

**Emergency and Confrontation: Australian Military Operations in Malaya and Borneo, 1950-1966.** By Peter Dennis and Jeffrey Grey. Allen & Unwin in association with the Australian War Memorial, Sydney and Canberra, 1996. Pp. xvi + 381. \$59.95 cloth.

This the next instalment of the official history of Australian military involvements in South-east Asia in the postwar years focuses on two conflicts at the sunset of the British Empire: the defeat of communism in the Malayan emergency of the late 1950s, and the defeat of Indonesian expansion in the Confrontation period in the mid-1960s. It is military history in the most conventional sense, neither a social history of human action, nor primarily the story of politics and diplomacy, the latter being dealt with in other volumes of the series. It is copiously researched, richly produced, but of very specialised interest.

JM

**Playford's South Australia: Essays on the History of South Australia, 1933-1968.** Edited by Bernard O'Neil, Judith Raftery and Kerrie Round. Association of Professional Historians, Adelaide, 1996. Pp. xv + 391. \$45.00 cloth.

For over a quarter of a century, from 1938 to 1965, 'Uncle' Tom Playford was premier in Adelaide. This interesting, beautifully produced collection of seventeen essays by South Australian historians chronicles some of the social, cultural and industrial history over which he reigned. Some essays are about Playford himself, as pragmatic conservative, as philistine and as interventionist; others deal with aspects of social history, such as religion, health, theatre and migration. Based on detailed research, the volume adds up to an interesting survey of the social changes as South Australia modernised and industrialised.

JM

**Sport in Australian History.** By Daryl Adair and Wray Vamplew. Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1997. Pp. xiv + 169. \$24.95 paper.

Another in the 'Australian Retrospectives' series, this is not about the history of sports so much as sport and its cultures as a window into wider society. Primarily looking at high profile, performative sports, Adair and Vamplew take a thematic approach, such as the ways that the organisation of sport reflects mythologies of egalitarianism, alongside social division and exclusion. One underlying interest is whether sport has been a factor in nationalism, both as 'imagined community' and as the medium of myths of national character; a nice, if disillusioning, example of this book's debunking of sporting folklore, is the revelation that Archer did not walk from New South Wales to win the Melbourne Cup but came most of the way by boat!

JM

**Young in a Warm Climate: Essays in Queensland Childhood.** Edited by Lynette Finch. University of Queensland Press, Brisbane, 1996. Pp. xviii + 173. \$18.00 paper.

*Young in a Warm Climate* is a special issue of the *Queensland Review*, edited by Lynette Finch, and devoted to essays on the history of childhood. Beginning with the nineteenth-century belief that childhood in a tropical climate was particularly fraught, the collection opens with essays by Kay Saunders and Katie Spearritt, M. John Thearle and Lynette Finch on various aspects of child health. The Queensland focus continues in the next section under the general heading of representations, with Sandra Taylor examining the Queensland *School Reader*, Sharyn Pearce, children's and adolescent fiction, and Gail Reckie and Paul Wilson, childhood and the law. The subject matter of the final section, discipline and education, sees the regional emphasis replaced with a more Foucauldian notion of construction, as Colin Symes discusses school architecture,

Raymond Evans, loyalism during World War I, and Gordon Tait and Denise Meredith, debates about sex education. As an example of a regional collection in a specialised area, *Young in a Warm Climate* brings into the public arena research that will be of interest well beyond the borders of Queensland.

SS

**Evangelical Christianity in Australia: Spirit, Word and World.** By Stuart Piggin. Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1996. Pp. xiv + 296. \$29.95 paper.

Religious history is experiencing something of a revival in Australia. However, recent accounts, Stuart Piggin believes, fail to give due attention to evangelicalism, always the most powerful force within Protestantism. His *Evangelical Christianity in Australia* is a preliminary attempt to redress the imbalance. Drawing primarily on sources related to the Anglican Diocese of Sydney, but contrasting this with the strongly lay leadership that has characterised the movement in Melbourne, he argues that evangelicalism is best understood as a movement with three major elements, spirit, word and world. Within a broad chronological framework the book gives examples of periods when these three were held in synthesis, making the movement strong, and other times when the synthesis began to unravel leaving one element dominant and the movement weakened as a result. There is a constant yearning for revival, which the author argues was achieved during the first Billy Graham crusade, but also a caution against extremism, which damages individual lives and leaves the movement as a whole at risk, with the perceived enemies, liberalism, ritualism and secularism, always on the alert to take advantage of its weakness. Essentially an insider's account, *Evangelical Christianity in Australia*, for its detail as much as for its arguments, will become a valued source for historians of religion in Australia.

SS

**Under Blue Skies: The Social Construction of Intellectual Disability in Western Australia.** Edited by Errol Cocks, Charlie Fox, Mark Brogan and Michael Lee. Centre for Disability Research and Development, Faculty of Health and Human Sciences, Edith Cowan University, Perth, 1996. Pp. xi + 334. \$27.00 paper.

*Under Blue Skies* is a collection of essays around the theme of intellectual disability, written by both historians and practitioners in the field. Disposing of the first 140 years of the state's history in the first two chapters, a more than adequate representation of the interest taken by bureaucrats in people with intellectual disabilities during that period, it then turns its attention to the years since 1960, a time when, the authors argue, Western Australia was introducing innovations well ahead of the other states. Later essays pay particular attention to the role of competing professions laying claim to expertise in the area and to the contribution of parents, whose concern was often a spur to action.

There is a sense of darkness and light in the arrangement of the essays, with the studies of Norman Megahy and Christina Gillgren on the bad old days of indiscriminate institutionalisation giving way to the cautious celebration of policies based upon theories of normalisation in the work of Leonie Stella and Megahy again. It is left to the final essay, 'Discourses of Disability', by Errol Cocks and Matthew Allen, to remind readers of the conditional nature of perceived progress and the need for continued vigilance if the rights of people with disabilities are not to be disregarded.

SS

**Australian Dictionary of Biography, volumes 1-12, 1788-1939.** Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1996. \$299.00 CD-ROM.

In its first venture into multimedia publishing, Melbourne University Press has released a CD-ROM edition of the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, volumes 1-12. A text-only transfer, using Folio Views