firms links twentieth century quackery with nineteenth century racial theory; and he makes the wide acceptance of such ideas uncomfortable rather than merely amusing. He concludes that the ‘new’ learning needs to be actively confronted because it hides ‘imperial and colonialist values and assumptions about race, gender and culture’, because it amounts to ‘dangerous anti-intellectualism’ with disturbing implications for any process of reconciliation in post-colonial societies and because it is a form of colonialist appropriation of cultures and traditions – a claim to understand Polynesian and Maori traditions and histories better than traditional or academic custodians(156-8).

This is a wonderful book; it should not have needed to be written. Howe’s willingness to engage with public debate is commendable, and this book is a shining example of the potential of reasoned historical argument in a popular context. His retention of the scholarly apparatus of endnotes and bibliography allows this book to take a place on scholarly bookshelves as well as bedside tables.

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Joy Damousi could never have imagined the context in which most will read her study of Australian war widows, Living with the Aftermath. This reviewer read the bulk of the book at a bleak, security-heavy JFK Airport a month after what is known, at time of writing, simply as September 11. This followed a three-week period travelling through a United States that was, once again, desperately whipping itself into a war – though this time merely a rather unfocused ‘war against terrorism’ successfully rescuing an ineffectual and hitherto unpopular President from obscurity.

Even at a time when war is once again at the forefront of the popular consciousness – albeit the latest style of war, with limited human combatants – Living with the Aftermath is in itself an unsatisfying book. Perhaps this is so simply because it deals with an unsatisfactory condition. Previous decades’ war widows have had to contend – often in the context of general social upheaval – with unsympathetic government and military bureaucracy. At the same time, national sentiment counters their attempts to confront the past with a strongly-held broad desire to move on while remaking dead soldiers into the glorious fallen. War widows are, to some extent, defined by themselves and others in relation to a particular tragic moment in time, yet they, like the rest of society, are a part of the process of redefining that time and making (or at least trying to make) it normal, understandable and perhaps even a benign part of history.

Drawing on a wide range of interviews, Damousi tracks the relation between the widows and public opinion – for instance, widows’ attitudes
to Anzac Day and the degree to which they have been permitted to participate in this confused and contrary national celebration. She also investigates the way in which those whose husbands were part of the now largely forgotten Korean war and the ‘failed’ Vietnam war have been treated by wider society. Perhaps most revealing of all is her map of the attitudes during wartime to grieving and mourning women, at which time even those close to those affected did not care to see the immediate implications of war fatalities. Most affecting to the modern-day reader here are the family members who destroy all record of deceased soldier husbands, in misguided attempts to redirect their widows’ futures.

The aspects of Damousi’s text which are less than satisfactory are perhaps related only to the brevity of the book. Important issues of methodology need more explanation and both analysis and evidence could have been more properly framed. For example, no serious attempt is made to compare war widows’ position to that of any other group of widows, or for that matter widows generally, notwithstanding that a few of the war widows in question are women who lived with war-damaged spouses for decades after the wars which ultimately ‘killed’ them. Similarly Damousi’s psychological/sociological analyses of her subjects – her explanations of their dreams, for instance, a matter to which she pays considerable attention – do not do the women’s individual circumstances justice. This is not because they are poor or inappropriate, but because they are too brief, and deal insufficiently with the subjects’ individual situations. It appears that Damousi’s research brought her into contact with many heart-rending situations, but that she also felt compelled in some respects to compound the individuals she encountered into types.

That said, where Damousi succeeds – and why the book, ultimately, is a success – is in the broader point she makes. While her prescription for relief from grieving – recognition of the necessity of public grief – hardly breaks new ground (though of course it does need to be discussed) her emphasis on the importance of emotional lives to social and cultural history is worthy of much greater exploration. This work itself is a companion to an earlier study of family bereavement, The Labour of Loss (1999); we will be fortunate if Damousi and other historians of her calibre continue to pursue, and elaborate on, this theme.

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Skimming through the extensive bibliography of Anglicanism in Australia I was struck anew by just how big a task it was: to attempt, in one volume, to capture the history of this church. With its innumerable institutions, its decentralised structure, its different regional communities