A historical overview of Australian religious sectarianism accompanied by a survey of factors contributing to its dissolution

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A somewhat healed wound exists in Australia's socio-religious past. This wound, known broadly as sectarianism, stemmed from an intense and deep seeded rivalry between those who identified (as belonging to) a Protestant strand of religion and those who identified as Roman Catholic. It would be no shock to today's young Australian that differences in religious belief and practice can and do result in forms of intolerance, division an even violence. Such expressions of difference have been seen recently in Australia across religious boundaries with the increasing Muslim presence. The 2009 proposal of a Muslim School resulting in headlines such as *'Islamic School divides Western Sydney'* typifies such division.[1] Yet today's average young Australian lives somewhat unaware of the fact that *'many Australians alive today have personal memories of sectarianism'.*[2] This heated rivalry within Australia, which viewed itself as a 'Christian Nation',[3] seems to have cooled, the question is – Why?

Australian social commentator Hugh Mackay aptly summarises this progression of Australia's society from inter-Christian sectarianism to other-religion wariness. "The (19)40s and 50s were a time of great sectarian tension between Protestants and Catholics, with strong anti-catholic prejudice especially evident in corporate life, conservative politics and the

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[1] 'Islamic school divides western Sydney suburb', *DailyTelegraph*, Cited 16 Apr 2012, Online: http://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/news/islamic-school-divides-western-sydney-suburb/story-e6freuy9-1225736019134.
[2] Benjamin Edwards, *WASPS, Tykes and Ecumaniacs: Aspects of Australian Sectarianism 1945-1981* (Acorn Press, Limited, 2008), 6.
[3] For a helpful discussion of the reasons for Australia being called a Christian Nation see Adam Jamrozik, Cathy Boland, and Robert Urquhart, *Social Change and Cultural Transformation in Australia* (CUP Archive, 1995), 142.

'establishment'. Today, it's Muslims who make us nervous."[4]   Similarly, Catholic historian Michael Hogan writes, "the rivalry which permeated colonial politics in the second half of the nineteenth century and survived well into the twentieth century…those divisions and the heat they generated seem a life-time away… They are the stuff of history for young Australians".[5] It will be the purpose of this paper to give a brief historical overview of Australian religious sectarianism before surveying factors in Australia's past that have contributed to this rivalry becoming 'the stuff of history'.

What was sectarianism?

So, firstly, what was sectarianism and how far reaching was it? Jeff Kildea highlights the difficulty in defining the term 'sectarianism' when he suggests that sectarianism is a term in Australian history 'pregnant with meaning which dictionary definitions fail to capture'.[6] Broadly speaking sectarianism refers to the hostility between different churches or 'sects', which then manifests itself in wider society. Sectarianism is not simply a reference to different theological doctrines and practice, but rather to the phenomenon of how those differences form the underlying basis of social intolerance, antagonism and hostility in the wider society. Hogan names 'class rivalries, marriage taboos, political influence, and alliances within secular organisations' as several of the many ways that sectarianism spawns into societal prejudices.[7] Hogan defines Sectarianism as "the religious divisions in society according to denominational boundaries - divisions which have a significant impact on society as a whole".[8] Adopting this definition we will now seek to establish a brief overview of the impact of sectarianism in Australia's past.

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[4] Hugh Mackay, *Advance Australia ... Where: How we've changed, why we've changed, and what will happen next* (Hachette Australia, 2007), 145.
[5] Michael Hogan, 'Whatever Happened to Australian Sectarianism?', *The Journal of Religious History* 13/1 (June 1984): 83.
[6] Jeff Kildea, *Tearing the Fabric: Sectarianism in Australia 1910 -1925* (Citadel Books, 2002), ii.
[7] Hogan, 'Whatever Happened to Australian Sectarianism?', 84.
[8] Hogan, 'Whatever Happened to Australlian Sectarianism?', 85.

How far reaching was sectarianism in Australia?

Catholic historian Patrick O'Farrell aptly states the general consensus among Australian religious historians that "Australian sectarianism was derived from the legacy of 16th century events".[9] That is, Australian Sectarianism is historically rooted in the divisive events between England and Ireland; primarily the two foundational events of this nationalistic division were the Protestant Reformation and the English conquest of Ireland. This understanding shows us that chronologically sectarianism reaches back to the very beginning of the Australian colony. The penal colony was not only a prison but an embodiment of three hundred year old nationalistic tensions. Edwards comments that the major cleavage in colonial society "existed between the Irish Catholic community and mainstream British Protestant society – this was the basic sectarian divide".[10]

The Catholic minority, who comprised roughly 25 per cent of the convict population, were, until 1819, denied religious freedom. Specifically they were denied freedom of worship, education in their faith, sacramental marriage or the consolation of their sick and dying by priestly ministry. Instead they were compelled to attend the Establishments' English Evangelical Anglican services.[11] During this time, two significant events occurred, notably the failed Irish Conspiracy of 1800[12] and the Armed Rebellion at Vinegar Hill in 1804. Both were forcibly put down by the colonial government. Hogan argues that it is not what really happened in these first 30 years in the colony that matters but rather the 'perceptions of later

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[9] Patrick James O'Farrell, 'Double Jeopardy - Catholic and Irish', *Humanities Research Journal Series* XII/1 (2005): 9. See also Edwards, *WASPS, Tykes and Ecumaniacs*, 62. Michael Hogan, *The Sectarian Strand: Religion in Australian History* (Penguin Books, 1987), 27–29.

[10] Edwards, *WASPS, Tykes and Ecumaniacs*, 62.

[11] Hogan, *The Sectarian Strand*, 24-26.

[12] The Irish Conspiracy consisted of a plan to overturn the government by putting Governor King to Death and confining Governor Hunter. The rebels were to meet at and take Parramatta and then before day light take the Barracks at Sydney. The rebels were well armed with pikes and were to be joined by soldiers who it was planned would take the guns to South Head and other places of security. See Arthur Aikin, *The Annual Review, and History of Literature* (Printed for T.N. Longman and O. Rees, 1805).

generations, accurate or not' that fuelled later sectarianism.[13] The Establishment's desire for a social order led to the decision to allow Catholics freedom to worship, with the appointment of Fathers Therry and Conolly in 1819. 'Authority saw religion as a force supporting and encouraging social order, and clergy as moral policemen, in a sensitive prison situation'.[14]

Throughout the expansionist era (1820-1920)[15] sectarianism grew, becoming a significant point of social conflict and division. Massam recounts how 'tribal' organisations were formed in order to promote and protect their tribe. In her opinion "The 1919 foundation of the Knights of the Southern Cross was understood by Catholics to be a necessary protection against non-catholic, especially Masonic, prejudice in employment as it was almost a matter of course that for some jobs: 'No Catholics need apply'."[16] She continues "Catholics saw themselves as a separate group in Australian society. In a pattern of mutual suspicion and guarded interaction the two groups sought to preserve their identities, especially by providing sectarian activities for young people. Catholic and Protestant children went to separate schools, joined separate clubs to pursue sporting or cultural interests."[17] Massam highlights how sectarian divisions, formed from institutional doctrines and fuelled by tribal organisations, influenced areas of society such as employment, education and family units.

Massam's brief summary gives us glimpse of the wide ranging influence Sectarianism had on Australian Society, highlighting for us the key topics that must be addressed via their history before any opinions on sectarian resolution can be put forward. We will proceed by addressing the subjects of institutional difference and their subsequent tribal/political organisations, before examining the everyday lives of Australians via the interrelated subjects of education, employment and marriage.

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[13] Hogan, *The Sectarian Strand*, 27.
[14] O'Farrell, 'Double Jeopardy - Catholic and Irish', 10.
[15] Roger C. Thompson, *Australian Imperialism in the Pacific: The Expansionist Era, 1820-1920* (Melbourne University Press, 1980).
[16] Katharine Massam, *Sacred threads: Catholic Spirituality in Australia, 1922-1962* (UNSW Press, 1996), 35.
[17] Massam, *Sacred Threads*, 34.

Institutional sectarianism: Not strictly anti-Catholic

While the primary institutional cause of sectarianism lay between Protestants and Catholics, Benjamin Edwards broadens our sectarian scope slightly when he writes "for the most part, the story of sectarianism in Australian history is one of rivalry and suspicion between the Protestant churches, including the Church of England, and the Catholic Church, yet it is important to note that historically this was not the only sectarian cleavage in Australian society".[18]

The main sectarian rivalry - the Protestant/Catholic divide - finds its historical beginnings in two key battles from previous centuries.

Firstly, the 16th Century Protestant Reformation divided Christendom into two broad camps: those who supported the authority and doctrines of the papacy and the Roman Catholic Church, and those who supported independent national state churches and the Bible-oriented teachings of the Reformers. The Protestant Reformation was later seen as a historical high point recounted by Protestants looking to gain a following in the name of 'truth'.

Secondly, the English conquest of Ireland in 1534 was indelibly marked in the memory for Irish nationalists, since as a result England dispossessed the Catholic Irish of their land and imposed an English government with its Protestant religion. As Edward Campion says, "The conquest of Ireland had made them a landless people … the Protestant proprietors of Ireland kept the Catholic Irish as helots in their own country. When they came to Australia they carried this history with them and passed it onto their children".[19] O'Farrell notes the influence that this historical event had in the Protestant camp, saying "very importantly for subsequent history, English propaganda sought to morally vindicate this invasion with an

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[18] Edwards, *WASPS, Tykes and Ecumaniacs*, 64.
[19] Edmund Campion, *Australian Catholics* (Viking, 1987), 6.

ideology of justifiable colonial subjection. So the Irish became, forever after, seditious Catholic barbarians, sub-human anthropoids, violent, dirty, ignorant, on whom it was a necessary duty to impose English rule, civilisation and religion".[20] These two 16th century events came to be historical landmarks that fuelled sectarian debates.

However, Edwards, building on the work of Hogan and Thompson, argues that while a common cause of anti-Catholicism was found amongst Protestant churches these differences were not completely insurmountable as may have been suggested by O'Farrell. Rather, "non-conformist Protestants also found common cause with Catholics in challenging Anglican pretensions to Establishment or ascendency in the colony".[21] Known as the 'Dissenters' back in England these groups, which included Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Baptists, Methodists and Quakers, banded with the Catholics in refusing to accept the Church of England's doctrine or its status as the Established church.

An example of non-conformist (or perhaps better non-Anglican Protestants) finding a common ground with Catholics is seen in the reaction to 1825 British Government's Church and Schools Corporation implemented under the newly ordained Archdeacon Scott. This corporation, (set up to reinforce the position of the Church of England by giving it priority in funding for religious and educational purposes), ordered the Governor to vest one-seventh of the Crown lands "for the maintenance and support of the clergy and the established Church of England... and the maintenance and support of schools and schoolmasters in connection with the established church."[22] This scheme favoured the Anglican Church so strongly that it soon aroused antagonism from other denominations.

Father J.J. Therry typifies the nature of Roman Catholic opposition by his reaction written in

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[20] O'Farrell, 'Double Jeopardy - Catholic and Irish', 9.
[21] Edwards, *WASPS, Tykes and Ecumaniacs*, 64; Hogan, 'Whatever Happened to Australian Sectarianism?', 83; Hogan, *The Sectarian Strand*, 30–47; Roger C. Thompson, *Religion in Australia: A History* (Oxford University Press, 2002), 11.
[22] Albert Gordon Austin (ed), *Select Documents in Australian Education* (I. Pitman., 1963), chap. 1.

1825: "From the document which has been recently published, it may be inferred that public provision is to be made for protestant parochial schools exclusively, and that, the children of the Catholic poor are to be either excluded from the salutary benefits of education or compelled or enticed to abandon the truly venerable religion of their ancestors according to the past or present system of the orphan school establishment in the colony".[23]

Such opposition was likewise forthcoming from Presbyterian Rev. Dr. John Dunmore Lang in an 1830 letter addressed to Lord Goderich, the then former English Prime minister:

> In short the Church and School Corporation of New South Wales instead of proving a benefit either to the Government or to the Episcopal Church as its projectors unfortunately persuaded His Majesty's Government it certainly would has lain as a dead weight on the colony for the last five years repressing emigration, discouraging improvement, secularizing the Episcopal clergy and thereby lowering the standard of morals and religion throughout the territory.[24]

In 1836 a decisive piece of legislation was enacted, the *Church Act,* whereby the Church of England lost its legal privileges in the colony of New South Wales. Hogan sums up the act stating, "if government funds are available to any religious denomination, then they should be available to all on some basis of equality. The state should have no favourites in the matters of religion".[25] Drafted by the reformist Attorney-General John Plunkett, and enacted by Governor Richard Bourke, this act established legal equality for Anglicans, Catholics and Presbyterians and later extended to Methodists.

Unfortunately, the institutional equality achieved formally by the 'Church Act' did not limit sectarianism. The influx of Irish Catholic immigrants, fleeing the Irish famine of the 1840s, prompted Lang to resurrect the old sectarian divide of anti-Irishism with his 1841 pamphlet *The Question of Questions: Is This Colony to be Transformed into a Province of Popedom?* This enduring question expressed a fear and suspicion of potential Irish Catholic threats to the

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[23] Father J.J. Therry to Editor of The Sydney Gazette. 14th June, 1825 from Eris O'Brien, *Life and Letters of Archpriest John Joseph Therry* (Angus & Robertson, 1922), 75.
[24] John Dunmore Lang, *An Historical and Statistical Account of New South Wales: Both as a Penal Settlement and as a British Colony* (Cochrane and M'Crone, 1834), 362.
[25] Hogan, *The Sectarian Strand*, 39.

future composition and character of Australian society; the suspicion subsequently led to sectarian arguments dominating much political discussion. This prompts us to consider the influence of sectarianism in the political sphere where in 1843 "sectarian tensions swiftly surfaced".[26]

Political sectarianism: Its Tribal Affiliations and World War One

Examining the 1843 colonial elections highlights the degree to which sectarianism became ingrained in Australia's history, specifically within the political arena. The 1843 election started when Colonel O'Connell, a liberal Protestant, surprisingly attracted so much Catholic support that his campaign 'against his wish or intention took on the appearance of a Celtic crusade'.[27] In light of a Protestant gaining Catholic support, Catholic barrister Roger Therry announced his candidature arguing that the Catholic Community was entitled to at least one representative in order to promote its interests and guard it from misrepresentation.[28] On hearing that Therry had put his nomination forward Protestant Charles Cowper decided to stand in order 'to stop a Papist from being elected'.[29] Therry's response to Cowper, insisting that he 'wanted to keep Catholics in the position of Slaves',[30] further fanned the flames of political sectarianism resulting in a rioting attack on the Wesleyan chapel in Windsor.

Regarding this situation, O'Farrell comments 'the pattern of sectarian confrontation was

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[26] Patrick James O'Farrell, *The Catholic Church and Community in Australia: A History* (Nelson, 1977), 57.

[27] O'Farrell, *The Catholic Church and Community in Australia*, 57.

[28] *Australasian Chronicle*, 16th Jan 1843 quoted in J. M O'brien, 'Sectarianism in the New South Wales Elections of 1843 and 1856*', *Journal of Religious History* 9/1 (June 1, 1976): 74, Cited 18 Apr 2012.

[29] *Australasian Chronicle, 4th March 1843*. Quoted in O'brien, 'Sectarianism in the New South Wales Elections of 1843 and 1856*', 75.

[30] This quote, in my opinion, may be wrongly attributed in O'Farrell, *The Catholic Church and Community in Australia*, 57. I could find no Primary document to support O'Farrell's assertion here, rather it seems that these are the words of the similarly named J. J Therry's then Bishop Polding who in a letter to John O'Sullivan wrote on the *"tyrannies" of the aristocracy, stating of the Catholics that their "children grow up with all the degraded propensity of slave-holders"* cited somewhat misleadingly in O'Brien, *Life and Letters of Archpriest John Joseph Therry*, 332. Though these words may not belong to Roger Therry they nonetheless illustrate the sectarian feeling of the time.

firmly established in 1843, with thereafter, St Patricks Day and 12th of July (Orange Day)[31] becoming high points on the sectarian calendar'.[32] Hogan illustrates how political sectarianism from the 1840s - 1880s was largely fuelled by 'religious newspapers stirring up the fires.' [33] These 'party publications' became the voice of numerous 'tribal' organisations that existed during this period and beyond. Protestant organisations such as the Loyal Orange Lodge (which first met in Australia in 1845) and the Royal Black Preceptory mobilised anti-Catholic tirades through their affiliated publications, most notably the *Protestant Standard.* Commenting on the *Protestant Standard,* Hogan writes 'there is only one thing that gives this paper a purpose: it is anti-Catholic'.[34] The Catholics' response through the '*Freeman's Journal'* was 'not particularly anti-protestant; it was strongly defensive of Catholic interests and concerns'.[35]

The intensity of sectarianism peaked during this time with the attempted assassination of the Duke of Edinburgh by an Irishman named O'Farrell in 1868. A riot broke out in Melbourne, whereby Orangemen fired shots on the Catholic Irish, wounding four and resulting in the death of a young boy. This event prompted the rapid growth of the Orange Movement with membership doubling by the year's end.[36] Hogan comments, 'this battle defined political factions for the next twenty years'.[37]

With the turn of the century and the advent of World War 1 these political factions grew in intensity. The political aspirations of Ireland concerning 'Home Rule', resulting in the failed

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[31] Orange Day - (also called 'the Twelfth' or 'Orangemen's Day') is a yearly Protestant celebration held on 12 July. It originated in Ireland during the 18th century. It celebrates the Glorious Revolution (1688) and victory of Protestant King William of Orange over Catholic King James II at the Battle of the Boyne (1690).

[32] O'Farrell, *The Catholic Church and Community in Australia*, 57.

[33] Hogan, 'Whatever Happened to Australian Sectarianism?', 103.

[34] Hogan, *The Sectarian Strand*, 107.

[35] Hogan, *The Sectarian Strand*, 109.

[36] In 1868 the Orange movement grew to 2000 members. In 1869 there were 2500 members in 28 lodges, in 1876 19000 in 130 lodges, and a peak was reached with 25000 members in 1882, in NSW alone.
  Patrick James O'Farrell, *The Irish in Australia: 1788 to the Present* (University of Notre Dame Press, 2000), 103.

[37] Hogan, *The sectarian strand*, 104.

'1916 Easter Uprising',[38] provided 'new fuel to ignite the smouldering coals of anti-Catholicism into a roaring blaze',[39] but it was the question of loyalty to the War that brought sectarian tensions to new heights.

Protestant denominations heavily supported Australia's involvement in the First World War.[40] "Australian churchmen, particularly Anglicans, were imbued with a theology of war and Empire, and which enjoined on the British nation the responsibility of protecting the weak, by force if necessary. This was the British version of the 'just war'."[41] An article from *The Baptist Recorder* highlights the threefold involvement of protestant clergy. They delivered casualty telegrams to next-of-kin, joined politicians in recruitment drives fighting 'for God and humanity in the name of righteousness and truth',[42] and were enlisted as AIF chaplains.

The question of Catholic loyalty was raised with the campaign against conscription by the involvement of Melbourne Catholic Archbishop Mannix. The Archbishop, who had been silent during the first plebiscite in Oct 1916, actively campaigned against conscription because the government's proposal did not exempt teaching brothers and seminarians. Santamaria writes, 'Dr Mannix chose to fight, not on the issue of the morality of conscription – he didn't oppose conscription when Australia itself was threatened during the Japanese war – but on the issue of the limits of Australian participation in a war …This issue coalesced the ancient emotion of Irish nationalism and the burgeoning realisation of Australia's national identity.'[43]

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[38] **Home Rule** was the ill-defined term representing the demands of Irish Constitutional Nationalists who wanted more say in how Ireland was governed – freeing them from the rule of London.
   The Easter Rising (1916) was the plan of the 'Irish Republican Brotherhood's Military Council' to forcibly self impose Home Rule whilst the British Military was significantly engaged elsewhere with the battles of WWI.
   John Cannon, *A Dictionary of British History* (Oxford University Press, 2009), 350.

[39] Kildea, *Tearing the Fabric*, 133.

[40] See especially pages 318-321 of John A. Moses, 'Australian Anglican Leaders and the Great War, 1914-1918: The "Prussian Menace," Conscription, and National Solidarity', *Journal of Religious History* 25/3 (October 2001): 306.

[41] S. Piggin, *Evangelical Christianity in Australia: Spirit, word and world* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), p.84.

[42] Michael Petras, 'Baptists and Society: Twentieth Century Australian Baptists in Retrospect', *The Baptist Recorder* (July 2000): 9.

[43] Bartholomew Augustine Santamaria, *Archbishop Mannix: his contribution to the art of public leadership in Australia*

This is by no means all that could be said about the infiltration of sectarianism into Australian politics. Judith Brett notes the respective alliances of Australian Liberalism are founded on Protestant 'virtues' and where 'the affinity between the Labor Party (ALP) and Roman Catholicism has long been recognised.'[44] Brett's view is in need of slight clarification as Murphy has shown that 'the Labor Party between 1890 and 1910 was predominantly a Protestant party. The increasing Catholic support for the Labor party between 1910 and 1914 was due, firstly, to obvious socio-economic links and secondly, (in the period of Protestant attempts to force bible reading into all state schools which about half the Catholic children still attended), to Labor opposition to this and the lesser feeling of Protestant sectarianism which pervaded the Labor party.'[45] Whatever one makes of these allegiances, political sectarianism must be understood in light of its relation to education to which we will now turn.

Education

The long running battles over state aid for religious schools are critical when it comes to understanding Australian sectarianism. Australia's first church building, erected in 1793 by Rev. Richard Johnson, the colony's first Chaplain, served the dual purpose of church and school for some five years.[46] The majority of schools established in the infant colony were started by Anglican clergymen and supported by small grants from religious bodies and missionary societies.[47] These schools, Colonial Secretary Earl Bathurst declared, were 'the

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(Melbourne University Press, 1978), 26.
[44] Judith Brett, *Australian Liberals and the Moral Middle Class: From Alfred Deakin to John Howard* (Cambridge University Press, 2003), 40.
[45] D. J Murphy, 'Religion, Race and Conscription in World War I', *Australian Journal of Politics & History* 20/2 (August 1, 1974): 155, Cited 19 Apr 2012.
[46] Neil K. Macintosh and St. John's Church, Parramatta, New South Wales, *The Reverend Richard Johnson: First to Preach the Gospel in Parramatta Town 1788-1800* (Pilgrim International for and, 1975), Id.
[47] Partridge, Percy H, *Society, Schools, and Progress in Australia* (Pergamon Press, 1968), ii.

best for imparting in the minds of local children the principles of the Established Church'.[48]

The public generally supported the denominational system; however, there was continued criticism for its lack of efficiency, particularly from a Legislative Council Select Committee established in 1844 under the chairmanship of Robert Lowe. In the towns there were often a number of denominational schools competing for students while in some country areas no schools existed at all. The Select Committee recommended that non-sectarian schools be established. In 1847 a dual system of schools came into operation whereby the responsibility for education in New South Wales was now shared between Church and State.[49]

Conflict escalated between the Government and Catholic Church in 1879 when Sydney's new Catholic Archbishop Vaughan launched an attack on the state schools of NSW. He denounced them as "seed-plots of future immorality, infidelity and lawlessness" and declared that they were "the most effective instruments…for squeezing very gradually and almost imperceptibly the Catholic faith out of a Catholic people."[50] This attack caused an outburst of furious Protestant indignation.[51] The Parkes government responded with its *Public Instruction Act*, passed in early 1880, which made primary education nominally compulsory, cheap and widespread, and abolished all state aid to denominational schools.[52] Judd and Cable note that 'religion was not the loser. The Act retained all the existing provisions for its teaching in government schools – general religious instruction (heavily protestant) and special religious education by visiting clergy.'[53]

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[48] Ian R Wilkinson, Brian J Caldwell, R J W Selleck, Jessica Harris, Pam Dettman, *A History of State Aid to Non-government Schools in Australia*, 2006, 3, Cited 19 Apr 2012, Online: http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/school_education/publications_resources/profiles/history_state_aid_nongovt_schools.htm.

[49] Ronald A. Manzer, *Educational Regimes and Anglo-American Democracy* (University of Toronto Press, 2003), 32–33.

[50] Quoted in A. G. Austin, *Australian Education 1788-1900: Church, State and Public Education* (Sir Isaac Pitman, 1961), 209–210.

[51] Stephen Judd, Kenneth J. Cable, and Anglican Information Office (Sydney N.S.W.), *Sydney Anglicans: A History of the Diocese* (Anglican Information Office, 1987), 105.

[52] Philip Gavin Griffiths, 'The making of White Australia: Ruling class agendas, 1876-1888', Thesis (PhD) (2007), 241, Cited 17 Apr 2012, Online: https://digitalcollections.anu.edu.au/handle/1885/47107.

[53] Judd, Cable, and N.S.W.), *Sydney Anglicans*, 105.

In 1885 the Catholic Church, under the new leadership of Cardinal Moran, reacted emphatically when the Australian Council of Bishops "laid down that parents who, without cause or permission, sent their children to a state school were denied absolution in the confessional".[54] This denial of sacraments certainly secured Catholic loyalty thus helped preserve Catholic identity, yet it negatively enforced Catholicism as a distinct sub-culture in the Australian community. Despite this negativity, Parkes set a unifying tone in his speech which moved the *Public Instruction Act,* appealing to an Australian rather than sectarian identity.

> Surely the Catholic religion … cannot be a thing, the teaching of which renders it necessary to separate the Catholic children from the other children of the country. They must mix in after years, and be associated with each other in all the duties of everyday life. Let them be workers, traders, men of competent means; let them go anywhere they may, into whatever groove of society they come—they must mix with persons entertaining other opinions … let us remember that we are above everything else free citizens of a free commonwealth. Whether we are Englishmen, Scotchmen, or Irishmen, or whether we are the sons of some foreign land, over and above every other consideration we ought to be Australians.[55]

Susan Ryan AO recognises the significant contribution of Henry Parkes' education reforms as a vital influence over the creation of Section 116 of Australia's constitution. Section 116 prevents the establishment of any religion, retaining a separation between church and state whilst condemning religious discrimination. This Section, Ryan claims, 'should be recognised as contributing greatly to the capacity for social harmony in the newly created democratic nation'.[56]

Despite the egalitarian headway that Parkes may have made, education proved to be a sectarian fighting ground for years to come. Edward's illuminating first chapter, 'Sectarianism in Personal Memory',[57] comprised of diverse interviews of Australians born between 1919 and 1959, consistently shows the subjects of marriage, employment and

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[54] Campion, *Australian Catholics*, 65.
[55] NSWPD, Vol 1, pp274-5. Quoted in: Griffiths, 'The Making of White Australia', 243.
[56] Susan Ryan, 'Priority Public: The Supreme Legacy of Henry Parkes' (Commemorative dinner May 2001, May 2001), Cited 20 Apr 2012, Online: http://www.parkesfoundation.org.au/Projects_ryan.htm.
[57] Edwards, *WASPS, Tykes and Ecumaniacs*, 6–41.

schooling as the key areas of sectarian experience. Some quotes from these interviews helpfully illustrate these schoolyard experiences:

> They were on their side of the fence and we were on ours, that's where you stayed….we used to talk about the Catholics in derogatory terms and call them 'cattleticks' and 'left footers'…on the way home from school we used to fight them all the time.
>
> <div align="right">Edward Glover — Anglican, born 1943</div>

> It was more because the friends that we went to school were the ones we mixed with…it wasn't by setting out to do so, but that's the way that your friendships were more or less channelled. So I didn't have any close friends that were publics.
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> <div align="right">David Gibson — Catholic, born 1943</div>

Regarding Glover's quote, Edwards comments that 'to a large extent for Glover and his friends, finding solidarity in their sectarian identity was an important aspect of forging their own group identity'.[58] We will return to this notion of 'identity' when we propose some thoughts as to the resolution of sectarianism. But first we will explore see this theme in regards to the subject of employment.

Employment

Robert Wilson, born in Sydney in 1930, recalls being told 'over a beer one night': 'look you'll never get anywhere in this company because you're a Catholic and we're all Freemasons'.[59] Wilson heeded this advice and sought employment elsewhere. This personal recollection draws our attention to the existence of groups, such as the Freemasons, formed along sectarian lines, which self-confessedly 'provided a certain amount of help to one another with jobs'.[60] Hogan writes of Freemasonry's ability 'to provide a network of people who could serve as useful contacts in trade and government, and who could assist in furthering the employment and promotion opportunities of its members'. He also specifies

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[58] Edwards, *WASPS, Tykes and Ecumaniacs*, 7.
[59] Edwards, *WASPS, Tykes and Ecumaniacs*, 10.
[60] 'The Practical Side of Freemasonary', *NSW Freemason* 31, 1935, p19. Quoted in James Franklin, 'Catholics Versus Masons', *Journal of Australian Catholic Historical Society* 20 (1999): 10.

that, unlike the Orange Lodge, which in the 1920s 'had their last period of strength and were being taken over by the Masonic movement among members of the WASP establishment', its primary purpose was not anti-catholic.[61]

In reaction to the prominence and influence of the Masons, the Catholics formed a group called the Knights of the Southern Cross in 1919 with the full support of Archbishop Kelly. Like the Masons, the Knights maintained a discipline of secrecy and membership invitation and in a similar way they achieved a network of contacts in strategic positions, especially in some public service departments in the states and Commonwealth.[62]

The extent of sectarian bias in employment during this period is near impossible to gauge. Since the 1870s there had been occasional advertisements for positions for which 'Catholics need not apply'. It was quite customary for applicants to be asked their religious affiliation as part of the interview procedure for public service positions. Jupp *et al* have shown that high levels of unemployment, particularly during the depressions of the 1890's and 1930's, led employees to find job security via sectarian networks. 'As long as there was persistent unemployment in Australia between the wars, employers could retain more power over the workforce than was consistent with genuine harmony.'[63] In one sense, the significance of employee discrimination did not lay so much in the truth or falsity of such claims. Much more important for political and social consequences is whether people actually believed the allegations.

Much sectarian polemic was perpetuated via a number of print media publications, which were both Protestant and Catholic affiliated. The Protestant Defence Association (formed in 1901) was associated with both *The Rock* and *The Watchman*. *The Rock* (1945-1995), one of

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[61] Hogan, *The Sectarian Strand*, 198.
[62] Hogan, *The Sectarian Strand*, 200.
[63] James Jupp, J. P. Nieuwenhuysen, and Emma Dawson, *Social Cohesion in Australia* (Cambridge University Press, 2007), 13.

the more dramatic though fringe publications; it frequently agitated against Catholicism by reporting alleged sex scandals involving priests and nuns as well as ridiculing Catholic theology.[64] Catholic organisations such as Catholic Federations and The Knights of the Southern Cross, sought to defend the Catholic faith through their official publication *The Catholic Weekly* (launched in 1942).

Although Hogan notes the continuance of a sectarian bias in employment lingering at least into the 1970s,[65] Franklin notes that 'since the 1960s, better relations have prevailed, mainly because Catholic theology has itself adopted a more tolerant view of other religions'.[66] Here, Franklin is likely referring to the doctrinal changes stemming from Vatican II which had great influence not only in the area of employment but specifically within the arena of marriage to which we will now turn.

Marriage

Since the earliest colonial days Catholics sought to preserve their identity by not entering into 'mixed marriages'; Catholics married Catholics not Protestants. Such was the case that, in penal times, before the importation of Catholic Priests, many Catholics chose to live in de-facto relationships rather than be married by a Protestant chaplain.[67] The matter of mixed marriages came to a head at the insistence of Bishop Murray of Maitland. Murray considered mixed marriages so scandalous that he refused to allow them in his diocese. After observing couples going to Sydney to have their marriages recognised, (which he interpreted as a threat to his Episcopal authority and the laws of the church), he sought to have Bishop Polding rule

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[64] See Appendix A for examples of 'The Rock's' Anti-catholic propaganda.
[65] As late as 1976 the Coombs Royal Commission into Australian Government Administration, obviously reluctant to mention the sectarian issue, had to point out under a heading *'Birds of a Feather in Foreign Affairs',* a strong old-school-tie bias in recruiting from Protestant GPS schools and under representing Catholics. See Hogan, *The sectarian strand*, 200.
[66] Franklin, 'Catholics Versus Masons', 8.
[67] Hogan, *The Sectarian Strand*, 117.

against mixed marriages. [68]

At the 2nd Australian Provincial Council in 1869 Murray and other Irish bishops succeeded in regulating against mixed marriages. The council decreed that 'with regard to mixed marriages … they are strictly forbidden by the ancient law of the Church, which the Popes have always inculcated ... We reprobate such marriages … [and] feel bound to admonish all Priests to adhere to this doctrine, and that they do not cease to set forth the evils arising from marriages of this kind …[which can proceed only with a written dispensation from the Ordinary and] are to be celebrated outside the Church and without any sacred ceremony.'[69] In 1907 the Papal encyclical *Ne Temere* exacerbated this issue. *Ne Temere* required non-Catholic spouses to agree to educate and raise their children as Roman Catholics. In some cases it was also expected that the spouse convert to Catholicism before marrying, to ensure compliance.

The issue of mixed marriage was not a one sided affair. In 1875 Anglican Bishop Barker, when opening the Protestant Hall in Sydney, warned his audience against marriages of Protestants to Catholics. His message met much approval by the audience.[70] The government intervened with the *Marriage Amendment Bill* (1923). The Bill prohibited Catholics from asserting that couples recognised as legally married by the State – but not by the Catholic Church – were 'not truly husband and wife' or that 'the children of such marriages were illegitimate'. [71]

Several telling accounts describing the impact that the mixed marriage debate had on Australian society have been recorded by the personal interviews conducted by Siobhan McHugh. McHugh has recorded personal testimonies of people who 'married out' in the

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[68] O'Farrell, *The Catholic Church and Community in Australia*, 202–203.
[69] Peter Wilkinson, 'Catholic Synods in Australia, 1844-2011', December 2011, 4. Cited 24 May 2012, Online: http://theswag.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2011-10/onlineextras/SynodsOfTheCatholicChurchInAustralia_Final.pdf.
[70] Hogan, *The Sectarian Strand*, 117.
[71] Edwards, *WASPS, Tykes and Ecumaniacs*, 67.

period from the 1920s to the 1970s. These accounts tell of people who were disinherited from their families, how grandchildren were ridiculed, and how, somewhat childishly, family members were literally 'cut out' of family photos. Children of mixed marriages were particularly hurt and damaged by sectarian tensions with numerous testimonies relaying how they were pressured to convert the errant parent. One lady spoke of her trauma at age seven when told by her nun at school 'your mother is going to go straight hell'.[72]

McHugh writes 'by the mid 1960's, things were changing'.[73] In 1966 Pope Paul VI revoked the much -loathed rule that a mixed marriage couple could not marry at the main altar in a Catholic Church, the non-Catholic party was no longer required to commit in writing to having the children brought up Catholic and the clergyman of the other faith was permitted to participate in the wedding service. Ask anyone under fifty what a mixed marriage in Australia is today and they'll talk about Greeks marrying Italians, or a Christian marrying a Muslim. These changes in Australia's social atmosphere alert us to the fact that much religious sectarianism has now dissipated.

Key factors contributing to the resolution of religious sectarianism in Australia

We cannot declare religious sectarianism completely dead in Australia today. It is still very much in the 'remembered past' as we have seen in the aforementioned interviews. It also continues to appear in new ways such as with the wider public response to the new Islamic school opening in Western Sydney. What we can say, however, is that the traditional sectarian bitterness between 'Irish Catholics' and 'English Protestants' has largely dissipated. The remainder of this paper therefore will examine some of the key factors that have influenced

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[72] Siobhan McHugh, 'Marrying Out - Catholic-Protestant Unions in Australia, 1920's-70s' (presented at the International Conference Negotiating the Sacred V: Governing the Family, Monash University, Victoria, 2008), Online: http://ro.uow.edu.au/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1030&context=creartspapers.
[73] McHugh, 'Marrying Out - Catholic-Protestant Unions in Australia, 1920's-70s', 8.

Australian institutions and values since the 1960s. These factors that have led to far reaching social change rendering much of traditional sectarianism redundant.

The early '60s started positively for Australian churches, continuing the modest religious boom that had begun the previous decade.[74] Hilliard writes that in the early '60s 'churches were confident with their special role of moral leadership in the community'.[75] Evangelicals saw a revival after the '59 Billy Graham Crusade; Protestant ecumenists were encouraged by the first national conference of Australian churches attended by 430 delegates in Feb 1960.[76] Roman Catholics were themselves submitting papers to be considered at the upcoming Ecumenical Council to be held in Rome at the end of 1962.[77] The religious future seemed bright by all accounts.

Yet the 1960s saw unprecedented social change leading to what has been popularised as 'the Religious Crisis of the 1960s'.[78] The Sixties saw the majority of households acquire television sets which began re-shaping people's long held perceptions of the world. Personal incomes rose, leading to the purchase of motor-cars thus producing a breakdown in like-minded parochial communities. Higher education increased with seven new universities. Western society began to reject the 'supernaturalism' of classical Christianity, as evidenced by the popularity of books such as John Robinson's *Honest to God*[79] and Harvey Cox' *The Secular*

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[74] David Hilliard writes 'Since the mid 1950's in every denomination all measurable indices of religious life – church membership, Sunday School enrolments, the number of new congregations, church income and enrolments in theological colleges – had gone steadily upwards.' David Hilliard, 'The Religious Crisis of the 1960's: The Experience of Australian Churches', *The Journal of Religious History* 21/1 (February 1997): 211.

[75] Hilliard, 'The Religious Crisis of the 1960's: The Experience of Australian Churches', 211.

[76] David M. Taylor, ed., *We were brought together: Report of the National Conference of Australian Churches held at Melbourne University* (Sydney, 1960).

[77] William Ryder, '"The Australian Bishops" Proposals for Vatican II', *Australasian Catholic Record* 65/1 (1998).

[78] Hilliard, 'The Religious Crisis of the 1960's: The Experience of Australian Churches'; George William Potter, *The Religious Crisis of the 1960s: The Methodist Experience in South Australia* (Flinders University of S. Aust., 1991); Callum G. Brown and Michael Snape, *Secularisation in the Christian World* (Ashgate Publishing, Ltd., 2010).

[79] Hilliard records that *Honest to God* 'caught public imagination, selling 15000 copies in the first fortnight'. From a private interview with Rev Dr Ian Grimmett in Brisbane, 6 May 1963, he quotes that in one Methodist residential college in the University of Queensland 'virtually every student was talking about it'. Hilliard, 'The Religious Crisis of the 1960's: The Experience of Australian Churches', 212.

City[80]. These and other sociological changes led journalist Graham Williams to write in 1965

that the Church had lost its relevance in modern Australia:

> It [the church] must go into the world and, if necessary, die in its present form in order to gain new life and new meaning for people.[81]

This decade of secularisation led to a continued decline in church attendance and religious

belief (the percentage of people confessing belief in God dropped from 87% in 1969 to 61%

in 1993 to 48% in 2010).[82]

It is tempting to conclude that the decline in religious belief has opened the way to a new

'tolerant' society. As some Australia's secularists argue, '*Religions are now the major source*

of global strife and instability. Whatever consoling and charitable benefits religions may

provide, these are now far outweighed by the dangers and costs'.[83] Yet Donald Horne's apt

summary of the mood in the '60s in his bestselling 1964 snapshot of Australian public life,

The Lucky Country, points us in a more helpful direction:

> Churches no longer matter very much to most Australians. In whispers of immortality there are concepts of a fair go: hell has been abolished as unfair to the underdogs. If there is a happy eternal life it's for everyone. Belief in salvationary role of Christ is no longer strong and the concept of evil is un-Australian: one must look for the good in people…The essential beliefs of Australians are essentially humanist and those parts of Christianity that fit this belief are maintained… in fact, to many Australians religion becomes important only when it stops them from doing something they want to do.[84]

Horne, along with Hogan, suggest that the correlation between decline in religious belief and

declining sectarianism is not as straight forward as the secular party might like to imply.[85]

Hogan writes, 'sectarianism gained much of its strength from people loosely attached [to

denominations] rather than strongly committed believers'.[86] These 'loosely attached' people

[80] Alister E. McGrath, *Christianity's Dangerous Idea: The Protestant Revolution--a History from the Sixteenth Century to the Twenty-First* (HarperCollins, 2008), 399.
[81] *Australian,* 19 February 1965
[82] Philip Hughes et al., *Shaping Australia's Spirituality: A Review of Christian Ministry in the Australian Context* (Mosaic Press, 2010), 48–49.
[83] John Perkins, 'Creating a Better Australia: Reinventing Secularism', *Australian Humanist* 82 (Autumn 2006).
[84] Quoted from Tom Frame, *Losing My Religion: Unbelief in Australia* (UNSW Press, 2009), 67.
[85] Hogan points out the inconsistency of such a correlation. Though in the 1870's sectarian passions and denominational support were high; but in the 1920's sectarian passions were also high in a period when denominational allegiance seemed much reduced. Hogan, 'Whatever Happened to Australian Sectarianism?', 86.
[86] Hogan, *The Sectarian Strand*, 86.

attached themselves to 'tribal' organisations, who (in Horne's words) found religion important when they were stopped from doing what they wanted to do. The history of sectarianism that has been sketched above proves this point exactly - the highest peaks of sectarianism occurred not over matters of religious doctrine, but over the everyday social issues of education, marriage, conscription and employment. Organisations such as the Loyal Orange Institute, the Protestant Defence Association and the Catholic Federations took up these issues and publicised them in their affiliated publications like *The Rock* and *The Catholic Weekly*. O'Farrell agreed: 'the central issue was always political power'.[87]

It is true that without such organisational forms sectarianism would never have been such a powerful force in Australian society. However, this explanation is ultimately unsatisfactory by itself. Such tribal organisations were important reflections of society's values; so perhaps it is likely that either changes in values, or values met, lay at the heart of sectarian dissolution.

Changes in the mass media as well as education help to explain some shifting in the underlying values of society. With regard to mass media it is important to note that before television and the internet, general society received information by way of the pulpit, public address, radio and written publications, all of which were often influenced by sectarian bias. While these modes of communication still exist, they now compete in the community with television and the internet causing information overload. Hugh Mackay notes that modern media has opened so many channels of information with alternative opinions that there is a general scepticism such that we just don't value truth that much anymore.[88]

On the education front much has happened to dissipate the issues that led to sectarian tensions. Firstly, the role of denominational schools, particularly Catholic Schools, in

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[87] O'Farrell, 'Double Jeopardy - Catholic and Irish', 10.
[88] Mackay, *Advance Australia ... Where*, 105.

imparting a sense of cultural differentness to other religious groups has largely been broken down. Clerical control of education was the key to this educative process. Hogan notes that 'it does make a difference that students in Catholic schools before the 1950's were taught almost completely by dedicated religious nuns, brothers and priests'.[89] However, post-1960, the proportion of lay teachers in Catholic schools has increased markedly (1965:21%, 1975:68%, 1995:97%),[90] making it inherently difficult for the Church to be as directive in setting out what students learn about the Church.

Secondly, the 1963 Menzies government brought the long running sectarian battle over state aid to an end when they gave Commonwealth grants to the states for the purpose of science education. These grants were available to denominational as well as government schools. Hogan writes, 'One of the outstanding features of the campaign for state aid in the 1960's was the cooperation between Catholic and Protestant pressure groups'.[91]

Yet the decision to re-introduce state aid is not so surprising given the strains on educational resources in the early 1960s due to developments that took place after the Second World War. Rise in immigration and birth rates accompanied by higher school leaving ages put intense strain on existing school networks. Coupled with a lack of development in Australian scientific and technological education in the post-Sputnik era produced much community concern. Education was in 'crisis' and many believed that the only way to alleviate the crisis was for the federal government to inject additional funds into the school system.[92]

The Catholic system, which had survived reasonably well before WWII, was also struggling and the prospect that it might collapse, placing a greater burden on the government system,

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[89] Hogan, 'Whatever Happened to Australian Sectarianism?', 86.
[90] K Canavan, 'The Transformation of Catholic Schools in Australia', *Journal of Religious Education* 47/1 (1999): 21.
[91] Hogan, *The Sectarian Strand*, 254.
[92] Ian R Wilkinson, Brian J Caldwell, R J W Selleck, Jessica Harris, Pam Dettman, *A History of State Aid to Non-government Schools in Australia*, 18.

was real.[93] The provision of assistance to Catholic schools still concerned many Protestants, but these changing social factors led to a softening of the old sectarianism battle lines. Significantly, traditional political allegiances had started to breakdown after the split of the Australian Labor Party (ALP) in the mid-1950's, leading to the formation of the Democratic Labor Party (DLP). No longer could Labor assume the Catholic vote. Rather, as Hogan notes, many Catholics started to find sympathies with the Liberal Party, being drawn together into cooperative political activity with Protestant spokesmen on ethical matters such as abortion, sexual permissiveness and caricaturing the Whitlam ALP as a party of irreligion.[94]

The ecumenical movement within both the Protestant and Catholic camps further accelerated the breakdown of these traditional boundaries. Christian movements towards church unity gained momentum from the World Council of Churches in the early '60s with the Uniting Church being formed from the Presbyterian, Methodist and Congregational churches. This movement has brought about much cross-denominational interaction with shared worship and social concern.

Most significantly, however, are the changes within Catholicism that resulted from the outcomes of meetings of the Second Vatican Council (1962-65). Lay participation in the Church was now encouraged; the Mass was now to be read in vernacular languages (not Latin), there were changes to monastic and convent orders whereby the 'religious' were to be more open to the world to influence it. Dialogue was initiated with Protestant denominations. The council decreed that in certain circumstances, determinable by the bishop, 'it is allowable; indeed desirable the Catholics should join in prayer with their separated brethren'.[95] Protestants were no longer heretics, but separated brethren. In March 1970, Pope

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[93] Michael Hogan, *The Catholic campaign for State Aid: A Study of a Pressure Group Campaign in New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory, 1950-1972* (Catholic Theological Faculty, 1978), 13–14.
[94] Hogan, *The Sectarian Strand*, 255.
[95] Edwards, *WASPS, Tykes and Ecumaniacs*, 197.

Paul VI issued an apostolic letter *Motu Proprio,* which relaxed the stringent canon laws concerning mixed marriages. Local bishops were now able to permit mixed marriages on the condition that the Catholic party 'make a sincere promise to do all in his power to have all the children baptised and brought up in the Catholic Church'.[96] Hirst sees this movement as a key moment in Australia's journey towards unity - 'The marrying and partnering of people of all sorts across all boundaries is the great unifying force in Australia'[97]

Parkes' desire for a unified Australia via an appeal to an Australian rather than sectarian identity, one where 'whether we are Englishmen, Scotchmen, or Irishmen, or whether we are the sons of some foreign land, over and above every other consideration we ought to be Australians', has been amplified by the increase in ethnicity since WWII. Post war immigration has led to dissipation in the nationalism that accompanied much sectarian conflict. English Protestants and Irish Catholics started to realise that they had more in common with each other than, say, Vietnamese Buddhists. Protestant devotion to the British crown has become a residual concern rather than a central issue.[98] Added to this is the increase in the number of locally born Catholic clergy with the declining link between and Irish identity.[99]

Accompanying multiculturalism as a significant factor in diminishing of sectarianism is class mobility. From the beginning, Australia's economic structure allowed Irish Catholic convicts, when freed, to be able to move to ownership, prosperity and respectability, a path followed by migrants thereafter. [100] In colonies starved of labour, few employers had the luxury of being able to avoid Irish Catholic workers.

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[96] Edwards, *WASPS, Tykes and Ecumaniacs*, 200.
[97] John Bradley Hirst, *Sense and Nonsense in Australian History* (Black Inc., 2006), 35.
[98] Hogan, 'Whatever Happened to Australian Sectarianism?', 88.
[99] Edwards, *WASPS, Tykes and Ecumaniacs*, 67.
[100] O'Farrell, 'Double Jeopardy - Catholic and Irish', 12.

It was only with the advent of the close living of cities and in times of mass unemployment that sectarian tensions arose and tribal organisations were formed. For some these organisations sustained them in a turbulent work environment offering them a sense of social superiority and identity. For others sectarianism explained their socio-economic frustrations.[101] These experiences alert us again to the issue of identity being intimately tied to sectarianism. Hugh Mackay has identified work as the new centre of an individual's existence in Australia,[102] whereby the workplace is the central social institution where we find our identity.

Changing Class position has a very direct effect on society's unity. Catholics are not destined to be working class, of all Australians it can be said that standards of living have improved, expectations have changes and new dreams are available.[103] Whereas sectarian groups once provided a sense of identity and social support for the under privileged, these same social groups in later generations now have much more attainable materialistic dreams and have much less need to rely on tribalistic support.

Conclusion

What then can we say of sectarianism in Australia? With deep historical roots in Angloc-Celtic nationalism, sectarianism deeply pervaded Australia's socio-religious past. It still exists in the memory of many Australians through its remembered influence in the personal areas of marriage, education and employment. Church institutions, political parties and tribal organisations were guilty of much bigotry, intolerance and social division. Sectarianism was the result of the idea that there must be one Australian identity and that of a particular kind.


[101] Edwards, *WASPS, Tykes and Ecumaniacs*, 24–25.
[102] Hugh MacKay, *Reinventing Australia: The Mind and Mood of Australia in The 90s* (Angus & Robertson, 1993), 83.
[103] Hogan, 'Whatever Happened to Australian Sectarianism?', 88.

The post-war period, and especially the sixties, saw the journey to a unified Australia advance rapidly. Vatican II, increasing class mobility and the secularisation of society have all had significant impact. With the values of 'good education' 'freedom to marry' and 'a fair go for all' in place, Australia seems to have found the Australian way of life. Perhaps the old adage 'don't talk about religion or politics' has good historical warrant.

Appendix A

The Rock drew on conspiracy theories, sensationalism and traditional polemic, sectarian imagery and prejudice in conveying its less than subtle anti-Catholic message.
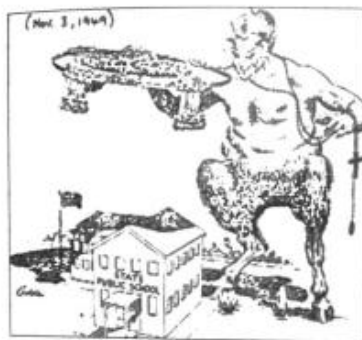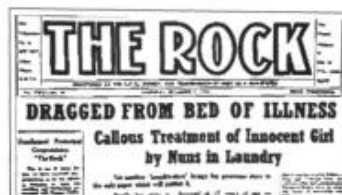
The Anti-Christ Pope, holding out his papal hat to collect government money, menaces public education. Traditional anti-Catholic imagery, such as this bestial demonic depiction of the Pope, whose shadow looms over free society, was frequently invoked by Protestant controversialists to articulate contemporaneous sectarian concerns. *The Rock*, 3 November 1949.

The saga of the 'Laundry Slaves' made front-page news of *The Rock* on numerous occasions. Exploitation for commercial gain of girls put in the charge of nuns at rehabilitation convents was a persistent allegation.

THE ROCK
DRAGGED FROM BED OF ILLNESS
Callous Treatment of Innocent Girl by Nuns in Laundry

THE ROCK
"Rock" Enters Convent to Contact Nun
Two Men Brutally Bashed

April Fools' Day prank or daring rescue mission?
The Rock, 1 April 1948.

Black arts, occult and despotic imagery were extensively used by *The Rock* in its efforts to expose what it saw as Catholic world domination plots.

Immigration Minister Arthur Calwell, here depicted as Rome's Stooge administering a dosage of European Scum and Rabble to Protestant Australia, was a favourite target of *The Rock*. Calwell, a Catholic, was invariably accused by *The Rock* of being a puppet of the Vatican's extensive conspiracy for world domination. *The Rock*, June 1949.

Calwell, here depicted as a fascist terrorising freedom, was invariably accused by *The Rock* of being a puppet of the Vatican's extensive conspiracy for world domination. Erotic imagery and allusions to Catholic sexual predation and perversion were common in *The Rock*. *The Rock*, August 1949.

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