

# Ivy Bennett's Memoir:

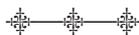
*Excavating the History of Psychoanalysis in Australia 1900–1957*

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ABSTRACT

A memoir of her early career, written by Australian psychoanalyst Ivy Bennett, opens the space for further excavation and assessment of the context within which Australian psychoanalytic institutes developed. Australia's evolution from British dominion to nationhood is of particular significance.

Ivy Bennett was the first practicing lay psychoanalyst in Australia. She began training with the British Psychoanalytical Society (BPS) in 1948, qualified as an Associate in 1951 and established her practice in her home city, Perth, Western Australia, in August 1953. She was elected to membership of the Australian Society of Psychoanalysts in December that year. After five years



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practice Bennett returned to England for further training. She was awarded full membership of the BPS in 1962. Although intending to return to Australia, Bennett married and emigrated to the United States with her husband, Eric Gwynne-Thomas (Mansfield and Brett Vickers 12 July 2011). She was a founding member of the Greater Kansas City Psychoanalytical Institute and Associate Professor of Child Development at the University of Missouri. Bennett supervised psychiatric residents at the Menninger Foundation (Slarke, 2003, pp. 50–51). She never worked in Australia again.

Ivy Verna Peace Bennett, the fifth of a farming family of six children, was born in Wagin in the southern wheat-belt of Western Australia. In 1912 her father, Ern Bennett brought his wife Catherine to his new property 'Rhynie', at Lake Grace, half way between Perth and Esperance (Bishop 1972, p. 6). Bennett followed a path typical of bright young country kids in the early decades of the twentieth century. Her first school was a one-teacher school with sixteen other students. At eleven she won the Government Inspector's scholarship to Albany High School, 250 kilometres from Lake Grace. (Country News, 1932, February 18). She won a bursary to study literature and modern languages at the University of Western Australia when she was seventeen. Towards the end of her degree, during a summer holiday job as a Reader for Professor of Education, Robert Cameron, she stumbled upon psychology and her destiny. She completed her Master's degree in Psychology, submitting a research thesis entitled: "An Experimental Investigation of Some Aspects of A-Social behaviour in Pre-school children," looking at the "emotional life of a group of pre-school children with special reference to the a-social behaviour of the type of shyness." (Fowler, report 28/04/1943). Doctor Lionel Fowler, who marked her thesis, commented upon her breadth of vision that allowed her to see "not shyness in children but children who were shy" (Fowler, *ibid*).

A memoir of her career, written by Bennett shortly before her death in 2011, is the basis of this article. After discovering her story in a newspaper archive I had written to her seeking to learn about her experience of Australia and early career as a psychoanalyst. My letter said:

"I am interested in your memories of the scene in the 1940s and 1950s—and the nature of the contact between the eastern and western states in Australia in the psychoanalytic field. I would like to know more about your training—and why you chose to train with Anna Freud's school rather than the Kleinians or Independents in London"? (Vickers to Bennett, 12 July 2011). Bennett's reply arrived six weeks later. Five pages long, written despite severe illness and degenerative arthritis in her hands, it had taken her three days to complete. While personal correspondence is the product of a shared subjectivity and ongoing conversation,

Bennett's letter to an investigator historian has a different purpose. She wants to tell her story as she sees it. She died three months later, in December 2011.



## Bennett's Memoir

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*First, let me correct a few wrong impressions you seem to have picked up. No, I was not the first Western Australian Psychoanalytic Graduate from the London Institute of Psychoanalysis. There were two others. (1) Miss—M? alas her name escapes me now—who was an educational psychologist trained under Dr. Cameron who was himself educated Ed Ph.D. at the London Institute of Education. Alas, this lady who had a great reputation for helping school learning problems in the thirties, unfortunately, died early, before I was senior enough to meet her. Second: There was Ruth Thomas, also a Cameron—University of Western Australia School of Education Grad, and once his 'Reader' and Secretary, which Summer position he also offered me and I found myself in her footsteps during the war. I knew her well in London, and she became one of Anna Freud's inner circle of "B" group analysts when the Institute split into A Group (Klein) and B group training. (A time of very ugly fights).*

*But let me go back to pre-war years in Perth. Remember when I first left Western Australia on the British Council Scholarship of 1945, the population of Australia was only six million and the 'White Australia Policy' reigned. By then end of the war and with all the influx of New Australians (as we called them) and the abolishment of "White Australia" only, the number reached ten million. I can remember when there were only 65,000 people living north of the Tropic of Capricorn. Times are changed!*

*Pre War Perth?*

*I remember it was a very 'British Community.' Everyone seemed to have relatives in the 'old country.' Many soldiers from the British Indian Regiments had retired to Perth, preferring its temperate climate to the cold English weather after India. Also, the RSL (Returned Soldiers League) from WWI was very active in country areas where I was at school in Lake Grace in the 20s and 30s—English, Scots and Irish—many had sailed to Fremantle from Southampton on a WWI Farmer's Settlement Scheme. Also when I reached the University of Western Australia I found most of our professors were English—or Welsh—Londoners mostly. Professor Cameron (Education), Professor Fox (Philosophy) and Dr. Fowler (Psychology) had all done their degrees in London and looked that way from conferences and sabbaticals ...*

*1937–1939: I took a BA degree in Modern Literature (English, French, and Poetry) in Murdoch's time. Then Professor Cameron offered me the Summer job as his*

Reader, and at the end of this, I had decided to switch my MA major from Natural History (Zoology and Biology) to Psychology. There was a lot of dispute between the Philosophy School (Professor Fox) and Psych (Dr. Fowler who had obtained his Ph.D. under Spearman) regarding the question: ‘was psychology a science or not?’ I gained my MA in Psych (clinical methods) in 1943 but meantime it was war-time, and most of our male staff had joined up, and it was not unusual for senior students to become instructors and take over the classes we had just completed. This happened to me (and others). From 1942 to 1945 I became a lecturer on Dr. Fowler’s staff. At this time the clinical department ran a Child Guidance Clinic with the participation of a Scottish psychiatrist—Dr. Murdoch from Perth’s Heathcote Mental Hospital staff; much vocational guidance work for the Army and RAAF. We were also involved in the intelligence testing of 59 children whose mothers had had Rubella. This led to the discovery of ‘Rubella Retardation’ (HQ In Adelaide). As well as working with returning Veterans I also put in a summer at Western Command Area Hospital where Major Gordon Bennett arranged rehabilitation and vocational guidance for Aussie prisoners of war released from Japanese Prisoner of War camps, often with hands and tongues cut off—Very grim for us young ‘half-baked’ psychologists. In 1944 I was awarded a Hackett Scholarship to study with Florence Goodenough in Minnesota but was not able to take it up because the dollar exchange was stopped during the war. I had also applied for the British Council Scholarship, but they said I was “too young.” I went on with full lecturing duties in the Psych department and applied again in 1945, and this time it was awarded to me.

I sailed in January 1946 on a troop ship to Liverpool with elegant ‘letters of introduction’ written in scholarly handwriting from Drs Cameron and Fowler and others to their colleagues and friends in London. These proved very useful when the British Council Supervisor, after enrolling me for a Ph.D. with Professor Cyril Burt at University College London Psych Department also allowed me a 6-month tour around England and Scotland comparing child guidance clinics. I was interested in clinical methods of treatment of disturbed children. Meantime I had met Ruth Thomas who led me to Miss Freud’s and Kate Friedlander’s big experiment in West Sussex where the case work for my Ph.D. thesis was done (recorded in the text book: “Delinquent and Neurotic Children: A Comparative Study, published in London in 1959 by Tavistock Press and in 1960 in NY Basic Books).

I obtained my Ph.D. in 1951 simultaneously with graduating in the inaugural class (1947–51) at Hampstead Child Therapy Clinic and gained Associate Membership in British Psychoanalytic Society, also in 1951. I returned to Western Australia at the end of 1952, built a practice in a lovely spot at 32 Bellevue Terrace, right near the top of Mount Stirling and the nearby gates of King’s park—did well there (1953–1957) and attended international conferences in Switzerland, Paris and London as well as

interstate conferences at Melbourne (Dr Clara Geroe), Sydney (Bondi Peto) and Adelaide (Southwood).

When I returned to Perth in 1952, I made no attempt to take up my old academic lectureship. I just hung up my shingle in 1953 and began and was busy up to 13 hours a day—the old Army referrals continued (Government paid), and I had organised a group of interested paediatricians with a fortnightly evening meeting in my apartment on the psychoanalytic approach to child rearing as practised by Anna Freud in her war-work with evacuated children and later at the Hampstead Clinic ...

At Miss Freud's "Wednesday meetings" I had met many famous visitors and graduating students provided the programmes. One of these was Marie Bonaparte who gave me great encouragement and also Dr. Clara Geroe, Hungarian colleagues of AF and DB. Dr. Geroe invited me to the Melbourne meetings (we then had nine analysts in Australia) and asked me to repeat a paper she had heard me read on the long work we did with the Concentration Camp children from Theresienstadt and Belsen (reported elsewhere). She made me very welcome in Melbourne, and I met the other Hungarian Dr. Bondi Peto (was president of the Sydney Group), and we were all enthusiastic and enjoyed our meetings thoroughly. This was before all the Graham fights, and Klein controversies began to upset meetings.

I met Dr. Peto again in New York at a conference after I had married and migrated to the USA and he and his wife were living in a pent house in NY and were happier there...

I must not close without mentioning Dr. Cecily de Monchaux. Cecily was a Sydney graduate in psychology, very proud of her half French half Aussie heritage; who took on my job on Dr. Fowler's staff when I left. A few years later she also won a British Council Scholarship and came in my footsteps to London. She was analysed by Dr. Willi Hoffer, a staunch friend and supporter of Anna Freud and soon came into the Hampstead circle. We became good friends, but she was not so much interested in therapy as in teaching. After her Ph.D. degree on 'Levels of Aspiration' published in the *International Psychoanalytic Journal*, she became a lecturer on the staff of UCL and played a big part in the founding of the first Chair of Psychoanalysis at UCL with Joseph Sandler. Cecily, unfortunately, died of a brain tumour just after she had married at the age of 53 years. Greatly missed—a born teacher ...

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Bennett's memoir alerts readers to two considerations in Australian psychoanalytic history.

Firstly, there was the loss of intellectual capital and potential contributions of young Australians who chose to remain abroad after completing their studies. They are unrecognized as Australian despite their later work being grounded in their Australian life and childhood (Rees, 2017, pp. 1–17; 2017a).

Secondly, Bennett's Australian story occurred at a period of significant cultural change—from her 1920s childhood time when the 'whiteness' of British Australia was a 'taken for granted fact' to beginnings of multiculturalism in the 1950s. For the early part of the twentieth century Settler Australians could not imagine their nation as anything other than British despite the existence of indigenous people. (Bongiorno, 2010, p. 74.2). The appointment of Clara Geroe, a Hungarian refugee, as Australia's first training analyst in 1941, heading a group of decidedly British Australian medical practitioners interested in psychoanalysis, was a harbinger of that change. Its impact is yet to be fully assimilated.

When Bennett departed for England on 1 January 1946, Australia's connection with Britain was a sure thing. The Prime Ministers' "Pledge of Unity and Empire"—the outcome of meetings between the prime ministers of Australia, New Zealand Canada and South Africa—and joined by representatives of India and Southern Rhodesia was signed by the British and the leaders of the Dominions on 18 May 1944 and affirmed the 'kinship' between Commonwealth nations. They could be sure of each others' loyalty through common heritage and membership of the Commonwealth as the world moved into the post-war era. (Foreign Policy Approved, 18 May 1944).

From childhood to young adulthood, Bennett's life was framed by the White Australia Policy. Directed at Kanaka and Chinese workers from Pacific Island and Asian countries shortly after Australia became a nation in 1901 (Lake and Reynolds 2010, p. 137) the "Policy's" legislative foundation was formed from three Acts: the *Immigration Restriction Act* the *Pacific Island Labourers Act* and the *Post and Telegraph Act*. (Jones, 2017).

Historians Marilyn Lake and Henry Reynolds (Lake and Reynolds 2010) show that the Policy emerged from evolutionary theories that developed following Darwin's 1851 publication of *Origin of Species*. Social Darwinist theory held that racial groups were ordered on an evolutionary scale. Australian Aborigines were classified as the lowest of low; white Europeans were at the summit. Asians were somewhere in between (Gregorio, 1997, p. 32). Racial characteristics were considered 'species specific'. Stronger, hardier races, or for Australian based self-styled anthropologist, Allan Carroll, British intelligence and ingenuity, would prevail over weaker races unable to adapt to modernity (McGregor, 1997, p. 45) If racial and ethnic groupings were more developed than others, then racial interbreeding was cause for anxiety about the future of the state, if not humanity (McGregor, 1997, p. 33; Huxley et al, 1939, p. 96).

For settlers, 'white', in land not their own, the idea of losing one's loss of racial and cultural identity was terrifying; threatening even the stability of the state. Fears of miscegenation were embodied in legislation ostensibly designed

to sustain the settlers' political and economic dominance. (Lake and Reynolds, p. 126, 128–132). For the politician Alfred Deakin, a writer of the policy, legislating for its racial identity was the point where Australia asserted its right to self government, (p. 143). Internationally, the Policy was an exemplar of progressive reform (p. 139). It divided the world into 'white' and 'non-white' regardless of their standing as powers or status as British subjects. It was

a logical development of the binary thinking that governed British imperial rule—the division between Crown colonies and self-governing Dominions or between 'advanced' and 'backward' races—and the United States naturalisation law, which divided the world's peoples into white and not-white. White Australia was produced in a convergence of these binary classification systems with the result that a vast range of diverse nationalities, ethnicities, and religious groups—Afghans, Chinese, Japanese, Hindus, Moslems, Negroes, Indians, Malays and Pacific Islanders—were lumped together in the ever-expanding category of 'not-white' (Lake and Reynolds, 2008, p. 144).

The racialism of 'White Australia' was apparent by the 1940s, strong enough that, when Japan invaded Australia in 1941, for Curtin there was no alternative but to assert the singularity of the 'British Race' to unify the country (Meaney 2003, p. 126). His assertion of the 'White Australia Policy' did not exclude other races, Curtin explained. It was intended to unite the nation as an outpost of the British race, far from the world they knew (Curtin, Speech 1941). Heritage and race continued to be foundation of international security even as the country opened the way for Southern European Immigration in the post war years and Britain's interests gravitated towards Europe (Bongiorno, 2010, p. 74.1; Bongiornio 2017). In 1947 an agreement was signed with the International Refugee Organization to take up to 12,000 people per year displaced by war in the Baltic states, (Dept. of Immigration 2017, p. 28). From 1951 to 1955 immigration agreements were made with a number of European countries, shifting the intake balance away from Britain. (Department of Immigration 2017, p. 35). In 1966 the way was opened for the immigration of selected Asian and non European applicants By 1973 the Australian population had risen from seven million in 1940 to almost thirteen million.

Bennett has sketched a vivid portrait of the intellectual and social world of her early years, one highly engaged with the rest of the world if not the eastern states. She has also pointed to some of the difficult events that occurred in the Australian psychoanalytic group when she returned. And of course, Australian society was far more complex than the one she had left. She highlights the

presence of the ‘White Australia Policy in her childhood years. Perhaps she is signaling its importance in later developments, particularly in psychoanalysis. Or, as she writes, remarking upon a presence she did not notice at the time. Born a little under two decades since Australian Federation, Bennett’s parents would have been raised in colonial times when Britain was ‘Home’, and the centre of government. Nevertheless Bennett’s memoir might be merely a matter of curiosity for people interested in early Australian psychoanalytic history—tangential to established accounts but of little consequence. This sidesteps the problem of ‘forgetting’: the suppression of events and ideas challenging dominant narratives or founding myths. Along with other expatriates, Ruth Thomas, and Cecily de Monchaux, Bennett’s contribution is unsung in her own country (Rees, 2017a). Professor Cyril Burt had wondered what was it in Western Australia that enabled such people of the calibre of Bennett, Thomas and de Monchaux to emerge? Perhaps their contribution was eclipsed by another, equally vital struggle over the legitimacy of psychoanalysis as a medical intervention- and eventually, medicine’s claim of it.



Historical narratives of psychoanalysis in Australia stress the white, male, medical, colonial model. It is, furthermore, British. (Gold, 1982, pp. 346–351; Connell, 2007, p. 46; Kaplan, 2015, p. 29; Hook, 2010, Salo, 2011, pp. 346–355 ). These histories are Australian centred, without reference to Australia’s place in the world nor the international currents of thought of which it was a part. For historian Robert Kaplan knowledge of psychoanalysis in the early twentieth century was ‘*surprisingly* concurrent with developments in Europe and Britain’(Kaplan 2015. p. 29; my italics). He seems to imagine an Australia confined within its borders, estranged from the centres of Britain and Europe. But from the late nineteenth century Australia was well engaged in multiple global networks of knowledge transmission. There was a strong sense of engagement with ideas and developments in Europe, America and Britain (Fuchs, 2004, pp. 757–784; Potter, 2003, pp. 192–193; Damousi, 2005, p. 87).

Myths of distance and isolation from the Centre persevere in accounts of Freud’s delight upon receiving a letter from Sydney doctor, Donald Fraser, advising that a group of doctors met regularly to read and discuss his work. Subsequently one of the group invited Freud and Jung to speak at the Mental Health and Neurology Section of the 1911 Australasian Medical Congress (MacIntyre, 1978, p. 109–113; Gold, 1982, p. 344; Damousi, 2005, p. 28; Salo, 2011, p. 346; Ellingsen, 2013, p. 16, 69–70; Kaplan, 2015, p. 39). Possibly the Australian doctors thought little of undertaking such a long journey from Europe. Among them were first

generation settlers who had made the long journey from their homeland during their lifetime. Some had undertaken advanced study in Europe, Britain or America. Freud's works were available through international mail and telegraph networks. It made sense to them to invite Freud and Jung to the Australian Congress.

The medical narrative continues, focusing upon developments during the Great War. As shell-shocked soldiers were repatriated to Australia doctors turned to Freud's theories to understand and treat war shock. From 1920 to 1930 *The Medical Journal of Australia* published more than twenty articles focusing on neurology and psychoanalysis including pieces by Doctors Paul Dane, Reg Ellery, and Roy Coupland Winn who later became influential in the establishment of the Melbourne Institute of Psychoanalysis ((Dane, 1929, p. 176; Ellery, 1928, pp. 303–304). Australia's first BPS trained psychoanalyst was Roy Coupland Winn, a war veteran with a distinguished service record (Gold 1982, p. 346). In 1920 Winn began studying psychoanalysis in London with Dr. Robert Riggall as his training analyst in 1920. After his return to Sydney in 1922, Winn tried, unsuccessfully, to introduce psychoanalysis into Sydney hospitals (Damousi, 2005, p. 65–67). His 1930 article 'Psychology in Relation to Modern Medical Practice', written in his capacity of Honorary Physician at Sydney Hospital, sought to explain psychoanalysis in relation to developments in experimental psychology since 1900 (Winn, 1930, pp. 752–761) Winn established his practice in 1931. In a profound act of betrayal Robert Riggall, who visited Sydney in 1934, advised Ernest Jones that despite growing interest in psychoanalysis amongst the medical fraternity, Winn was "not the right man to start a society" (Riggall to Jones, 08/08/1934). Men from the centre of the Empire, Riggall and Jones assumed their authority over the 'the colony,' as a matter of course. Maybe Riggall considered Winn unable to assert himself against opponents of psychoanalysis. Nor did his understanding of psychoanalysis satisfy the BPS. After submitting an application and clinical paper to Council he was approved as a BPS Associate on condition he did not train others. (BPS Minutes, 03 Dec. 1934; 17 Jun. 1935; 10 Jul 1935).

Psychoanalysis in Australia was not the medical men's discovery. In May 1903 John Kirwan, then editor of the Western Australian paper *The Kalgoorlie Miner*, republished an item on Freud's dream theory. His source was the March edition of the English monthly *Household Words*, a periodical founded by Charles Dickens in 1858. Freud, introduced as 'a distinguished scientist,' was described as one of 'the best-known specialists in Europe on the subject of nervous diseases' (Dreams with Meanings, 11 May, 1903). Newspaper archives throw up little more about psychoanalysis until 1910. Following the English publication of Freud's *The Interpretation of Dreams*, papers across the country carried syndicated pieces

explaining his theory of dreams and the unconscious, some publishing the item several times. Psychoanalysis's Australian arrival mirrored Britain's multiple cultural entry points in medicine, education, philosophy, the arts, and literature of the British experience. (Hinshelwood, 1995, pp. 135–151; Damousi, 2005, *passim*). By 1918 Freud's work was studied in psychology courses at the Universities of Sydney, Queensland (Damousi, 2005, pp. 47–49, 87–91) and in Western Australia (The University of Western Australia, School of Psychology, 2015).

Hooke (2010) and Salo (2011, pp. 346–355), speculate that the slow uptake of psychoanalysis emerged from 'protectionism' and 'border control' of the 'White Australia Policy'. New ideas, thinking and creativity were shut out creating a parochial, isolated country, argues Hooke (Hooke 2010). These observations of Australia's insularity have also preoccupied cultural commentators and historians throughout the twentieth century. Horne wonders whether it began in colonial days when, as a source of supply to the rest of the world Australia defined itself and was defined as being subordinate to the 'legitimate' power at the Centre (Horne, p. 181). Perhaps it is an outcome of distance from the centre where knowledge and theory is located and assumed to be universal. (Connell, 2007, pp. 44–47). Considering an Australian social unconscious means exploring the multiple processes commencing with early settlement, if not before. White people are uneasily settled in a land belonging to another people.

The idea of British Australia has also occupied the minds of Australian historians. The *Post and Telegraph Act*, part of the White Australia 'triad', also contributed to the emergence of a white, "British Australia" as ideas, people and products flowed to and from centre and periphery (Bridge 2017, p. 97). From the late nineteenth century Australians could traverse the distance to Britain in a virtual sense. Telephone, telegraph, radio and television networks enabled people, whose mourning for the "homeland" could stretch several generations, to maintain personal and professional connections (Grinberg and Grinberg, 1989, p. 22). New transmission was central. Biased towards British interpretation of the world, news services reinforced the strong relationship between developing technology and Imperial unity. It bound Australians to their British identity. (Potter 2003, p. 192). The idea that Australia was anything other than white and British, or that the link with Britain would dissolve was hard to swallow. (Bongiorno, 2010, p. 74.2).

The response of the Australian medical hierarchy to the European refugee crisis directly impacted upon the development of medical psychoanalysis in Australia. So far little in-depth research has been undertaken on the august and powerful group, the British Medical Association (BMA) in Australia. Those scholars who have studied Australian medical history remark upon psychiatry's

fierce protectiveness of its imperial connections (Cohen 1998, p. 82). Leading Practitioners were British trained well into the twentieth century (Lewis, in Cohen, 1998, p. 82), focusing upon organicity in the cause and treatment of mental disorder. Available archival material, though, suggests the ruling medical body, the British Medical Association (BMA) wanted to keep Australian doctoring 'British.' It also, through the psychiatrists, had definite ideas about the nature of treatment. This did not, it seemed, include psychoanalysis.

But the BMA could not keep the Jewish refugees out on the basis of race. While there was ambivalence about Jewish people the policy did not exclude Europeans Jews. Shephardic Jews from Egypt, and other Jewish groups from the Middle East, were categorized in racial terms (Stratton 1994, pp. 51–65) and not permitted entry. As Stratton explains, European Jewish identity was thought of in terms of religion rather than as a racial threat to the new Australian nation (Stratton 1995, pp. 51–65). Everything changed after Kristallnacht on 11 November 1938. Almost immediately Britain closed its borders to adult men. Unlike New Zealand and Canada, which refused to accept refugees from this point, the Australian government agreed to an intake of 15,000. The British recognized the Dominions' sovereignty in this respect. (London 2000, p. 45). The problem for the BMA though was that they were not British trained.

When medical refugees began to land in Australia it was seemingly the number of potential new arrivals that alarmed the BMA. When forty refugee doctors arrived in Melbourne on the one ship in May 1938, the Victorian Branch of the BMA initiated legislation restricting the registration of foreign doctors (Refugee Doctors in Victoria (1938, July 16)). (B.M.A. and refugee doctors 1938, July 18)). New South Wales followed Victoria in early 1939. The legislation required refugee doctors to complete the final three years of an Australian medical degree followed by a twelve-month internship at an Australian hospital before they could be registered (NSW Medical Board Rules: 1939). In this way standards of practice could be assured. Some were lucky. The psychoanalysts Siegfried and Lotte Fink, both German Jews, arrived in Sydney in February 1939 having been granted an entry permit in September 1937 (Fink, NAA: A12508, 21/1197). Siegfried Fink followed the BMA's requirement for retraining (Schoenberger to Jones 13 May 1939) and subsequently built an analytic practice (Gold, 1982, p. 345). Karl Winter, who settled in Adelaide with his wife, a German Jew, in 1933 could not register until 1956. Winter, analyzed by Hans Sachs, was an influence upon the psychoanalyst Harry Southwood who trained under Geroe (Southwood and Dibden 1979).

By early 1939 knowledge of the European situation had reached Australia. The Sydney press's opposition to the BMA's policy was ferocious, the *Sydney Morning Herald* describing it as "stronger even than racial prejudice in restricting

the flow of aliens into this under tenanted country” (Refugee Doctors (1939, January 3); Case for the refugee (1939, May 11)). At such points of crisis and conflict, the invocation of British authority was often a weapon of choice. In February 1939 the *Newcastle Morning Morning Herald* published a piece noting that the British medical publication, *The Lancet*, opposed these obstructionist policies by medical authorities (Refugee Doctors (1939, February 4)). Despite the evidence refugee doctors could create employment and make a contribution, the *Newcastle Herald* continued, “the emotional belief that the refugee, in particular, takes employment away from nationals” prevailed. (Case for the refugee (1939, May 11)). Despite sustained opposition in the press, the BMA’s influence in government circles was clearly stronger.

The analysts were a tiny group. In 1939 eight European psychoanalysts applied for visas. Six applied together, including Eva Rosenfeld, Clara Geroe with her husband, also a doctor, and Andrew Peto and his wife Elizabeth Kardos. (Meszaros 2014, pp. 156–158). Stephen Schoenberger applied separately (Steiner, 2000, p. 121–123). Michael Balint was another applicant. Geza Roheim also expressed interest in settling in Australia (BPS Australian list 1938). Despite support from Duncan Hall, Australia’s Colonial Representative at the League of Nations, arguing they would bring Australia up to date with international developments through their combination of medical psychoanalysis and education (Hall to Peters 29 March 1939), only Andrew Peto and his wife, Elizabeth Kardos, were accepted. (Meszaros, 2014, p. 157). William Geroe subsequently applied, successfully, for entry of himself, his wife, Clara Lazar, and child, using his particular bricklaying skills to bring his family to Australia. (Graham to Brumley 1995, pp. 1–5).

Throughout the spectre of the BMA loomed, guarding the status quo. Legally psychoanalysts could work if they did not practice as doctors, Schoenberger advised Jones in May 1939. But he was warned by Doctor Paul Dane that the BMA “could use its influence to oppose [Jones], and that would interfere with the standing of psychoanalysis in the future” (Schoenberger to Jones, 13 May 1939).



During the 1920s, psychoanalytic interest moved away from the Great War’s traumatized soldier to the ‘troubled child’; from the child in the soldier to the soldier-parent in the child (Roper, 2016 p. 41–42). Following Hermine von Hug-Hellmuth’s work on child psychotherapy during the 1910s Anna Freud began working therapeutically with children (Roper, 2016, p. 43; Plastow, 2014, pp. 61–84; Midgley, 2012, p. xv). Her first paper “The relation of beating phantasies to a day-dream” was published in 1923 (A Freud, 1923, pp. 89–103). She

was a trained teacher: combining with psychoanalysis the child-centered education embodied in the New Education Fellowship founded in 1921 (Midgley, 2012, p. 36). Her work coincided with Melanie Klein's initial explorations of infantile phantasy. Klein's paper, also published in 1923, "The Development of a Child," was first presented to the Hungarian Psychoanalytical Society (IJPA 1920, p. 122; (Klein, 1923, pp. 419–475).

Children were more the province of lay professionals than medical in Australia (Damousi, 2005, pp. 131–156). In Perth, the government-funded Psychological Clinic headed by the psychologist Ethel Turner Stoneman, opened in 1926 and closed four years later by the government, was the centre of a campaign for its re opening by feminist groups (Brett Vickers, 2012). After her return from studying in London and the United States during 1921, psychologist Constance Davey joined the South Australian Department of Education. Her work, developing connections with child welfare and education authorities, laid the groundwork for long-term welfare reform (Edgar, 1981). Sydney's Dr. Irene Sebire established the first child psychiatric clinic at the Rachel Forster Hospital for Women and Children in 1932 (Gilchrist, 1967, p. 89). They had been inspired by the American child psychiatrist, Dr. Anita Muhl, contracted to provide a consultancy for two years from 1940 (Damousi, 2005, pp. 147–148). Muhl's work followed the New Education Fellowship Conference which had visited each Australian state capital city during 1937. One of its delegates, the internationally renowned psychoanalyst, Susan Isaacs had drawn audiences with her lectures on the child's and infant's emotional life (Cunningham, 1938, pp. 601–640). Bennett's inspiration for a career in psychology was also the result of her involvement and interest in child guidance. The contribution of these groups across Australia to the development of psychoanalytic practice, and indeed, the relevance of psychoanalysis to child welfare and education and its development within organisations in Australia is a subject for further research.

The legitimacy of psychoanalytic practice was contingent upon approval from the Centre. From the start it was medically dominated. Doctors sought Ernest Jones' ear and Jones, it appears, responded in kind. BPS records show that in December 1920 when 'Educationalists from Western Australia' approached the British Psychoanalytical Society for affiliation its response was masterly inaction. The West Australian approach was deferred—and forgotten (Minutes 16/01/1921). But Jones drew attention to sessions run by Australian medical colleagues on the 'Psychotherapy of War Neuroses' at 1920 Australasian Medical Congress held in Brisbane in the recently launched *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*. (IJPA 1920, pp. 340–341). In 1927 Paul Dane went to London, met Ernest Jones and attended BPS lectures with other 'medical men and women'

(Dane, 1929, p. 176). It did not occur to him that Jones had peopled the BPS with lay and medical professionals. For Bennett, accustomed to BPS's intellectual culture where people usually found a place on their merits, it may have meant there was little room for her, a lay analyst when she met the Australian group in the 1950s. In her later years, she was to remark upon the prejudices of the Australian medical establishment and insurance body as the reason she did not return to Australia (Bennett quoted in Slarke, 2003, p. 51).

And so it was to the British Medical Centre that Australian doctors turned when it came to establishing psychoanalytic training. In the light of later developments, it is useful to explore these events in detail. In 1939 a benefactor, Lorna Traill, proposed to donate five thousand pounds to develop an outpatient psychological clinic (Gold, 1982, p. 347). One of committee of six doctors was formed to administer the funds, Paul Dane, believed the Traill money was best used to start an institute of 'pure psychoanalysis' along the lines of the London Clinic for Psychoanalysis. To "strengthen his hand," he wrote privately to Ernest Jones seeking support. "One member is hostile to the proposal," Dane related. "The other four are sympathetic to the proposal but might favour some kind of psychological clinic like Tavistock Square" (Dane to Jones 24<sup>th</sup> August 1939). Involvement from non-medical practitioners does not appear to have been considered. If Dane did so, it was to exclude them. "I am of course only in favour of patients being taken for analysis upon the recommendations of a man versed in psychological medicine and after an interview with the Director or Doctor in charge of the Institute" (Dane to Jones 24 August 1939).

Then there was training. By August 1938 Clara Geroe had been granted an entry visa. Qualified as a psychoanalyst in Hungary in 1930, Geroe specialized in child analysis and education (Lazar Geroe, Application 1938). All that mattered for Dane was that Geroe was a qualified psychoanalyst. The timing of her emigration was right for his plans. But, he complained, although he had corresponded with her several times she had not answered his question: does she intend to settle in Melbourne? If she decided to do so, it would clinch the matter with the committee. "She will or ought to be able to be the nucleus of a psycho-analytical institute" (Dane to Jones 24 August 1939). In reply, Jones assured Dane that Geroe would be relocating to Melbourne (Jones to Dane 11 September 1939). When Geroe arrived with her family in March 1940, Dane was there to meet them. He took them to their first Australian accommodation, a St Kilda boarding house. Geroe, whose English was poor, began the work of learning English (G. Geroe and C Brett Vickers, 23 August 2013). Her first patient was from Europe, able to speak the languages she did. It was more than two years before Geroe felt completely comfortable working in the language. 'She really agonized over that,' her

son George remembered. Unsurprisingly Geroe was homesick. George remembered coming home from school to find her sitting alone, sobbing (G. Geroe and C. Brett Vickers 23 August 2013).

The Melbourne Institute of Psychoanalysis was opened on 11 October 1940. It was constituted on the same lines as the BPS—this replication implying a unity of tradition and goals. In addition to training the *Articles of Association* included the development of a psychoanalytic clinic. And, perhaps reflecting Geroe's interests, a second clinic "for the purpose of providing advice and assistance to parents teachers and educators in their difficulties and problems in the educational sphere" was to be established. The Institute was medical: a non-profit entity with a minimum of five and a maximum of nine constituting the Board, the majority qualified medical practitioners (MIP Articles, 14 November 1940).

Geroe's medical training legitimized Dane's plans but he had to face down insinuations of impropriety by BMA members. Following comments that Geroe would be guilty of 'infamous conduct,' should she practice psychoanalysis he took the matter to a Melbourne firm of solicitors, A.G. Hall and Wilcox (Dane to Jones 28 April 1941). The legal opinion was that Geroe, as a psychoanalyst, was not performing a medical service either in her own right or as an employee of the Institute (A.G. Hall and Wilcox to Dane 21 March 1941). It was the 'all clear'. He sent a copy to the BPS. Geroe was elected to membership of the BPS and recognized by that body as a training analyst in July 1941 (BPS Minutes 9 July 1941). Jones and Winn were elected as "Directors to the Company": the Melbourne Institute of Psychoanalysis (Dane to Jones 28 April 1941). Despite initial protests that it had not been consulted the BMA backed down when, Gold relates, a Dr. Robertson "felt it was better to have the clinic under the wing of the medical profession than to let the psychoanalysts run their separate Institutes as did the osteopaths" (Gold, 1982, p. 350). Thus, in an arrangement between the Imperial Centre and the Colonial periphery, psychoanalysis in Australia was claimed by the medical profession. Geroe, whose career was formed in the structures of the old Austrian-Hungarian Empire, and built upon pedagogy and child analysis, was catapulted into the role as the first training analyst in Australia.

Hooke writes that "Geroe brought to Melbourne Ferenczi's attitude of open-mindedness toward other disciplines, which meant a quite extraordinary outreach work even by today's standards: she established connections with universities and hospitals and set up a low-fee clinic and a child clinic" (Hooke, 2010). It was nothing new for Geroe who had undertaken similar work in Hungary (Lazar Gero Application 1938). There was little need for persuasion. Geroe found a potentially like-minded, well-established network of teachers, nurses and probation officers, interested in the 'mental hygiene of the child.' The medical professionals

may well have been astonished at her cross- disciplinary approach. In Geroe's first year Paul Dane found himself visiting the exclusive Fintona Girls School, to give a talk. (MIP Report 1941). When Geroe visited London and met Ivy Bennett in 1952 she had no hesitation in inviting Bennett to present her work to the Australian group.



London was in ruins when Bennett arrived in 1946. Clothing and food were in short supply. People were exhausted after so many years at war. If she had thought to find a training course she was sorely disappointed. But luck and her connection with Ruth Thomas helped. Within the year she had met Anna Freud. A year later she wrote to Professor Currie, the Vice Chancellor at the University of Western Australia. "There were so much confusion and disappointment with regard to finding serious training courses, I had almost begun to despair," She continued. "The chaotic conditions and disjointed staff make training courses in specialized fields difficult to secure." No courses were planned until 1950 (Bennett to Currie 26 January 1947). The British council Scholarship had sought to provide opportunities for young people from the Dominions in Britain. No one thought about whether Britain could provide anything of substance at this bleak time.

Anna Freud stepped in. "After all this, you can imagine how overjoyed I was to hear that I had been awarded a Special Fellowship in play therapy by the National Association for Mental Health (NAMH) to train under Dr. Kate Friedlander in the West Sussex Child Guidance Service under Anna Freud's supervision". (Bennett to Currie 26 January 1947). "This was wonderful luck", she continued, "as I am the only student of any kind accepted by the Sussex Service and in fact the only play therapist in training by the NAMH. The course has been especially designed for me as the unique and inaugural student in what will, within in a few years be a really excellent course, giving the best qualifications Britain offers in this work". (Bennett to Currie 26 January 1947). Bennett gathered material for her doctorate during 1947 and 1948. Her study of young offenders and neurotic children, aiming to classify the causes of maladjustment, aiming to develop responsive "remedial measures and new types of treatment." was completed in 1951. (Bennett, 1960, pp. 3-4).

Bennett was the eighth member of Anna Freud's cohort of students at the Hampstead Clinic. The others were refugees from Vienna. Gradually the usefulness of psychoanalysis began to dawn on her. She worked with children who were "very severely disturbed emotionally, many of them with heartbreaking war and evacuation histories and neurotic conditions far more complicated than I ever saw in Australian children" (Bennett to Currie, 26 January 1947). "I am

enormously keen about it and feel it is certainly the most interesting and probably the most important work I have ever done. Kate Friedlander supervises my work very closely” (Bennett to Currie, 26 January 1947). “Anna Freud had longer plans for her,” Bennett, continued. “This may mean a training analysis,” she continued. Indeed, she added, Anna Freud was happy to help develop psychoanalysis in Australia. In 1950 she applied to use her Hackett scholarship for this purpose (Bennett to UWA Board 23 09 1950; Bennett to Currie, 26 January 1947). By 1948 Bennett had commenced training at the BPS. Together with fellow student, Ilse Hellman, she published an observational study of a ten-year-old boy who had lived in Anna Freud’s nurseries since he was three. In a “double approach” Bennett and Hellman compared observations made during his early development with material gained during treatment (Bennett and Hellman 1951 pp. 307–324) opening “possibilities for detailed study of important psychological and educational problems.” It was useful for investigations of the “damage done” by early loss and separation experiences and the scope and potential for remedial education (Bennett and Hellmann 1951, pp. 323–324).

Ten months after returning to Australia in January 1953, Bennett presented a paper listed as ‘On Child Analysis’ at the Annual Conference of the Melbourne Institute of Psychoanalysts. Dr Frank Graham presented a paper on Kleinian analysis, Andrew Peto presented a paper ‘On Depersonalization’ (MIP, 11 March 1954). Bennett did not attend the June 1954 meeting, the minutes noting members’ regret that ‘Miss Bennett was unable to make the long journey from Perth (ASP, 23 June 1954). Graham’s presentation on Kleinian theory may have been a way of ‘throwing down the gauntlet’ against Geroe’s clear preference for Anna Freud and child analysis. Years later Graham recounted that Geroe was “against Kleinians. Roy Winn was all for her although he had no Kleinian experience. I may have caught it from him, but I doubt it because in my mental hospital work I saw a lot of Kleinian work observable in insane patients . . . . But Clara was a bit against it. So several of us went to England for a Kleinian experience. Clara didn’t try and stop us but she certainly did not encourage us, Definitely not. She was a bit on the discouraging side”. (Graham and Brumley, 1995, pp. 1–5).

Graham’s focus on a controversy about Klein, while true, is disingenuous. After the Melbourne Society was established in 1940, the British took little interest in it apart from publishing its reports. There was a war to attend to. But from 1950 the British began to draw the Australian group under its umbrella. It was almost fatal for the small group of nine psychoanalysts constituting the Australian Society of Psychoanalysts.

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Andrew (Bondi) Peto arrived in Australia in 1949, four years after the death of his first wife, Elizabeth Kardos during the Nazi's siege of Budapest. To support him the BPS made him a member. (Meszaros, 2014, p. 166). He stayed in Melbourne with the Geroe family before moving on to Sydney in 1950 (G. Geroe, 23 08 2013).

At this point BPS records show that on 19 July 1950, the BPS Board discussed Peto's proposal, through Balint, "for the Australian Study Group to be made a branch of the BPS". Simultaneously Geroe had written to the Training Secretary John Rickman requesting that Australia become a Branch of the BPS (Geroe to Rickman 25 June 1950). It was an extraordinary turn of events. One wonders what Peto was playing at? Or Balint? And the BPS, for that matter? The events that follow suggest the BPS was supporting Peto's bid to take charge of the Australian group at the expense of Geroe. The BPS followed Geroe's suggestion that Winn be granted full membership of the BPS (Meeting 15 January 1951; 07 February 1951). Siegfried Fink was transferred from the Swiss Psychoanalytical Society (Meeting 19 November 1951).

Geroe supported her proposal for Australia's Branch membership with the information she had completed the training of two analysts, Graham and Southwood (25 June 1950). She had worked alone for almost a decade. Britain had taken little interest in Australia since her arrival in 1940. So the British response, must have been a shock to her. In his response Rickman stated that Geroe's method of combining the roles of analyst, trainer, educator and supervisor, and then accrediter of new analysts, was no longer acceptable to the BPS. "It had occurred to us that it would ease your position and bring practice into line in Australia with that in England if the separation of registration and education was made one of our policies. Accordingly, you will do the training and we the registration". (Rickman to Geroe, 27 October 1950). Frank Graham was accredited by the BPS on 25<sup>th</sup> September 1951. Correspondence clarifying BPS decisions about of Peto's role has not come to hand.

But it appears that Peto was the BPS's man. Rickman died suddenly on 1 July 1951. Winnicott took over as Training Secretary. In September 1951, Peto applied, successfully, to the BPS for support for his application to register as a Medical Practitioner in New South Wales (Board Minutes 25 September 1951). By this time he was heading the Sydney Institute of Psychoanalysis. In 1952, following a BPS review of its Commonwealth Institutions, Michael Balint wrote to Winn suggesting that the Sydney Institute should constitute itself formally as a Study Group until it was developed enough to be recognized as a Branch Society. Furthermore, Balint suggested that, the Sydney and Melbourne groups could be combined to form a single Australian Society. (Balint to Winn, 26 May 1952).

Winn was excited but careful. Such a move, he wrote, “should benefit both the aims of psychoanalysis and Australia itself, and I also feel sure that Drs Lazar Geroe and Frank Graham would approve.” He would meet with them “to work out a constitution which however will be as much as possible, *with respect to our subordinate position*, modelled on the lines of the British Psychoanalytical Society” (Winn to Balint, 4 June 1952). The italics are mine. Subordinate to whom? For Winn and his colleagues, it was always going to be a “British Society”. Was he referring to Geroe? Or recognizing that the Australian group was, foremost, accountable to the British Society?

When Bennett joined the Australian group in 1953 Peto was making an exceptional contribution. He organized seminars for Institute members and paediatricians at the Institute of Child Health. At the Pacific Region ‘Seminar on Mental Health in Childhood’ organized by the World Health Organisation and Commonwealth of Australia in August 1953, he gave two lectures on ‘Childhood Development’ and ‘The Effects of Separation on Childhood.’ His audience included delegates from Australia and South East Asia. (Peto to Hellman, 21 May 1954). He presented on war neuroses, trauma and child development. A highly intellectual analyst who had also published his work in the 1930s, Peto was steeped in Ferenczi’s interpretation of psychoanalysis. One of his primary interests was the effects of separation upon the developing child, and the importance of helping mothers to develop a secure, loving base within themselves to provide this for their children (Damousi 2009, pp. 134–136). In 1955 he was a guest speaker at a symposium on juvenile delinquency organised by the Australasian Association of Psychiatrists (Peto to Hellman 25 May 1955).

But Peto’s venture failed. The BMA’s bars on the registration of refugee doctors continued until 1956 when the rules began to be relaxed, to approve doctors recognized as contributing to Australian society. Geroe’s application succeeded. (7 More Migrant Doctors in Vic. (1957, January 1)). Inexplicably Peto’s did not. Before the year was out he had left for New York. George Geroe recalls his mother’s relief about this—although, when pressed, she retorted that the matter was ‘confidential’ (G Geroe and C Brett Vickers, 26 August 2013). We do not know what communication Peto had with the BPS. Perhaps the British, expecting Peto’s registration to come through, was ‘rolled’ by the BMA in Australia.

On the basis of available documents the BPS response appears to be breathtakingly authoritarian, without recognition of the particularities of the Australian situation, even if was of a mind that it was carrying out IPA policy. Without Peto as a second training analyst the BPS decided it could no longer recognize the Australian group as competent to undertake training on its behalf. (Meeting BPS 19 November 1956). Its letter to Geroe, signed by John Bowlby, the BPS Training

Secretary is clearly a response to correspondence from her. The “British Society had not understood that Geroe was the only training analyst in Australia,” he wrote. Perhaps no one had bothered to check, whether Peto had been formally appointed as a training analyst.

Bowlby continued, “I think we all agree that it is undesirable for all training activities to be carried out by the one analyst” (Bowlby to Geroe 20 December 1956). The BPS “would only recommend for Associate Membership students who have had at least one year of supervision from another analyst than the one who has carried out the personal analysis.” (Bowlby) Unless another analyst was fully qualified and appointed as a training analyst, Australia was not in a position to provide training. Candidates would have to go to Britain to qualify. Without their man, and having left Geroe alone for so long, the British had to retrieve the situation. It made an offer. If Frank Graham was to qualify fully, Bowlby suggested, he could become the second training analyst needed for Australian training to be re accredited. (Bowlby to Geroe 20 December 1956). Bowlby went on to say:

The study of the history of training in Australia clearly teaches us a lesson: it is necessary to institute much closer communication between yourself and us. With more contact between the Melbourne Institute and the Training Committee, various problems could be thrashed out. These included the principles of selection, procedure of acceptance, length of analysis before training starts, etc. Furthermore, the Council requires that the Training Committee be informed in some detail about new applicants before they are accepted . . . . We believe that with closer contact we shall be of greater use to the Australian Society and we shall avoid misunderstandings and mistakes” (Bowlby to Geroe 20 December 1956).

It appears Geroe did not disclose the contents of Bowlby’s letter to her colleagues or students. If she had done so, it is to be wondered whether anyone would have thought to question the British position or appeal to the International Body. While memories of this time have not been recorded, informal conversations have disclosed that Geroe’s students were faced by her implacable insistence that to qualify they had to go to Britain for training (J Brett and C Brett Vickers, c. 20 October 2014). Graham and Southwood departed in 1957. So, reluctantly, did Rose Rothfield (*ibid*). Bennett also left for London. In 1959 after Graham qualified as a full member of the BPS and the analyst, Vera Roboz, with full BPS approval arrived in Australia from Hungary to support Geroe, the Australian Society set to work.

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Bennett's story, told in parallel with the early history of Australian psychoanalysis, shows that the early history of Australian psychoanalysis is set within global currents of knowledge exchange, and political change. Australia was far from isolated from the rest of the world and yet caught within the ambiguities of its colonial identity and desire to find its own path. The Australian story of psychoanalysis, particularly the establishment of psychoanalytic training is a site of this encounter. Geroe, a Hungarian representing the BPS as a training analyst, was placed in a country far from the centre and had to make the best of it. She also had to face the BPS's assertion of authority over its Dominion Society. The BMA response to the 1939 refugee crisis is another point for further exploration. Its Britishness is clear. And Paul Dane seeking to establish an institute turned to Britain, following a route no doubt taken by medical colleagues before him when they wanted to get something up and running in the colonies. Undoubtedly the psychoanalysts, and doctors, from Europe represented an unwanted intrusion which resulted in a flurry of Britishness and whiteness. By 1956, perhaps, Geroe was British enough.

Bennett's story also reveals the neglect of an invaluable resource in the development of the psychoanalytic discipline. Here were three native born lay psychoanalysts, all of them women: Ruth Thomas, Cecily de Monchaux and Ivy Bennett. They had found their way to London on the basis of their Australian qualifications and experience and trained at the Centre. Their problem, it seems, was they were not medically qualified. Bennett tried to engage with the Australian group, with little success. In 1957 De Monchaux made a site visit to the Australian group, on behalf of the BPS (Council Meeting 25 June 1957; 07 October 1957). Ruth Thomas stayed away from the professional bodies even though she retained personal links with Australia (Model, 1983, p. 3).

Bennett did not want to be '(mis) quoted.' Indeed, she was not certain she wanted her story to be published. Nor did she wish to be studied. She has, though, provided much to consider about complex story of Australian psychoanalysis, its place in Australian Settler culture and its relationship with the rest of the world.

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21 September 1951: Peto applied for support for his registration as a Medical Practitioner in NSW

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