heritage "Australians"\textsuperscript{21}.

The Australian Museum's major new multicultural/community access initiative, Our Place, fails to truly foster tolerance and understanding because it does not address these issues. As I pointed out earlier, this gallery experimented with many of the approaches advocated by New Museology critics' abandoning a didactic, authoritarian approach by attempting to be all-inclusive. In reality, including numerous perspectives on general themes does nothing to combat the ignorance and misinformation that leads to racist attitudes towards non-Anglo Australians. This aspect of the gallery demonstrates that abrogating the museum's "pedagogic authority" (Shelton 1990:98) can go so far as to completely neutralize the museum's message. 

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The result is a passive exhibition that does not engage the audience beyond reflecting whatever the viewer wants to see. Our Place deals with an issue that is so important, so timely and so fundamental to Australia's future, that the Museum needed to follow Neil Postman's advise and engage in an argument with its public (1990:58). Art of the Himalayas displays a similar hesitation to confront the difficult and highly political issue of modern Tibet, compromising the effectiveness, even integrity, of the exhibition.

This tendency to avoid difficult and contentious issues runs contrary to the stated philosophy of the Australian Museum and, indeed, to the feelings of many of its staff.

Interestingly, while attempting to address most if not all of New Museology's criticisms, the Australian Museum generally does not succumb to its pervasive pessimism. Most New Museology critics advocate a more positive and integrated social role for museums, but seem to offer little hope that fundamental progress in human nature will make their vision a reality (Stam 1993:275). By contrast, the almost exuberant enthusiasm displayed by most Museum staff for positive change is encouraged, at least rhetorically, by the upper management. This situation could lead to an environment where change is possible and desirable. Recent cultural initiatives at the Australian Museum, while perhaps motivated as much by self-interest and the future viability of the institution as by idealistic social objectives do display an inclination towards change. These
changes, as displayed by Our Place and Art of the Himalayas, have not yet revolutionised the Museum, as the staff are all too aware. Creeping into their enthusiasm for change, is a general cynicism that nothing will change. The Australian Museum's hesitation to truly follow through with its own rhetoric, even when the going gets rough, is partly to blame. Yet, even some of its more radical experiments, like Our Place, have not entirely succeeded. Many New Museology critics may be surprised to find that their suggestions, when put into practice, are in some ways just as problematic as the "old" museum ways.

And the way forward? Perhaps in the end, the best approach is for museums to become even more flexible and self-critical, while carefully re-examining and retaining many of the "old" features that make them unique, credible and appealing institutions. Museums may need reminding that it is the objects in their stores and their galleries, together with the information exchange that such things can stimulate, that make them places of wonder and excitement. Community participation and access strategies are laudable initiatives, but ones that require museums to work even harder at the difficult task of negotiating representation. The Australian Museum must not only encourage community involvement, but also address the more difficult, critical and controversial issues that these communities bring with them to the Museum. These issues are the bridges that join artifacts, galleries and text panels to the realities and experiences of every day life.
ENDNOTES


2. While there is no established school of New Museology literature, many current writers advocating change in museums advance remarkably similar ideas. I have, therefore, followed Stam (1993) in grouping a wide range of authors under this label, including many Australian writers.


5. Throughout I often refer to the "community" or "communities". While the most staff I interviewed defined a community as a group of people who held something--residence, language, heritage, interests, gender etc--in common, the Museum's use of "community" generally refers to groups of people identified by their ethnicity.

6. Aboriginal and Pacific Islander requests for repatriation of artifacts and reburial of human remains, however, are another issue altogether. These requests and the subsequent actions taken on them constitute entirely different museum-community relationships.

7. I interviewed a total of 18 staff members, 6 in the Anthropology division, 4 in the Education division, 3 in Exhibitions, 2 in Community Relations, 2 in Materials Conservation and 1 scientist.

8. Many thought the establishment of such a museum would enhance Australia's international reputation (Kohlstedt 1983:2). Others, like the editor of the Sydney Monitor in 1833, questioned the appropriateness of "an infantile people being taxed to promote" the sciences (quoted in Strahan 1979:13).

9. The Museum addresses both the natural world and the cultural heritage of Australia. While informal discussions by Museum staff have raised possibilities of combining the cultural and scientific programs, at present they remain quite separate. This is a timely and important issue as the Museum struggles to maintain its traditional emphasis on scientific research while also implementing
new community-oriented public programs. The politics of cultural representation in natural history museums is also a contentious issue in Australia (see Chance and Zeplin 1993; Craig 1993).

10. As a current example, The Australians Against Further Immigration (AAFI) political party barely tries to hide its own extreme racism. One of their candidates is on record saying "My policy on refugees and illegals is to reopen the...Meatworks, creating up to 500 local jobs, and convert them into blood and bone" (The Sydney Morning Herald, 15/4/94).

11. In the outer Sydney suburb of Campbelltown, the Inquiry found that 47% of adult migrants had experienced racist abuse and 9% racist violence, while 36% of student migrants had experienced racist abuse and 14% racist violence (in Collins and Henry 1993:15).

12. Even though official estimates say that Asian-Australians will comprise only 7% of the total population by 2025 (Nedeljkovic 1992:26).

13. The other four are Canada, the USA, New Zealand and Israel (Collins and Henry 1993:1).

14. This is compared to New Zealand 16.6%, Canada 15.2%, Switzerland 14.2%, Great Britain 8.5%, France 7.7%, West Germany 7.2%, Sweden 5.1%, and the USA 4.7%, all in 1980 (Collins 1993:1).

15. Few politicians have adopted an anti-multiculturalism stand. In 1988, the then leader of the Opposition, Mr. John Howard, dropped the multiculturalism policy from his platform and was soon himself dropped by the Liberal Party.

16. It is a common misconception that the multiculturalism policy is a promotion of massive immigration intakes. In August 1993, for example, the Leader of the National Party, Tim Fisher, called for cuts to immigration intakes combined with a review of the multiculturalism policy (The Sun-Herald, 8/8/93). Since the mid-1980s, as the Australian government promoted and defined its multiculturalism policy, immigration level have been consistently cut. The 1993-94 intake is set at 76,000 down from 110,000 in 1991-92 (The Sun-Herald, 8/8/93).

17. Some examples at the Australian Museum include "Treasures of Ancient Macedonia" (1989), "Taonga Maori: Treasures of the New Zealand Maori People" (1989), "Beyond the Java Sea: Art of Indonesia's Outer Islands" (1993), and "Rediscovering Pompeii" (September 1994).
18. This position's responsibilities include "to attract a greater diversity of people from different backgrounds, and to give Museum visitors a greater appreciation of our multicultural Australia" (Annual Report 1991/1992:28). The Cultural Diversity Coordinator position was made redundant in May 1994. These responsibilities now belong to the Program Manager for the semi-permanent gallery Our Place: Australian People, Australian Identity.

19. To this end, the Museum reserves the right to censure all text produced for exhibitions in this space.

20. Sydney's multicultural make-up featured heavily in the successful Olympic Games 2000 bid. Prime Minister Paul Keating proclaimed "Australia's unique experience in creating a multicultural society of remarkable tolerance and harmony, together with the warm relations we enjoy with other countries, will go a long way in ensuring that all Olympic nations will enjoy, in safety, both the games and one of the most beautiful and exciting cities in the New World" (The Daily Telegraph Mirror, 24/9/93).

21. It is only recently that words like Greek-Australian or Asian-Australian have come into common usage. Colloquially, most people are still referred to (and often refer to themselves) as "Greek" or "Chinese" etc., even if they, their parents, or even their grandparents, were born in Australia. Generally, only those of Anglo-Celtic heritage are commonly referred to as Australians.
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