

FOREIGNERS

SECRET ARTEFACTS OF INDUSTRIALISM

Edited by Jennifer Harris

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FOREIGNERS: Secret Artefacts of Industrialism

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Foreigners in Workplace Culture - *Graham Seal*



Figure 30 The usually ineffectual stop sign. Despite management vigilance or because management turned a blind eye, thousands of foreigners left the workshops. Photograph by Gina Pickering.

The illicit use of an employer's materials, time and facilities to produce items for personal use or profit is an old and widespread aspect of workplace culture. In France the practice is known by a number of regional terms, though most generally as *la perruque*, or the wig. In America the term is sometimes a 'homer' or a 'government job' and in Britain it is variously known as 'pilfering', 'idling' or just 'a fiddle'.⁶⁰ In Australia the same activity may be called either a 'foreign order' (NSW), a 'foreigny' (South Australia) and in Western Australia, a 'foreigner'.

As a large and long-lived industrial workplace employing many skills and trades, the Midland Railway Workshops were the site of a great deal of foreigner activity. Those that survive - and there are many - can be considered secret artefacts of a way of life and work that is fast fading into the past along with the industrial processes within which they flourished. But this does not mean that the foreigner itself has disappeared from workplaces, either in Western Australia or elsewhere in the industrialised world. Other factories and workplaces, including offices, elsewhere in the world also have their own forms of the foreign order. In all these places the foreigner, under whatever equivalent local term, is a tangible artefact of the usually hidden culture of work and workers.⁶¹

At the Midland Workshops, as in every other situation in which foreigners are produced, this

ambivalent tradition was an integral aspect of worklife. It remains so in other workplaces, where it is a part of the sometimes-fraught relationships between workers and those who employ them, or at least seek to manage them on a day-to-day basis.⁶² While workplaces differ from industry to industry and even within industries, there are enough similarities between them to make some general observations that also relate to the culture of the Midland Workshops.

Many industries and workplaces, particularly those with long and strong trade traditions, used various forms of initiation to integrate apprentices or 'new starters' into the larger body of workers or tradesmen. At different times and places these have taken the form of being stripped and covered in oil or grease - either completely or selectively around the genitalia - being rolled in barrels, doused, shaved or otherwise ritually humiliated and levelled from the status of outsider to that of a new, but accepted member of the workplace hierarchy.

Such primarily ceremonial acts were usually instigated and attended by all or many of the co-workers or tradesmen, depending upon the trade or skill into which the luckless newcomer was being initiated. Less physical initiations, often operating in tandem with those already described, took the form of mild pranks. So a new apprentice might be asked to 'go for a long weight/wait', 'find a can of striped paint' or 'ask Bill for the left-handed wrench', and

so on. Whatever form or forms these practices took they were designed to actually or symbolically bring the initiate to the same level as his (very rarely her) workmates and their culture. The ritual humiliation involved was an age-old practice, still sometimes surfacing in bastardisation ceremonies performed in the defence forces and certain educational institutions.⁶³

Once the newcomer had been cleansed and accepted into the community of workers he was able to take full part in the rich folklife of labour. This involved many possible elements and aspects that, once again, differ in emphasis from place to place and time-to-time but follow similar patterns. Activities might include playing pranks and jokes on the bosses and/or fellow workers. Sometimes these might take place at appropriate moments on the folk calendar, such as April Fool's Day (April 1), though any other time would do as well. Such things as placing a laxative in the tea-urn could always guarantee a laugh for those not having to rush to the toilet - though retribution might be unpleasant when the culprits were unmasked. The potential for such 'shit stirring' was large and as well as briefly relieving any monotony might also provide the basis for another important element of worklife.

Play at work can also take more organised forms, as in the case of the occupational sport now known as 'trugo'. Beginning around the 1920s in Melbourne's Newport railway workshops, trugo was

created when workers began knocking rubber buffer washers around with a sledge hammer during their meal breaks. Hitting a washer between two upright tins was called a 'true go'.⁶⁴ As well as creatively appropriating the tools and structural elements of the occupational arena, with the added appeal of being able to hit them together, trugo provides an insight into the importance of materials being close to hand in the development of customs and other occupational activities. This game could not have evolved in Western Australia's Midland Railway Workshops, for example, because the trains there did not use buffers,⁶⁵ a small but important difference.

Workplace storying takes many forms. The most basic form is hearsay. Gossip about what he is doing with her or how so-and-so managed to get promoted are part of the everyday conversation of working life. Closely connected are rumours. These may be of any kind depending on the circumstances, but are most prevalent in situations of uncertainty and absence of hard information. Rumours of layoff or redundancy are commonplace where and when livelihoods and mortgages are under threat. Rumours about the fate of bosses may be heard at times of management change, organisational restructure and financial turmoil. Any other period or moment that seems outside the usual ebb and flow of worklife will generate rumours, usually in large, conflicting and usually inaccurate numbers.

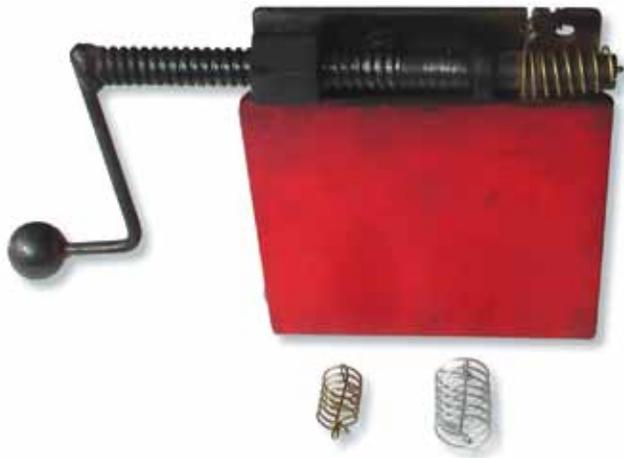


Figure 31 Extra household income was generated by this burley cage maker. A fitter made it illicitly in the workshops in the 1960s; his wife then made burley cages for sale at home. Photograph by Gina Pickering.

Personal stories, or anecdotes about such things as ‘the worst boss I ever had’ or ‘what we did to the deputy manager at the works picnic’, are frequently encountered examples of this kind. Together with yarns, tales and legends about strikes, lockouts, unusually good or bad workers and the perennial ‘how it used to be better in the old days’, these forms of folk narrative form part of the shared lore of a trade, occupation or workplace. This lore both consolidates the commonality of the group which maintains and extends it and identifies them against other groups, either within the workplace or outside it.⁶⁶

Sharing a joke is also an important element of the spoken word of workplace lore. The telling and hearing of jokes at meal breaks, during a ‘smoko’ or while a machine is being repaired is a communication between equals and also reflects and reconfirms the values and attitudes they share as members of the work group. It hardly needs to be said that many of the jokes told in predominantly masculine industrial work situations will often be of the coarser variety.⁶⁷

One of the identifying badges of workplace, trade or industry membership is the ability to speak and understand the lingo. Specialised technical terms for tools, equipment and processes must be learned. As well, there may be more general terms and phrases familiar only to those who follow a particular trade or occupation within a workplace.⁶⁸ These esoteric signifiers of occupational discourse are at once overt

in that they are freely spoken, yet also covert in that their meanings may be understood fully only by the occupational group that speaks them. Foreigners are a material manifestation of this covert-overt context of occupational folklife, their known, but mostly unspoken, existence paralleling the in-group language of labour and the workplace culture to which both belong.

The rhythms of worklife are both specific to a workplace or industry and related to the calendar of the broader society. Christmas, New Year, Easter and the school holidays are the main determinants of worker vacations. Days of significance may relate to trade union history and mythology, such as Eight Hour Day and May Day. Within individual industries there were traditional holidays, such as work outings or picnics. These were occasions when the culture of the workplace itself connected with the broader culture of family, friends and community. In a place like Midland, where it was said that even the houses stood up when the Workshops siren blew, work and community were different aspects of the same interlinked culture of work, family and community life.

Other customs were of an occasional nature, often involving the occupational and life cycle of workers. Birthdays, weddings and retirements frequently invoke a variety of traditional forms of festive observance that might include celebration within the workplace and/or outside its confines

in the wider community of worker families and communities. The departure of a worker to another job or location might also be marked with a party, either at work, in the community, or both. The death of employees, either after retirement or while still on the job, might also be commemorated by the funeral attendance of workplace representatives. Retirement is, in many places, a time for workmates to present a foreigner to the retiree as a memento of his or her working life.⁶⁹

Within these observable aspects of worklife are the intangibles of attitudes and values. These are usually based on a powerful sense of worker solidarity, bolstered by craft pride and, frequently, trade union membership. Authority, in the form of bosses on the site and the often unseen management, is under continual and critical scrutiny. While this might manifest in formal conflicts and negotiations related to wages and conditions, there is also a continual undercurrent of tension between workers and employers. Such situations were, and are, commonplace in the world of work and are often projected in various forms of subversive expression and behaviour.⁷⁰

One example of such critical and subversive expressions are the photocopied and emailed folk cartoons, parodies and jokes that workers circulate among themselves. Like manufactured foreigners these are usually clandestine, though in some cases such items may appear on walls and noticeboards.



Figure 32 The jokes of the workshops hidden in graffiti. “Come back Rooster” can be read behind these boilermakers in the flanging shop in 1994. Photograph by Stephen Smith.



Figure 33 Humorous erotica such as this penis bottle opener were popular foreigners. Photograph by Gina Pickering.

They come from the general stock of anonymous expressions that circulate around the western world at least and which generally have a sharp point to make about occupational relations and conditions.

One of the most persistent and problematic aspects of worklife is the line of command. Despite a trend towards a 'flattened' management structure and egalitarian project teams that have been with us since the 1980s, authority still tends to flow from the top to the bottom rather than the other way around. There are many, many pieces of workplace humour that focus on aspects of the hierarchy problem. One of the most popular exists in various versions, most of which are localised to particular industries or workplaces. Usually titled 'Capability of Duties', 'Personnel Rating Form' or something similar, these items satirise the hierarchy from the point of view of those at the receiving end, that is, the bottom.

Leaps tall buildings at a single bound
 Is more powerful than a speeding locomotive
 faster than a speeding bullet
 Walks on water
 Gives policy to God

Leap short buildings at a single bound
 Are more powerful than a switch engine
 Are just as fast as a speeding bullet
 Can walk on water if the seas are calm and
 are allowed to talk with God

Leap short buildings with a running start and
 favourable winds
 Are almost as powerful as a switch engine
 Are faster than a speeding 'BB' pellet
 Walk on water of indoor swimming pools and
 may talk to God if a special request is approved

Rarely clear trees of medium height
 Will not win a tug-of-war with a locomotive
 Are able to fire a speeding bullet
 Can swim well and
 Are occasionally addressed by God's secretary

Step over the dog's kennel with ease
 Can instantly recognise a locomotive
 Are able to fire a BB gun
 Can float on their backs and
 Are permitted to talk with God's secretary if a
 special request is approved

Run into buildings
 Recognise locomotives two out of three times
 Are not issued live ammunition
 Are able to stay afloat in life jackets, if properly
 instructed, and talk only to walls.

Fall over doorsteps when trying to enter the
 building
 Say things like 'look at the choo-choo train'
 Wet themselves with water pistols
 Play in mud puddles, and
 Mumble to themselves

In great contrast to the above, the very lowest level of the hierarchy - where all the real work gets done - is peopled by outstanding individuals who can, typically:

Lift buildings and walk under them
Kick trains off the tracks
Catch speeding bullets in their teeth -
and then eat them
Freeze water with a single glance, and
Are God.

Closely related to conflicts over power, technology and communication are mythologies of leadership. The traditional view of those being led is succinctly expressed in the following modern version of a theme that was probably old when Aesop used it.

THE BOSS

When God made man all the parts of the body argued over who would be the BOSS. The BRAIN explained that since he controlled all the parts of the body, he should be the BOSS. The LEGS argued that since they took the body wherever it wanted to go, they should be the BOSS. The STOMACH countered with the explanation that since it digested all the food, it should be BOSS. The EYES said that without them, the body would be helpless, so they should be BOSS.

Then the ARSEHOLE applied for the job. Then other parts of the body laughed so hard that the arsehole got mad and closed up. After a few days the BRAIN went foggy, the LEGS got wobbly, the STOMACH got ill and the EYES got crossed and unable to see. They all conceded defeat and made the ARSEHOLE the BOSS. This proves that you don't have to be a brain to be a BOSS ... JUST AN ARSEHOLE.⁷¹

This crude but clever modern reworking of an ancient piece of folklore pops up in offices, factories and workplaces of every kind. It has been doing so for at least thirty years. It maintains its evergreen popularity because it sums up what most workers think about their bosses. Even if they do not think like this, they are generally expected to participate because not to agree with the workmates' stereotype of the boss could have implications for worker social relations and, perhaps, community relations.

A popular reprographic cartoon that appears in workplaces around the western world is one often known as 'the Last Great Act of Defiance'. It depicts a small mouse giving 'the finger' to a large bird of prey descending upon the defenceless animal. Its message, like that of many other such forms of workplace lore, is simple, clear and direct.⁷²



Figure 34 "The last great act of defiance"
Image courtesy of *The Bare Fax*, Harper Collins, Sydney, 1996

Figure 35 A foreigner Samurai sword illustrates the co-operation between foundry, flanging, plating and tarpaulin shops, it was made by a young boilermaker in the 1970s who says he made it 'because I could'. Photograph by Gina Pickering.



The original creation, the reproduction and the dissemination of such reprographic humour is itself a foreigner. These activities involve the subversion of work time, appropriation of paper and unsanctioned use of employer technology in the form of photocopier, facsimile machine or email. This does not happen once but uncountably many times as workers in other places receive and send on these mischievous missives.

The foreigner - at the Workshops and in many other industrial workplaces - was and is at once a form of initiation into the mysteries of the trade, and an induction into the mores of the workplace and its workers. It was also a tangible expression of industrial trade crafts and often venerable traditions and skills, as well as a means of 'sticking it up' the bosses. In many cases the pecuniary or other benefit gained by the maker of the foreigner was, if any, very much a secondary consideration. The main point was to show that you could do it, using your trade skills, the employer's time and materials and under the noses of the management.

Also integral to the custom as it was practiced at the Workshops, and in many other places, was the ability to sneak the completed foreigner out of the workplace undetected. This can involve the subsequent display of the visible evidence of success at home or in the community, whether the foreigner was a full-sized pleasure boat, a primarily ornamental bottle-opener or superbly crafted samurai sword.

This community knowledge of a successful foreigner was an important element of the acknowledgement of the individual as a skilled worker. Those who were especially good at foreigners, either in terms of numbers made, the size of the job or the cleverness with which it was executed and transported from the Workshops were often referred to, admiringly, as 'foreigner kings'. Even today, many years after the closure of the Workshops, those members of the ex-Workshops community who know their identity accord such individuals this status. In other worksites such outstanding exponents of the foreign order may also be duly regarded by their peers.⁷³

The whimsical element that is part of the character of many foreigners is a sign that play is a significant aspect of the practice. At the Workshops, the masculine dominance in the workplace dictated that, as with joking and most other aspects of worklife, playfulness would often be expressed in the sexualisation of the objects produced. Bottle-openers in the shape and - usually fantasised - size of the penis seem to have been a favourite, symbolically combining the male drinking ethos and its inherent machismo. The homers illustrating Yvonne Lockwood's 1984 study of the practice in America are likewise humorous, with an autoworker's plastic sculpture crafted from the ejection of a moulding machine and described as a 'black cobra', together with an accomplished if ghoulish embellishment of a mill worker's hardhat, also bearing the motto 'death row'.⁷⁴

As these examples suggest, humour is an important element of worklife. Laughter allows communication between workers, often in the form of bantering, stirring, pranking and joking communication. It also provides a major forum for the expression of discontent about aspects of working life. Many of the same complaints and tensions recur in workplaces of all kinds.⁷⁵ These may also be worked out in stories and jokes about or aimed at the bosses or other aspects of what workers perceive as 'bullshit', incompetence, or unacceptable human relations actions. The whimsical aspect of foreigner production - including the fact that many of them had no practical function or pecuniary aim - is another reflection of workers needing to humourise industrial work processes, inherent tensions and the unpleasant conditions and conflicts within them.

Foreigners do not have to be removable objects. Other forms of appropriation are frequently encountered. Personal or unsanctioned activities can be conducted on the employer's land, facilities or time. Animals might be kept and personal jobs, such as photocopying flyers for a community fund-raiser or other non-work activity may be carried out. At the Midland Railway Workshops, gardens, fruit trees and vegetable patches were established and maintained by workers and there was certainly at least one chook pen there during the 1970s. Foreigners, then, were not only created by the illicit use of materials and machinery, but also through the appropriation and utilisation of employer space and time. In these

ways did workers complete their informal hegemony over all aspects of their place of labour.

While the foreigner is the direct, tangible outcome of the workers' attitude to their work, their workplace and those who control it, these objects are only the physical manifestations of a mostly intangible work culture. The submerged processes and priorities of this culture involve taking what is provided and/or imposed and transforming it into something that is owned not by the bosses or the shareholders but by the workers themselves - and also the outside networks of their families and communities. Spaces are adapted to unofficial uses, such as reprographica in desks or filing cabinets and on walls and furniture; places are appropriated for unsanctioned activities such as a vegetable patch or perhaps the storage and concealment of a large foreigner before it can be smuggled out of the works; materials, whether wood, metal, paper, etc. are purloined for personal or external communal use (often for positive ends, such as charity or support of local activities and initiatives at schools, children's sports, etc.); time paid for by the employer is filched for other purposes and ends, including workplace customs such as initiations, picnics, pranks and unscheduled smokos; equipment in offices and factories is used to manufacture or copy items other than those officially produced by the business; tools provided for doing the work of the business, including pencils, lathes, presses, etc. are put to other purposes.



Figure 36 Detail of handle of samurai sword.
Photograph by Gina Pickering.

Beneath these small to major subversions of the official are those forms of discourse that James Scott has called 'hidden transcripts' - what the ostensibly subordinated have to say about those above them as they engage in workplace conversation.⁷⁶ Such conversations are amalgams of complaints, accusations, banter, ribald jests at the expense of the boss perhaps, and rumour, often accompanied by the unbelieving shaking of heads as the latest management inanity or bastardry is disbelievingly dissected. While foreigners may be seen simply as illegal or semi-legal perquisites, a form of pilfering, in places such as Midland they have a much deeper significance, reflecting and reinforcing the complex of attitudes and values shared by the workforce. Foreigners are an integral and reinforcing element of the hidden transcripts of stories, jokes, customs and other expressions and practices that constitute the lore of any workplace.

In those cases where foreigner activities are not for the personal profit of the individual/s involved, the moral and ethical line between that to which a blind eye can be turned is a very grey and uncertain one. Foreigners are an essentially illicit act of stealing someone else's property or other belongings, even when these are scraps and by-products of the industrial processes of the workplace. Were and are all makers of foreigners criminals? Yes, if only in a relatively petty sense. But were they morally bankrupt? Not according to the moral economy of worklore. This unwritten code holds that the compact

between labour and capital - even when that capital takes the form of a public utility - is inherently uneven. The simple possession of capital is not of itself sufficient to justify the greater profit or other benefit of whoever happens to hold it and deploy it, even if, as in the case of the Workshops, that was ostensibly for the common good. In this view of the world the share the worker gains through skill and labour is tiny compared with that reaped by capital, or even by the better remunerated senior management. Accordingly, the appropriation of time, materials, skill and space are a justifiable 'perk' of the job. Even if some workers did not share this worldview, it was the dominant one at the Workshops and they were wise to keep quiet about such unsanctioned workplace practices as the foreigner. As other studies of this practice have demonstrated, this is the prevailing attitude among workers.⁷⁷

Furthermore, it is frequently the case that many, if not most of the bosses in a workplace are aware of and complicit in this moral economy, 'turning a blind eye' and so allowing it to flourish.⁷⁸ Ambivalent though such a philosophy and its practice might be, it is the rationale and justification that has informed the workers' culture since at least the start of the industrial revolution, based on ancient but persistent folk notions of the common good. The Midland Railway Workshops was an industrial work site with a strong worker philosophy and the foreigners it produced are among the last artefacts of a vanished way of life and labour.

The moral justification for the foreign order derives from the same worldview as that associated with poaching and other essentially pre-industrial forms of covert economic practice. Before the industrial revolution the main economic forms were those derived from feudalism and its successors. There was usually a lord who controlled the land and its resources but allowed the poor access to those resources in a moral compact that suited all involved.⁷⁹ There were also extensive bundles of rights and privileges shared by the poor, said to date from time immemorial and which depended on open access to fields, woods, fish and fowl. As these rights were gradually repudiated and previously common lands privatised by the process known as 'enclosure' - a more sophisticated form of appropriation - so the practice of poaching grew.⁸⁰

The foreigner, homer, or other such illicit activity is a form of poaching, a connection recognised by Michelle de Certeau in his understanding and use of the term *la perruque*.⁸¹ It involves the covert appropriation of time, space and materials that are owned by someone else for the benefit of the poacher and, often, his community. Like poaching it is morally ambivalent. Technically illegal it is often tolerated. Those who commit it and who benefit from it do not consider it to be wrong. Illegal, yes, but immoral, no.⁸² For those who have less, to take some of the plenty owned by others is a primitive but powerful folk attitude with roots in the distant past and branches that continue to flourish in the industrial and post-industrial eras.



Figure 37 Foreigner shoe brush and jarrah cradle. Photograph by Gina Pickering.

CONTRIBUTORS//

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GRAHAM SEAL is a folklorist and cultural historian with a particular interest in the traditions of working life. His published works include books and articles on folk heroes, urban legends, folk speech and other aspects of English-language culture. He is Professor of Folklore and Director of the Centre for Advanced Studies in Australia, Asia and the Pacific at Curtin University of Technology. In 2007 he was made a Member of the Order of Australia in recognition of his research.

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STEPHEN SMITH is Adjunct Associate Professor at Curtin University of Technology and Director of the Forest Heritage Centre. He started his working life in the 1970s as an apprentice boilermaker at the Midland Government Railway Workshops.

LEN WATSON (deceased) was a mechanical fitter who started his apprenticeship at the Midland Railway Workshop in 1917. He worked in a variety of locations on the rail lines, moving in and out of Midland, until his retirement in 1965.

RON WATSON started at the Midland Railway Workshops in the Time office before commencing an apprenticeship as a moulder. His father, Len, urged him not to become a boilermaker because they inevitably became deaf. He left the workshops just after World War II but continued to work on rail transport until his retirement in 1986.

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- ²⁷ See, for example, interviews with Patrick Gayton by Kendall Crake, 20 March 2003, Battye Library Accession no OH 3429, and Mick Hyde, op. cit.
- ²⁸ For example, Stephen Smith, interviewed by Maxine Milne, 24 February 2003, transcript in the author's possession; also Dave Hicks, in conversation with Ric McCracken, February 2004, cited in Ric McCracken, 'The Workforce Cultures' in Bertola and Oliver, op. cit., p. 214, footnote 39; Peter Carty, interviewed by Mia Lindgren, DVD, *Midland Workshops Life*, produced by Mia Lindgren, Murdoch University, 2004.
- ²⁹ Anteby, op. cit., p. 12.
- ³⁰ Cited in Becker, op. cit., p. 125.
- ³¹ Ibid.
- ³² Hyde interview transcript, op. cit., p. 10.
- ³³ The *Government Railways Act 1904 – 1967*, By-law 84: Workshops Rules, No. 61 and 62. Copies held in WAGR Papers, State Record Office of WA [SROWA] Accession no WAS1403, item 1976/2799, vol 1.
- ³⁴ Over the ninety-year history of the Workshops, several changes were made to the Rules; the ones quoted in this instance are from 'Workshop Rules', ibid.
- ³⁵ This freedom is evidenced by the wealth of stories about various activities carried out in lunchtime, such as illicit gambling and even the cultivating of fruit and vegetable crops in various parts of the grounds.
- ³⁶ *The Government Railways Act. Appeal Board's Decision Book*, vol. 18, Appeal nos. 2594, 2634, 2705 and 27806; vol. 19, Appeal nos. 2782, 2783 and 2784. These records are retained by the Public Transport Authority, and were viewed with their kind permission. The author wishes to thank Pam Burgoyne for her assistance.
- ³⁷ Ric McCracken, telephone conversation with the author, 11 August 2006; Bob Wells (former WAASRE official), telephone conversations with the author, 15 and 27 August, 2007: *Appeal Board's Decision Book*, op. Cit., vol. 18, Appeal no. 2668, 12 January 1983.
- ³⁸ Mountain, op. cit., interview transcript pp. 33-35.
- ³⁹ Ibid, p. 35.
- ⁴⁰ *Appeal Board's Decision Book*, op. Cit., vol. 18, Appeal no. 2693, 30 April, 1984.
- ⁴¹ Dave Hicks, interviewed by Julie Rogers, 24 April 2002, Battye Library Accession no 3305, interview transcript pp. 4-5.
- ⁴² John Mannion, telephone conversation with the author, 18 July 2006.
- ⁴³ Webster, op. cit., mentions, 'hundreds of cyclists' concealing 'illicit items' as they left the premises at the end of the day, and of mates protecting those who had 'returned to work "under the weather" from a lunch-time sessions at a nearby pub'.
- ⁴⁴ For example, Dave Hicks, interviewed by Sarah Tonkin, *Westrail Midland Workshops History Project* DVD, produced by Geraldine Harris & Mia Lindgren, Murdoch University, track 7. Hicks speaks of 'doing your time' at Midland.

- ⁴⁵ Bobbie Oliver, 'Shades of the Cold War: the role of communist workers at the Midland Railway Workshops', in G. Patmore, et. al. eds, *The Past is Before Us. Proceedings of the Ninth National Labour History Conference*. The University of Sydney, 30 June – 2 July, 2005, p. 188.
- ⁴⁶ Bob Wells, telephone conversation with the author, 27 August 2007.
- ⁴⁷ Ron Wadham, cited in McCracken, op. cit., p. 209.
- ⁴⁸ See Bobbie Oliver, '“They can't take a trade off you” – varying perceptions of job security over 50 years at the Midland Government Railway Workshops', in Julie Kimber and Peter Love (eds.), *The Time of Their Lives: the Eight Hour Day and Working Life*, Australian Society for the Study of Labour History, Sydney, 2007, pp. 153-168.
- ⁴⁹ See, for example, Charlie Fox, 'Work organisation', and Lyla Elliott, '“Derailed”: The closure of the Midland Workshops' in Bertola and Oliver, op. cit.
- ⁵⁰ Oliver, 'They can't take a trade off you', op. cit., p. 164. Numbers dropped from 2043 to 949. See WAGR/Westrail Annual Reports.
- ⁵¹ See, for example, Webster, op. cit., p. 9.
- ⁵² Gayton, op. cit.
- ⁵³ Ibid.
- ⁵⁴ Fred Cadwallader, interviewed by Ric McCracken, 2002, Tape 1, interview transcript, Battye Library Accession no. OH 3248.
- ⁵⁵ Silverstone, Sean, 'Homers: Secrets on the Factory Floor', Harvard Business School, Working Knowledge, October 10, 2005, <http://hbswk.hbs.edu/item.jhtml?id=5035&t=bizhisstory> accessed 29 June 2006.
- ⁵⁶ Ibid.
- ⁵⁷ Mars, op. cit., p. 205.
- ⁵⁸ For example, one past employee and union official objected to contributing to the Foreigners Exhibition on the grounds that 'it will make my members look like thieves'. (Information given to the author by Ric McCracken, 11 August 2006.)
- ⁵⁹ Ron Wadham, 'Supplement 2: Industrial Relations' in 'Ronald Arthur Wadham with the WAGR 1969 to 1989', unpublished memoirs donated to the Midland Railway Workshops History Project (2004), n.p, lodged in the Battye Library's Midland Workshops collection.
- ⁶⁰ See Michel Anteby, 'Factory 'Homers': Understanding a Highly Elusive, Marginal and Illegal Practice', *Sociology du Travail* vol 45, no 4, 2003. See also Donald Roy, 'Banana Time': Job Satisfaction and Informal Interaction', *Human Organization* 18, 1959-60; Erwin Smigel & Ross, H Laurence (eds), *Crimes Against Bureaucracy*, NY, 1970, Stephen Ackroyd & Paul Thompson, *Organizational Misbehaviour*, Sage, London, 1999; Jason Ditton, 'Moral Horror versus Folk Terror: Output Restriction, Class and the Social Organization of Exploitation', *Sociological Review* 24 (3) 1976 and Jason Ditton, 'Perks, Pilferage and the Fiddle: The Historical Structure of Invisible Wages', *Theory and Society* 4 (1), Spring 1977. Folkloric approaches include Robert Byington, *Working Americans: Contemporary Approaches to Occupational Folklife* Smithsonian Folklife Studies No. 3, 1978, Los Angeles; Richard Dorson, *Land of the Millrats*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge MA, 1981, Graham Seal, 'Occupational Folklore', in Gwenda Davey & Graham Seal (eds), *The Oxford Companion to Australian Folklore*, OUP, 1993 and 'The Folklore of Work', chapter 6 in Graham Seal, *The Hidden Culture: Folklore in Australian Society*, OUP, 1989, 2nd rev edn Black Swan Press, 1998. For the foreigner in Hungary see Miklos Haraszti, *A Worker in a Worker's State: Piece-rates in Hungary*, Universe Books, New York, 1978.

- ⁷⁸ Also observed by Anteby op. cit. in his discussion of ‘multiple complicities’, see also Lockwood op. cit. p. 208. The author of the present essay once worked in a factory where even the owners were involved in what was essentially a workplace-wide production of ‘foreign orders’, as they were known there. Significantly, perhaps, the business subsequently became bankrupt.
- ⁷⁹ E P Thompson, ‘The Moral Economy of the English Crowd in the Eighteenth Century’, *Past & Present* 50, 1971.
- ⁸⁰ Graham Seal, ‘Tradition and Protest in Nineteenth Century England and Wales’, *Folklore*, 100:2, 1988.
- ⁸¹ Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, University of California Press: Berkeley, 1984.
- ⁸² See similar observations and attitudes among workers interviewed by Anteby and Lockwood op cit. Anteby also draws attention to legal statistics showing a small prosecution rate for homers in selected jurisdictions in the USA and Canada.
- ⁸³ Allen W. Wood gives an overview of eighteenth century debates in regard to Kant’s *Critique of the Power of Judgement*. See chapter 8 ‘the theory of taste’ in A W Wood, *Kant*, Blackwell Publishing, Oxford, UK. 2005.
- ⁸⁴ Douglas Burnham provides a clear and easy to read introduction to Kant’s theories. See D Burnham, *An Introduction to Kant’s Critique of Judgement*, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh, 2000.
- ⁸⁵ C Murray, (ed) *Key Writers on Art: The Twentieth Century*, Routledge, London. 2003.
- ⁸⁶ C Greenberg, *Art and Culture*, Thames and Hudson, London, 1973.
- ⁸⁷ This separation of the arts from ‘mechanical’ (Craft) and ‘aesthetic’ (Fine Art) is grounded in Kant’s *Critique of Judgement*. See Burnham, *ibid*.
- ⁸⁸ M Owen Jones, ‘The concept of “Aesthetic” in Traditional Arts’ *Western Folklore* Vol 30 No 2 (April) 1971, pp. 77-104 Accessed [http:// www.jstor.org](http://www.jstor.org) 28.05.06.
- ⁸⁹ M Owen Jones, *The Handmade Object and its Maker*, University of California Press, California, 1975.
- ⁹⁰ See M Csikszentmihalyi, *The Art of Seeing*, J.P. Getty Trust, California, 1990 and M Csikszentmihalyi, ‘Design and Order in Everyday Life’ in *Design Issues* Vol 8 No 1 Autumn. pp. 26-34, 1991. Also M Csikszentmihalyi, & E Rocheberg-Halton, *The Meaning of Things: Domestic Symbols and the Self*, Cambridge University Press, New York, 1981.
- ⁹¹ In many of the oral histories associated with the workshops, the men talk with admiration of the skills of their fellow workers. Many identify their work as ‘a craft’ and speak of the ‘craftsmanship’ of others. See comments by Fred Cadwallader and Neil McDougall in N Ellis, & C Smyth, *Midland Railway Workshops: a history in pictures 1904-2004*, St George Books, Osborne Park, WA. 2004.
- ⁹² See Ellis & Smyth *ibid*.
- ⁹³ See E Dissanayake, ‘The pleasure and meaning of making’ in *American Craft* April, pp. 40-45, 1995 and E Dissanayake, *Homo Aestheticus: Where Art Comes From and Why*, University of Washington Press, Washington 1992.
- ⁹⁴ Stories referred to in this chapter were either retold by Ric McCracken, the manager of the Midland Railway Workshops History Project or gathered by students working on the exhibition.
- ⁹⁵ Stuart Hall and Tony Jefferson, *Resistance Through Rituals: Youth Subcultures in Post-War Britain*, London, Routledge, 1975.

- ⁹⁶ See for example, Tony Bennett, *Culture: A Reformer's Science*. St Leonards: Allen & Unwin, 1998; Ben Highmore, *The Everyday Life Reader*, London, Routledge, 2002; Ben Highmore *Everyday Life and Cultural Theory: An Introduction*, London, Routledge, 2002; Meaghan Morris, 'Banality in Cultural Studies' in Patricia Mellencamp ed., *Logics of Television*, London, BFI, 1990.
- ⁹⁷ Linda Alcoff and Elizabeth Potter, *Feminist Epistemologies*, New York and London, Routledge, 1993; Robin Schott, *Discovering Feminist Philosophy: Knowledge, Ethics, Politics*, Lanham, Rowman and Littlefield, Publishers Inc, 2003.
- ⁹⁸ Peter Vergo (ed.) *The New Museology*, London, Reaktion Books, 1989.
- ⁹⁹ From student interviews with former workers of the Midland Government Railway Workshops.
- ¹⁰⁰ From student interviews with former workers of the Midland Government Railway Workshops.
- ¹⁰¹ See for example, John Fiske, *Reading the Popular*, London and New York, Routledge, 1989; John Fiske, *Power Plays, Power Works*, London, Verso, 1993; Angela McRobbie, *Postmodernism and Popular Culture*, London, Routledge, 1994; Sian Supski, *It Was Another Skin: The Kitchen in 1950s Western Australia*, unpublished PhD thesis, Bentley, Western Australia, Curtin University of Technology, 2003.
- ¹⁰² Morris, op. cit.
- ¹⁰³ Cohen, Stanley and Laurie Taylor, *Escape Attempts: The Theory and Practice of Resistance to Everyday Life*, London and New York, Routledge, 1992.
- ¹⁰⁴ Bennett, op. cit., p. 9.
- ¹⁰⁵ Highmore, op. cit., p. 17.
- ¹⁰⁶ Edward Pols, *The Acts of Our Being: A Reflection on Agency and Responsibility*, Amherst, The University of Massachusetts Press, 1982, p. 7.
- ¹⁰⁷ Christine Couche, *At Woman's Command?: Female Agency and the Myth of the Powerful Woman in Shakespeare's Venus and Adonis, Antony and Cleopatra and All's Well that Ends Well*, unpublished PhD thesis, Crawley, Western Australia, University of Western Australia, 1995, p. 4.
- ¹⁰⁸ Vergo (ed.) op.cit.
- ¹⁰⁹ See for example Karp, Ivan, Christine Mullen Kreamer and Steve D. Lavine, *Museums and Communities: The Politics of Public Culture*, Washington and London, Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992.
- ¹¹⁰ John Kuo Wei Chen, 'Creating a Dialogic Museum: The Chinatown History Museum', in Karp, Ivan, Christine Mullen Kreamer and Steve D. Lavine (eds), op.cit.
- ¹¹¹ Harding, op.cit.
- ¹¹² From student interviews with Midland Government Railway Workshops workers.