INTRODUCTION

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> *The state is invisible [it must be] personified before it can be seen, symbolised before it can be loved, imagined before it can be conceived.*
>
> – Walzer (1967, p. 191)

The 2001 centenary of Australian Federation celebrations highlighted the roles played by convicts and free settlers in the colonisation of Australia. However, little attention has been given – at least by social scientists – to other colonial and post-colonial figures and their influence on contemporary Australian identity. The purpose of this book is to address this gap assessing the influence of convicts, free settlers, bushrangers (in particular Ned Kelly), the Anzacs, sporting heroes and the nation's other important individuals on Australian identity.

How much influence do historical and popular figures have on the way Australians see themselves in the twenty-first century? To what extent do colonials such as convicts and bushrangers still have an influence upon contemporary Australian identity, and what form does this take?

Often viewed as a successful sporting nation, to what extent is Australian identity influenced by the exploits of sporting celebrities, and are those sportspeople predominantly male?

Situated in the field of empirical national identity research, this book explores the influence of colonial and contemporary figures on Australian national identity. It contributes to empirically based Australian literature, where authors have tried to assess various aspects of national identity (e.g. Pakulski & Tranter, 2002, 2000a, 2000b; Jones, 1997; Jones & Smith, 2001; Phillips, 1996, 2000). For example, Jones (1997, p. 291) identified 'Australian nativism' and 'civic culture', claiming that the former identity type 'looks backward to a vision of Australia that is fading', while 'civic culture, a more abstract and open concept, looks forward to a future already in the making'. Building upon Jones' work, Pakulski and Tranter (2000a, p. 218) suggested that 'ethno-nationals' among other things, stressed 'the importance of more "primordial ties" acquired by birth and long residence, the ties that bind us to the ethnically defined and culturally circumscribed nation', whereas 'civic' identity was characterised by 'the centrality of voluntary ties, interdependence and shared commitments to the core institutions of a society'.[1] Building upon this empirical tradition, we use survey data to explore the influence of Australian colonial and post-colonial figures.

Earlier related studies based their findings upon survey questions constructed to test abstract notions of national identity, such as civic or 'nativist' identity types (Jones, 1997). Our research relates to historical groups and individuals, and the influence they have on the way contemporary Australians see themselves. We conceptualise a more historically grounded form of national identity than previous researchers in this field of research. Of course, claims of historical influence and collective memory certainly have essentialist elements. For example, some Australians are able to

trace their bloodlines directly to the early settlers, convicts, bushrangers and to the Anzacs. Yet if national identity is linked with 'the various sets of lived relationships in which individuals are engaged' (Bradley, 1996, p. 24), we should find that historical groups are associated with certain social and attitudinal dimensions that we can uncover in our survey data.

Smith (1991, p. 14) outlines five features that are common to conceptions of identity at the national level, that relate to the nation. He defines a nation as 'a named human population sharing an historic territory, common myths and historical memories, a mass, public culture, a common economy and common legal rights and duties for all members'. Given that nations are complex and abstract as well as founded on the basis of territorial boundaries, it follows that national identity is also multidimensional, formed from the shared myths, memories and culture. The latter are particularly relevant to our research.

Smith (1996) argues that the inhabitants of many nations claim to be a 'chosen people', who have arrived in their 'promise land' and at some stage in their history experienced a 'golden age' of 'heroes, priests and poets'. Smith's conception of nationhood provides an important point of departure for this book. The first golden age in Australia recalls a time of convicts, settlers and pioneers, men and women who developed the British colonies in Australia. A second golden age was set more recently during the post-World War II economic boom. The foundation 'myths' of the first golden age connect modern Australians to early colonists, transported convicts, bushrangers and 'gold rush' miners. They form the basis of the colonial and national history and provide an Australian 'mythscape' (Bell, 2003).[2] In Australia, the 'emigrant-colonists' and free settlers were the 'chosen people' (Smith, 1999, p. 137) who came mainly from England, Ireland and Scotland (Ward, 1978 [1958], p. 47). These early 'white'

Australians 'subdued' the indigenous people and kept at bay 'external enemies' such as the French (Phillips, 1996, p. 116).

We agree with (Bradley, 1996) that national identity is multifaceted, complex and fragmented. It is frequently contested, and implicit (sometimes explicit) in this concept are questions over belonging, who is a member of the nation and who is not? As Weeks (1990, p. 88) claims,

> *[A]t it's most basic it gives you a sense of personal location, the stable core to your individuality. But it is also about your social relationships, your complex involvement with others.*

Building upon Weeks (1990), Bradley distinguishes personal and social aspects of identity. Personal identity refers to 'the construction of the self: our sense of ourselves as unique individuals, how we perceive ourselves and how we think others see us' (1996, p. 24). In contrast, social identity 'refers to the way that we as individuals locate ourselves within the society in which we live and the way in which we perceive others as locating us' (1996, p. 24).

There are three dimensions of identity that need to be discussed at this point; the passive/active, essentialism/social constructionism and ethnic/civic notions of identity. Bradley (1996, p. 25) distinguishes passive from active identity. In our research, we consider claims to convict ancestry as an aspect of national identity that is predominantly passive, but one that may also be expressed actively, for example, through participation in genealogical societies (Lambert, 2002). Public interest in convicts is more broadly expressed through the popularity of convict tourist sites, such as the former Tasmanian penal colony at Port Arthur, or re-enactments of convict experiences at Sydney Cove.

Calhoun's (1994) distinction between essentialist and socially constructed notions of identity is critical for our

analyses. Calhoun (1994, p. 13) points to the problematic nature of 'essentialist' identity claims where 'individual persons can have singular, integral, altogether harmonious and unproblematic identities'. Alternatively, social constructionism 'challenges at once the ideas that identity is given naturally and the idea that identity is produced purely by acts of individual will'. In addition, Calhoun (1994, p. 13) takes issue with 'accounts of collective identities as based on some "essence" or set of core features shared by all members of the collectivity and no others'. An example would be those who believe that the only 'true' Australians are those who are born in Australia.

Bell (2003, p. 73) also cautions against essentialist identity conceptualisations, maintaining there is 'no singular, irreducible, national narrative, no essentialist "national identity"'. Instead he champions the idea of the 'mythscape' where 'the myths of the nation are forged, transmitted, reconstructed and negotiated constantly' (Bell, 2003, p. 75). Constructionist understandings of identity were advanced by Anderson (1991), who famously maintained that nations are

> *imagined, because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion. (1991, p. 6)*

Cornell and Hartmann (1998, p. 101) point to the interactive process of identity formation, arguing 'neither actions nor circumstances alone create groups, for our actions depend on how we interpret circumstances and circumstances ultimately are the products of human actions'. One of the main foci of this research is to identify important components of the 'collective memories' associated with the Australian nation, in this case, colonial and post-colonial aspects of the Australian *mythscape*.

In the United States, Schwartz (2008) argues that stories concerning the birth of nations are 'foundational' and important for generating collective memories and beliefs. Schwartz's (1998, 2008) research on changing 'memory' in the United States demonstrates the decline of meta-narratives regarding 'the myth that answers ultimate questions about national origin, purpose and fate'. Similarly, Schuman, Schwartz and d'Arcy (2005) argue that heroic narratives that attempt to answer ultimate questions about the origins of societies are less convincing. For example, the claim that Columbus 'discovered' America has declined in salience from the late twentieth century onwards, due to revisionist attacks on his reputation in the 1970s (Schuman et al., 2005, p. 11).[3] However, Schuman et al. (2005, p. 13) found that many Americans continue to regard Columbus as having 'discovered America', with only a small proportion attributing villainous qualities to the explorer, suggesting such revisionist critiques may have been overstated.

The research of Schuman et al. (2005, p. 13) on Columbus mirrors the decline and subsequent revival of public support for the Anzacs in Australia, with the size of Anzac day marches declining during the 1970s in response to the Vietnam War, but recovering strongly since the 1990s (Lake & Reynolds, 2010). Although contested, Columbus' role in the American foundation myth is central, while equivalent figures such as Captain James Cook are less prominent in the foundation narrative of Australia. Historically, expressing adulation for 'heroes', placing people 'on a pedestal' (with the possible exception of sportspeople), is tantamount to anti-Australian behaviour (Horne, 2008 [1964]). Goals of equality, a 'fair go' and egalitarianism are (at least ideally) upheld as key Australian values, while hero-worship has traditionally been frowned upon, and those who are elevated tend to be 'cut down', a process referred to as the 'tall-poppy' syndrome

(Macintyre, 2009, p. 255). A major aim in this book is to identify the historical and contemporary national figures who exemplify these Australian values.

As citizens of a settler society, many Australians appear to appreciate the role played by early ('white') immigrants in the formation of their national identity. Yet the role of those early involuntary settlers, the convicts – who were the very reason eighteenth century British colonies emerged in Australia – tends to be downplayed. The 'convict stain' persists in Australia, in tension with more recent celebrations of 'convict chic' (Bennett, 1988; Sayle, 1988). The oft-romanticised bushrangers appear to have little relevance for contemporary understandings of Australian identity, with one exception, the 'armoured outlaw' Ned Kelly, who has (for some) transcended his negative reputation to emerge as a romantic outlaw hero. Nevertheless, the very fact that a rural outlaw remains a hero of an advanced industrialised nation, more than 125 years after his death, signals the continuing importance of the Australian bush in the construction of the Australian national mythscape.

For Smith (1991, p. 91) 'at the broadest level nationalism [is] … a form of historicist culture, and civic education', an ideology 'that overlays or replaces the older forms of religious culture and familial education'. The nation must boast 'a glorious past, a golden age … to give meaning to its promise of restoration and dignity' (Smith, 1991, p. 161). When was this golden age of 'saints and heroes' that tells Australians what was 'authentically theirs' and how to see themselves in a modern nation state (Smith, 1991, p. 67)? Settler societies such as Australia, America and Canada 'attempt to coalesce the cultures of successive waves of (mainly European) immigrants' (Smith, 1991, p. 40) rather than incorporate indigenous history and traditions. We identify the Australians who exemplify popular notions of national identity, by quantifying 'important

Australians', the heroes who contemporary Australians see as reflecting or contributing to national identity (Smith, 1991, p. 161; Hobsbawm, 1990, pp. 72–73).

Due to the short history of 'white' Australia and the under recognition of indigenous history and leaders, Australians have limited historical figures to draw upon. Some nations have long, written histories filled with heroic figures to choose from, such as Churchill, Nelson, Washington, Lincoln or Napoleon. As a settler society with a short history of European colonisation, Australians have fought in several theatres of war, but have never fought a war on home soil, and have not experienced a civil war or revolution apart from local rebellions such as the Eureka stockade, Castle Hill or the 'Great Rebellion' in Sydney. Australia lacks easily identifiable military or political foundation heroes. Indeed, the best-known Australian war heroes are the Anzacs, a laudable group rather than notable individuals, who, while they fought bravely, were defeated by Turkish forces at Gallipoli in World War I. Admiration for the underdog and a dislike or ambivalence regarding those elevated to higher office is allegedly part of the Australian character (Hirst, 2007). The lack of identifiable foundation heroes goes some way to explaining why a nineteenth century outlaw is arguably the only 'heroic' colonial figure recognised by the majority of contemporary Australian citizens.

Theophanous (1995, p. 281) maintains that 'prior to the development of multiculturalism' there were 'two strands' to national identity in Australia: 'one that emphasised our British heritage, and one that emphasised a limited form of egalitarianism and commitment to social justice'. Another potential reason why Ned Kelly remains an iconic figure is that he straddles both of these identity dimensions. Kelly's stance against the colonial police taps into historical elements of Australian identity where the British authorities were seen as colonial overlords.

Anti-British aspects of the Kelly story in part account for the opposition of right wing conservatives and pro-monarchists who downplay his symbolic importance. At the same time, Kelly's conflict with colonial police 'oppressors' (as some colonial Australians saw them) and the 'greedy' banks that preyed upon poor Irish settlers relate directly to the egalitarian and social justice strands of Australian identity. Tensions between the British and Irish in their countries of origin were transplanted and played out in the colonies, with early Irish-Australians on the receiving end of some rough justice from the colonial police and wealthy (predominantly British) landowners, known as 'squatters' (Jones, 1995). Outlaws such as Kelly

> *were celebrated because they were seen, rightly or wrongly, to embody the spirit of (Irish) defiance and protest, a symbolic striking back of the poor and dispossessed against those perceived as their oppressors. (Seal, 1996, p. 197)*

Billig (1995, p. 69) argues 'national identity is more than an inner psychological state or an individual self-definition: it is a form of life, which is lived daily in the world of nation-states'. National identity is continuously constructed and reinforced by everyday symbols and language (Billig, 1995), including for Australians, the frequent appearance of Ned Kelly in art, books, film and newspaper articles. In Kelly's era, bushrangers had a direct or indirect impact upon the lives and imagination of a substantial number of people. This is reflected in the fact that before Kelly was hung in 1880, 32,000 signatures were collected petitioning the Governor for a stay of his execution (Molony, 2001, p. 196). Our research shows that Kelly still has symbolic resonance for a majority of Australians long after his death. In part, he is remembered as one of the few colonial figures who exhibited the anti-authoritarian,

rebellious qualities claimed to be part of the Australian national character. As Fitzsimmons (1990) put it, '[O]ther nations glorify authority and openly embrace the officialdom culture. We eschew such notions. (Here's to you, Ned Kelly)'.

Kelly's image has also been used to market a variety of Australian products, from towels and coffee mugs to the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games. He has been 'aggressively mined' by the mass media as 'a source of borrowed meaning and identity' (Klein, 2001, p. 73), as Jones (1995, p. 339) put it, 'Ned Kelly has become a commodity to be packaged and promoted'. Yet Kelly's popularity extends far beyond those with interests in his commodification. While word of mouth transmission of his exploits has diminished, the architects of popular culture still 'carry a torch' for Ned. As an extract from a prominent Australian newspaper illustrates, 'Ned Kelly's life and legend have inspired paintings, novels, films and songs. One cannot understand the Australian spirit without coming to terms, like it or not, with his life and legend' (SMH, 1988).

Kelly evokes a variety of responses, both positive and negative. For some he was an underdog, who stood against injustice and police corruption in support of his family and friends, a rebel not afraid to break the rules, exemplified in the expression 'as game as Ned Kelly' (Hirst, 2007, p. 31). Yet many revile the outlaw, regarding him as a dangerous thief, bank robber and police killer who sought to undermine the social order and stability of the Australian colonies. In Chapter 3, we provide evidence of the social divisions over Kelly, in the way different assessments of his character shape attitudes towards his standing as a national hero. Attitudes towards Kelly are also circumscribed according to demographic and political background. Younger people, as Mannheim (1952 [1928]) suggests in terms of European intellectuals, are more likely to positively acknowledge Kelly's

rebellious nature, and ideologically, the left tend to exhibit more favourable attitudes towards Kelly than the right. Political Party identification plays a similar role. Supporters of the Australian Labor Party (ALP) and the Greens tend to see Ned Kelly in a more positive light than Liberal partisans.

The ALP has favoured constitutional change towards a republic over the existing monarchical arrangements, which also echoes Kelly's republican aspirations. Ned Kelly was allegedly carrying a letter (the Jerilderie Letter) outlining plans for a North Eastern Victorian Republic when he was captured (Jones, 1995, Chapter 16; Molony, 2001, p. 155). According to Warhurst (1993, p. 106), the ALP has 'been influenced by a strong residue of anti-British feeling stemming from the predominance of Catholics of Irish-Australian decent'. By contrast, members of the conservative coalition parties (the Liberal and National parties) tend to be 'emotionally attached to the monarchy and tradition' (Warhurst, 1993, p. 104), with former Prime Minister Howard effectively thwarting the 1999 constitutional referendum for an Australian Republic by not offering bi-partisan support (McAllister, 2001).

CHAPTER ORGANISATION

In the following chapters, we assess the relevance of a range of historical and contemporary figures for Australians' attitudes to national identity. Chapter 1 examines the role of convicts, Chapter 2 the free settlers, Chapter 3 the outlaw Ned Kelly and Chapter 4 the volunteer Word War I soldiers collectively known as the Anzacs. In Chapter 5, we review the role of Australian sporting heroes, and in Chapter 6 we ask who Australians consider to be the most 'important' individuals who personify contemporary national identity.

We draw upon the distinction between essentialist and socially constructed identity in Chapter 1, as we suspect that many of those who claim convict descent in Australia (and indeed those in the UK who deny that their convict relations were transported from Britain to Australia) are engaging in a form of identity construction, rather than acknowledging an actual blood line or family connection. As Smith explains, 'ethnicity' has for some 'a "primordial" quality', existing 'in nature, outside time' (1991, p. 20). This may be contrasted with 'situational' conceptions of ethnicity that are related to 'attitudes, perceptions and sentiments that are necessarily fleeting and mutable, varying with the particular situation of the subject'. This allows ethnicity to be used "instrumentally' to further individual or collective interests' (Smith, 1991, p. 20).

The contrast between 'ethnic' conceptions of nation that emphasise 'community of birth and native culture' and 'civic' forms based upon '[H]istoric territory, legal-political community, and legal-political equality of members, and common civic culture and ideology' (Smith, 1991, p. 11) is an important distinction in the context of our research.

Chapter 1 is an empirical examination of those who claim convict ancestry. We use questions that were first included into the 1999 Australian Constitutional Referendum Survey (ACRS; Gow, Bean, & McAllister, 2000) by Ronald Lambert. Lambert (2002) used the survey questions for descriptive purposes, while explaining why members of genealogical societies embraced their convict ancestry. Consequently, his research was based mainly upon qualitative interviews. In contrast, we analyse recent survey data from Australia and the United Kingdom, conceptualising convict ancestry as more than just a genealogical tie. We argue that claims of convict ancestry comprise a neglected aspect of Australian identity and that convict identifiers may be located in terms of their social and attitudinal characteristics, as well as through 'blood lines'.

Drawing upon Calhoun's (1994) distinction between essentialist and socially constructed identity, we suspect Australians who claim that historical figures such as convicts have an influence on contemporary identity, are in the business of identity construction. This is because, many, perhaps most survey respondents do not know for sure whether their descendants were convicts or free settlers on the early transport ships. As we argued in earlier work (Tranter & Donoghue, 2003), claims of convict ancestry are to a large extent constructed, because many Australians who claim to be descended from convicts are not, or they are not aware if they are descended from convicts or not. In fact, our recent data from the United Kingdom regarding British knowledge of family members who were sent as convicts to Australia, suggests contemporary Brits would rather forget any convict links in their family history. In this case, to borrow from Anderson (1991), many Brits seem to have 'imagined away' their Australian convict connection.

Knowledge of one's ancestry is of course important for understanding an individual's ancestry. Yet more broadly, Australians can give their opinions regarding certain individuals and groups whom they believe influence contemporary national identity. We provide evidence of the construction of national identity by examining socio-demographic indicators and present evidence that certain social characteristics (e.g. social class, education and income) is linked to the construction of contemporary identity claims. We show that higher status Australians are less likely than others to claim they are descended from convicts.

In Chapter 2, we consider the role of free settlers and briefly outline the rate and nature of settlement in Australia. As mentioned above, in Chapter 3, we examine the role of the bushranger Ned Kelly in the story of Australia. We consider how the best known of the Australian outlaws or

'bushrangers' – Ned Kelly – symbolises Australian-ness. We consider why he is still important, and the extent of his influence upon national identity. While higher status Australians consume art and literature that reference outlaws (e.g. Sidney Nolan's Kelly series of paintings, and Peter Carey's acclaimed *True History of the Kelly Gang* novel), younger Australians are the most likely to acknowledge Kelly's symbolic importance for the nation. However, Australian cosmopolitan 'elites' would rather a bushranger on their bookshelf than a convict in their closet.

While divisions over the heroic or villainous character of Ned Kelly remain, artists, journalists, novelists, filmmakers and academics still tap the wellspring of his life story for their creative and commercial ends. In the process, they ensure the memories associated with Kelly are enshrined in popular culture and continue to symbolise the rebellious aspects of the Australian character. Social bandits such as Robin Hood and Jesse James are well known figures in England and America, and are often portrayed as champions of the poor and oppressed people. In Australia, Ned Kelly plays a similar role as a rebellious and romantic symbol. In a nation built not only by free settlers, but also by convict transportees, Australians have only recently begun to shrug off the stigma of their penal history.

Ward (1996) claimed, in the introduction of Seal's book on Ned Kelly that 'it is not in the least "the facts" but the mythology to which they gave rise which should interest the historian and all the rest of us'. When Ned Kelly was omitted from the Bicentennial Authority list of 200 men and women who had 'made positive contributions to making Australia what it is today', critics suggested 'one of the failings of the list is that it disregards the radical, anti-authoritarian, rebellious element in Australia's history'.

In contrast the Australian soldiers or 'diggers' who 'stormed the cliffs of Gallipoli' have clearly become an integral part of the national mythscape. These allegedly ill disciplined 'bushmen' and larrikins are transformed by their duty and sacrifice in war into 'pioneer-soldiers', loyal to the Empire and the state (Day, 1998, pp. 75–76).[4] According to Day (1998, p. 76), the

> *heroic myths of the settler pioneers and bushman soldiers imbued Australia with the self-confidence to imagine a great future for their nation and with the energy and inventiveness to try and achieve that vision.*

Day (1998, p. 86) also claims the Australian 'way of life' is 'a celebration of the digger out of uniform', with its emphasis on physical (often sporting) rather than intellectual achievement, and a commitment to egalitarianism and mateship. This is commemorated and celebrated in the annual Anzac Day ceremonies, and embodied in the following quote from the Anzac Day Commemoration Committee of Queensland website: 'the Spirit of Anzac is a cornerstone which underpins our Australian image, way of life and indeed is an integral part of our heritage'. These 'traditional' national identity claims provided cohesion and confidence in the first half of the twentieth century, although they glossed over the roles played by indigenous Australians, women, convicts and internal tensions such as the sectarian conflict between the English and Irish (O'Farrell, 1986).

Following World War II, some foundation myths have become stronger while others are less relevant for sections of Australian society. In Chapter 4, we explain why the seemingly rational assertion by David Day in 1998 that the 'digger has become a problematic emblem for many Australians', and prediction of the 'digger's demise' did not come to pass.

Empirical evidence in the form of nationally representative survey data show how Anzacs resonate with contemporary Australians in terms of nation identity.

In Chapter 5, we examine the importance of Australian sportspeople for national identity, although show that the term 'sporting heroes' traditionally signifies male sporting stars, as the latter dominate television and other mass media. As a result, the masculine values portrayed by sportsmen such as Sir Donald Bradman have taken on heroic proportions. Whether contemporary sporting stars such as indigenous runner Cathy Freeman, or swimmer Ian Thorpe will achieve similar heroic status is a moot point, as the intense media scrutiny on high profile sportspeople may well undermine their status.

In the twentieth century, sporting heroes have arguably promoted social cohesion and boosted national confidence and prestige. They may also have distracted the Australian public from deeper social issues such as the status of indigenous peoples and the 'stain' of convict ancestry (Bennett, 1988; Sayle, 1988). Australians often claim to be a nation who 'punch above their weight' in terms of sporting achievements (Hutchins, 2002). As Ward (2010) points out, Australia has tended to perform well in Olympic Games events. Sporting achievements are considered to be central to Australian identity stories, as Wesley (2000, p. 178) argues, 'Australia's sporting prowess is often spoken of by Australians in terms of the country's superiority in sports in *per capita terms*'. In relation to national identity, McAllister (1997, p. 20) maintains: 'while a generalised sense of national pride in Australia is one of the highest in the world, the only aspects of Australian society which people express great pride in is its sporting achievements'. In earlier research, we found that over 80 per cent of Australians believe sporting heroes influence 'the way Australians see themselves' (Tranter &

Donoghue, 2007, p. 172), with national identity forged through international sporting competitions such as cricket, rugby and football World Cups and the Olympic Games.

National sporting figures are often promoted as a symbol of Australian identity, and they are clearly situated in the realm of popular culture (Cashman, 1995). We measure the influence of sporting heroes using attitudinal data from the Australian Survey of Social Attitudes (AuSSA) in 2003 and 2011. While often claimed to be a successful sporting nation, how important are the exploits of sportspeople considered to be in terms of national identity? If sportspeople are important in this regard, who among them do Australians view as the most influential?

In Chapter 6, we identity the most important Australians. Who are these 'heroes, saints and sages' (Smith, 1991) that exemplify aspects of the Australian national character? Who do Australians – as citizens of a settler society with a short written history – nominate as contemporary examples of heroes? If Cashman (1995) is correct, we expect sporting 'heroes' to dominate the findings, with historical figures, such as Ned Kelly, also featuring prominently (Seal, 2002). As Hobsbawm (1990, p. 143) suggests, sporting contests are 'uniquely effective … for inculcating national feelings' as '[T]he individual, even the one who only cheers, becomes a symbol of his nation himself'. Hobsbawm's point is important in the context of this research as we are interested in identifying the Australians who are regarded as nationally important, as a gauge of the extent that they symbolise national values and identity. While collective 'heroes' such as the Anzacs are important in popular conceptions of national identity (see Day, 1998; Tranter & Donoghue, 2007), we suggest Australians also identify with particular 'heroic' individuals who personify aspects of the national character.

Hobsbawm (1972, p. 504) maintained 'the myth cannot be entirely divorced from the reality', a point that is

particularly important for students of national identity, for it is the legend surrounding historical figures that are integrated in representations of the national character, rather than the facts. This is analogous to Thomas and Thomas' (1928, p. 572) famous dictum, 'If men define the situation as real, it is real in its consequences'. Social bandit folklore still resonates in many advanced industrial societies and historical figures still contribute to conceptions of national identity. The universal characteristics attributed to ideal/typical portrayals of outlaws and heroes – rebellious but brave, fighters against injustice and oppression, chivalrous in their treatment of women and the poor, and embodying a sense of fair play – comprise characteristics and values associated with national identity in many English speaking, particularly settler societies such as Australia, Canada and the United States.

NOTES

1. 'Ethno-national' identity involves strong social attachments to the Australian 'nation' seen as 'a specific and shared culture, traditions and customs', while 'civic' identity is characterised by attachment to Australian 'society' as 'a voluntary association of people sharing major social institutions and commitments' (Pakulski & Tranter, 2000a, p. 209).

2. Bell (2003, p. 66) is critical of the conflation of the concepts of 'myth' and 'collective memory' in theoretical accounts of nationalism and instead prefers the term 'mythscape' – 'the temporally and spatially extended discursive realm wherein the struggle for control of peoples' memories and the formation of nationalist myths is debated, contested and subverted incessantly'.

3. Schuman et al. (2005, p. 14) found older cohorts to be more likely than younger people to hold 'heroic' as opposed to 'simple

traditional' views of Columbus. Their study of American school textbook portrayals of Columbus' reputation was predominantly positive, although moved in the 1970s to much more negative characterisations, then recovered to a more positive view in the 1980s and 1990s (Schuman et al., 2005, p. 19).

4. 'The nickname "Digger" is attributed to the number of ex-gold diggers in the early army units and to the trench digging activities of the Australian soldiers during World War I. The actual origin of the name has been lost in time but the Australian soldier is known affectionately around the world as the Digger' (Australian Army website).