

## HIST150: Colonial Australia

Faculty of Arts and Sciences

School of Humanities

Assignment 2: What issues do Political Cartoons illuminate about Federation?  
What are the challenges in interpreting these Cartoons?

Due Date: May 28<sup>th</sup> 2012

---

By Christiaan Dodemont

---

## Assignment 2

### By Christiaan Dodemont

#### Table of Contents

<b>1. Essay Question.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2. Synopsis.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>3. Introduction .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>4. Cartoons and Issues.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>4.1 Cartoon: The Defence View.....</b>	<b>6</b>
4.1.1 Context: National Security .....	6
4.1.2 Issue: A United Defence .....	6
<b>4.2 Cartoon: Barton ‘You Dirty Boy’.....</b>	<b>7</b>
4.2.1 Context: White Australia .....	7
4.2.2 Issue: Immigration .....	7
<b>4.3 Cartoon: Q.u..ash!! or the tragic ending of a SA Anti-Bill Deputation.....</b>	<b>9</b>
4.3.1 Context: The Federation Question in South Australia.....	9
4.3.2 Issue: The Colonies For and Against Federation .....	9
4.3.3 Issue: Referendums.....	10
<b>4.4 Cartoon: There is only room for one Colony in this Stream.....</b>	<b>11</b>
4.4.1 Context: Water Legislation .....	11
4.4.2 Issue: Riparian Rights.....	11
<b>4.5 Cartoon: Yah! got it!.....</b>	<b>12</b>
4.5.1 Context: Masculine Australia .....	12
4.5.2 Issue: Women’s Suffrage.....	12
4.5.3 Issue: Aboriginal Rights.....	13
<b>5. Challenges in Interpreting Political Cartoons .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>6. Conclusion .....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>7. Bibliography.....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>7.1 Primary Sources .....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>7.2 Secondary Sources .....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>7.3 Other Sources.....</b>	<b>19</b>

**Comment [d1]:** Good but content pages are not essential for a 2000 word assignment

**Marker's Comments: 93% (High Distinction)**

	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Excellent
Adequate research (at least 4 secondary sources)					✓
Critical evaluation of sources					✓
Answers the set question/s					✓
Clear essay structure and argument				✓	
Grammar, spelling and expression					✓
Footnotes and Bibliography				✓	

This is a very well written and researched assignment, which raised some very interesting and relevant points. You demonstrated an excellent understanding of the topic and you covered most of the relevant issues in your analysis. Also, your incorporation and interpretation of selected sources demonstrates your highly developed research skills. I especially liked your use of direct quotes and use of secondary sources to back up your claims.

Your key problem here was at times throughout your discussion you provided too much background info and were at risk of being a little repetitive. While the subheadings are good for larger works, for a 2000 word essay they tend to break up the flow of the argument and were a bit distracting and confusing. More so, there were a few minor referencing issues, in particular the footnotes. There was an over use of footnotes and you need to work on these in the future. You have the right idea, but now need to perfect the technique. Nevertheless, your introduction covered the main aspects of the topic rather nicely – you now need to tighten it so that it is clear and concise. With careful proofreading and closer attention to details, these minor mistakes will be remedied. Overall, an excellent piece of writing. Keep up the good work!

## Essay Question

What issues or debates do the Federation political cartoons illuminate? What are the challenges facing the historian who seeks to interpret political cartoons?

### 1. Synopsis

The political cartoons bring to light Federation issues such as defence, immigration, views of those for and against unification, riparian rights of the Murray, women's suffrage and the removal of Aboriginal rights. In order to better interpret political cartoons as sources of information, historians must know the context of the cartoon, identify the symbolism used, and have an awareness of author's motives to deduce a cartoon's true meaning. ✓

## 2. Introduction

Historians, school students<sup>1</sup> and the public alike tend to find the topic of Federation ‘tedious reading’<sup>2</sup>. Newspapers in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries utilised political cartoons to generate interest in Federation concerns and their impact on the colonies. This essay will examine a selection of five political cartoons by discussing the context in which they were published, and detailing the issues they raised. These federation issues include: national defence; immigration policies; campaigns for and against federation; referendums; riparian rights of the Murray River; women’s suffrage; and Aboriginal rights.

Political cartoons are a valuable primary source of information when dealing with historical events. Not only do they raise key concerns, they provide a look into the mindset of the people of a particular period in time. Political cartoons however, often carry double meanings and this essay will address some of the challenges involved in their interpretation. It will be demonstrated that having an understanding of the context and symbolism, as well as discerning the motivations of the author, help us to identify the intended meanings. By understanding these political cartoons it is hoped that Australian Federation may become an intriguing topic for the people of today and highlight its significance in this country’s history.



**Comment [d2]:** All footnotes should be at the end of the sentence after the full stop. Use a semi-colon to separate footnotes if there are many for a single sentence.

**Comment [d3]:** Link or join these points.

- 
- <sup>1</sup> Anna Clark, ‘The Edmund Barton Syndrome’ in *History's children : history wars in the classroom*, Sydney, 2008, p. 21.
- <sup>2</sup> Raymond Evans, ‘White citizenship: nationhood and race at Federation’, *Memoirs of the Queensland Museum, Cultural Heritage Series*, vol. 2, 2002, p. 179.

### 3. Cartoons and Issues

#### 3.1 Cartoon: The Defence View

##### 3.1.1 Context: National Security

In *The Defence View*<sup>3</sup> mother Australia proposes using a bigger gun of *unity* to the smaller toy guns of the children colonies. The issue of national defence was the catalyst for the federation movement. Interests other than British turned their attention to the Pacific in the second half of the nineteenth century. By 1864 the French had established a penal colony in New Caledonia, and American and German eyes looked towards Samoa<sup>4</sup>. Wary of similar German interests in New Guinea, Queensland Premier Sir Thomas McIlwraith annexed the island in 1883, but was rebuffed by Britain who asserted that Australia should think about an all-Australian government before desiring to extend its borders<sup>5</sup>. Tensions were further aroused when the French took possession of New Hebrides in 1886<sup>6</sup>. The colonies were wary of potential invasion and looked to Britain for help. ✓

**Comment [d4]:** Subheadings can break the flow of the discussion.

**Comment [d5]:** End of sentence.

**Comment [d6]:** After the full stop.

##### 3.1.2 Issue: A United Defence

British Major General Bevan Edwards was invited to inspect colonial security. Each colony had their own defence force and Edwards criticized the inadequate forces concluding that Australia would be incapable of defending its borders in the event of attack<sup>7</sup>. Sir Henry Parkes seized on this report. In his Tenterfield oration he argued that Australia needed a unified colonial army with a 'great national government for all Australia'<sup>8</sup>. The Federal Council was thus established to handle federal interests including national defence<sup>9</sup>. National security was again a concern in 1895 due to the perceived threat of invasion from Asia<sup>10</sup>. It is also no coincidence that the cartoon was printed at the time of the British war in Sudan<sup>11</sup>, and

<sup>3</sup> 'The Defence View', *The Critic*, 4 June 1898, no pagination.

<sup>4</sup> Frank R. Beasley, 'Problems of Federation' *Australia Foreign Affairs*, vol. 13, no. 2, 1935, p.328.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 328.

<sup>6</sup> Luke Trainor, *British Imperialism and Australian Nationalism*. Cambridge, 1994, p. 95.

<sup>7</sup> Brian Matthews, *Federation*. Melbourne, Text Publishing, 1999, p. 41.

<sup>8</sup> S Alomes and C Jones, 'Federation' in *Australian Nationalism: A Documentary History*, eds. S Alomes and C Jones, North Ryde, 1991, p. 108.

<sup>9</sup> Kathleen Dermody, *A Nation at Last : The Story of Federation*, Canberra, 1997, p. 2.

<sup>10</sup> Ged Martin, *Australia New Zealand and Federation 1883-1901*, London, 2001, p. 40.

<sup>11</sup> James Lawrence, "'The White Man's Burden'" Imperial Wars in the 1890s', *History Today*, vol. 42, August, 1992, p. 45.

Germany's push for naval power<sup>12</sup>. However the 1890s saw depression and drought hampering colonial economies<sup>13</sup>. The economic slump meant little funding was available for defence<sup>14</sup>. The national security issue was the initial drive behind the federation, but was less significant towards 1901. ✓

### 3.2 Cartoon: Barton 'You Dirty Boy'

#### 3.2.1 Context: White Australia

Barton 'You Dirty Boy'<sup>15</sup> raises the issue of race in the federation movement. In this cartoon Queensland Kanaka workers carrying weapons are portrayed as a threat. Edmund Barton, the first Prime Minister, holds a *white Australia* scrubbing brush to clean up black Queensland. In 1890 devoted federalist Alfred Deakin stated that Australians were 'separated only by imaginary lines... people one in blood, race, religion and aspirations.'<sup>16</sup> However, *Australians* meant white Australians and this view was held by politicians, newspapers and people alike. According to *The Boomerang* Australia was 'a place where the English race shall be spread from sea to sea unmixed by any lower caste'<sup>17</sup>. The white race was equated with the virtues of purity, strength and morality, and those who sympathised with non-whites were also targeted. *The Bulletin* labelled the Sydney Peace Society 'anti-white Australian Scum' for advocating an end to racist militarism<sup>18</sup>. The concept of white Australia was entrenched in the colonial psyche. ✓

#### 3.2.2 Issue: Immigration

White Australia was concerned with the impact of Asian immigrants on white jobs. The cartoon refers specifically to the *Kanakas*; pacific islanders employed by farmers in sugar cane fields<sup>19</sup>. They, along with many other Asian immigrants were hired at lower wages and

<sup>12</sup> James Holmes, 'Mahan, a "Place in the Sun," and Germany's Quest for Sea Power', *Comparative Strategy*, vol. 23, no. 1, 2004, p. 43.

<sup>13</sup> B K. de Garis, '1890-1900' in *A New History of Australia*, ed. F K Crowley, Melbourne, 1980, p. 219.

<sup>14</sup> Martin, *Australia New Zealand*, p. 40.

<sup>15</sup> 'Barton "You dirty boy!"', *The Bulletin*, 19 October 1901, no pagination.

<sup>16</sup> Patricia Grimshaw, 'Federation as a turning point in Australian history', *Australian Historical Studies*, vol. 33, no. 118, 2002, p. 28.

<sup>17</sup> Evans, 'White citizenship', p. 185.

<sup>18</sup> Raymond Evans, 'Keeping Australia Clean White' in *A Most Valuable Acquisition: A People's History of Australia*, eds. Verity Burgmann and Jenny Lee, Fitzroy, 1983, p.186.

<sup>19</sup> John Hirst, 'When was our nation born?', *Eureka Street*, vol. 11, no. 4, 2001, p. 26.

were willing to accept poorer conditions than white workers<sup>20</sup>. White Australia had failed in earlier attempts to gain power over immigration<sup>21</sup>, which remained under British control. To appease the British parliament, the 1901 Immigration Restriction Act required new immigrants to sit a fifty-word dictation test<sup>22</sup>. Known as the Natal formula, the test was of any European language, guaranteeing failure for the majority of immigrants<sup>23</sup>. This was followed by the 1902 Pacific Island Labourers Act resulting in mass deportation of pacific islanders after 1906<sup>24</sup>. As Deakin pointed out, these acts were ‘not to allow persons to enter the Commonwealth but to keep them out.’<sup>25</sup> ✓

---

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 26.

<sup>21</sup> Helen Irving, *The Centenary Companion to Australian Federation*, Cambridge, 1999, p. 7.

<sup>22</sup> *Immigration Restriction Act 1901* (Cwlth), s. 3a.

<sup>23</sup> Evans, ‘White Citizenship’, p. 185.

<sup>24</sup> *Pacific Island Labourers Act 1901* (Cwlth), s. 8 (2).

<sup>25</sup> Evans, ‘White Citizenship’, p. 185.



### 3.3 Cartoon: Q.u..ash!! or the tragic ending of a SA Anti-Bill Deputation

#### 3.3.1 Context: The Federation Question in South Australia

*Q.u..ash!! or the tragic ending of a SA Anti-Bill Deputation*<sup>26</sup> refers to the successful 1898 federation campaign in South Australia. The cartoon depicts a larger Premier Charles Kingston sitting on many smaller figures opposing federation. Anti-Billites led by Hugh Dixon attempted to dissuade the South Australian public against federation. They claimed that the closure of border tariffs and duties, coupled with the cost of a new federal government would be highly expensive<sup>27</sup>. They emphasized job losses to Victoria, higher taxes and wage cuts<sup>28</sup>. Led by Kingston, the Yes campaign focused on advantages of federation: opening eastern markets to its wine and wheat<sup>29</sup>; opening access as a service provider to the Broken Hill mines and western goldfields; building northern and western railways making South Australia the communications and transport hub of Australia; and national protection of the Murray River<sup>30</sup>. The vote for federation was carried overwhelmingly in all South Australian referendums. ✓

#### 3.3.2 Issue: The Colonies For and Against Federation

The cartoon highlights the battle between pro and anti-federation groups. There were two main issues of contention: democratic and economic. The democratic issues centred on the equal representation in the Senate. New South Wales and Victoria had the largest populations, and feared that equal representation in the Senate gave power to the weaker states<sup>31</sup>. The issue remained unresolved<sup>32</sup>. Economic issues were the most damaging to the pro-federation cause<sup>33</sup> highlighted by the rivalry between free-trade New South Wales led by Premier George Reid, and the other protectionist colonies. Members of both sides were for, or against federation, however arguments over economy worked in the negative's favour. With its climate suited to pastoralism and agriculture<sup>34</sup>, New South Wales generated revenue from

<sup>26</sup> 'Q.u..ash!! or the tragic ending of a SA Anti-Bill Deputation', *The Critic*, 21 May 1898, no pagination.

<sup>27</sup> S Alomes and C Jones, 'Federation', p. 118.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 118.

<sup>29</sup> R Norris, *The Emergent Commonwealth, Australian Federation: Expectations and Fulfilment 1889-1910*, Melbourne, 1975, p. 27.

<sup>30</sup> John C. Bannon, 'The achievement of Federation' *Bulletin (Law Society of S.A.)*, vol. 23, no. 1, 2001, p. 28.

<sup>31</sup> Norris, *The Emergent Commonwealth*, p. 19.

<sup>32</sup> Kathleen Dermody, *A Nation at Last: The Story of Federation*, Canberra, 1997, p. 13.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 44.

<sup>34</sup> Beasley, 'Problems of Federation', p. 329.

minerals, and taxation from land and income<sup>35</sup>. Conversely the other states relied heavily on revenue from border tariffs<sup>36</sup>. At the 1897-98 Federal Convention Edward Braddon suggested that three quarters of proceeds generated from a new national tariff should go to the states<sup>37</sup>. To placate New South Wales, the policy was limited to ten years and, as its nickname the 'Braddon Blot' suggests, was not popular<sup>38</sup>. Despite his own preferences, Reid agreed earning him the nickname 'Yes-No Reid'<sup>39</sup>. New South Wales failed to reach the 80000 votes required to pass the referendum in 1898<sup>40</sup>. However, alterations to the constitution to favour New South Wales ensured the 1899 referendum was a success. ✓

### 3.3.3 Issue: Referendums

The cartoon also highlights the use of referendums. At the 1883 Corowa conference, Dr John Quick proposed popularly elected officials for a new convention, responsible for drafting a constitution to be voted by the public at referendum<sup>41</sup>. Many feared this would place power in the hands of populists, and produce unqualified delegates<sup>42</sup>. These fears proved unfounded. With the exception of Western Australia, the public voted initially in 1897 for delegates for the upcoming Federation Conventions, and subsequently the 1898 and successful 1899 federation referendums<sup>43</sup>. Federation guidebooks claimed, 'Ours is not the federation of free, but the wise, solemn, rational federation of a free people.'<sup>44</sup> The referendums were pioneering for their inclusion of the public and for uniting Australia through peaceful means as opposed to force.

---

<sup>35</sup> Norris, *The Emergent Commonwealth*, p. 4.

<sup>36</sup> Beasley, 'Problems of Federation', p. 331.

<sup>37</sup> Martin, *Australia New Zealand*, p. 14.

<sup>38</sup> Dermody, *A Nation at Last*, p. 41.

<sup>39</sup> Matthews, *Federation*, p. 107.

<sup>40</sup> Irving, *The Centenary Companion*, p. 12.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 10.

<sup>42</sup> Bannon, 'The achievement of Federation', p. 28.

<sup>43</sup> Martin, *Australia New Zealand*, p. 5.

<sup>44</sup> Hirst, 'When was our nation born?', p. 24.

### 3.4 Cartoon: **There is only room for one Colony in this Stream**

**Comment [d7]:** Important to include the name of the cartoon in your text, not just the sub heading.

#### 3.4.1 Context: Water Legislation

In this cartoon a rotund New South Wales Premier George Reid leaves no room for three South Australian Federal Convention delegates to bathe in the Murray stream. The Murray River was a major source of water for inland South Australia, New South Wales and Victoria. The droughts of the 1870s and 1880s awoke the desires of the colonies for the Murray<sup>45</sup>. In 1884 Alfred Deakin headed a Royal Commission into water supply where he studied the United States and Canadian irrigation techniques<sup>46</sup>. The Victorian Irrigation Act of 1886 enacted most of Deakin's findings guaranteeing an allotment of water, including portions of the Murray, to the purchase of land. New South Wales followed suit in 1896<sup>47</sup> unlike South Australia who used of the Murray predominantly for trade<sup>48</sup>. The issue of the Murray River would be a major talking point of the 1897-98 Federal Convention. ✓

#### 3.4.2 Issue: Riparian Rights

*There is only room for one Colony in this Stream*<sup>49</sup> focuses on the arguments of riparian rights, or rights to the use of water<sup>50</sup>, which plagued the 1897-98 convention. Focusing on South Australia's desire for commercial use, delegate Patrick Glynn argued that the Murray be defined as a navigable river, ensuring federal protection<sup>51</sup>. New South Wales claimed that South Australia was depriving it of much needed water. George Reid wanted to divert the Murray for irrigation of its large agricultural districts<sup>52</sup>. This had repercussions for South Australia who had trouble navigating its trade vessels in declining waters, worsened by drought beginning in 1895<sup>53</sup>. The solution was to hand control of the Murray to Federal Parliament with an agreement to 'reasonable use of the waters... for conservation or

<sup>45</sup> Poh-Ling Tan, 'Legal Issues Relating to Water Use, Agriculture and Natural Resource Management in the Murray-Darling Basin: A Policy History and Analysis', issue paper no. 1, report prepared for Institute for Rural Futures, Armidale, 2002, p. 14.

<sup>46</sup> 'Australia's Prime Ministers', revised 2012, <http://primeministers.naa.gov.au/primeministers/deakin/before-office.aspx>, accessed 25th May 2012.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 14.

<sup>48</sup> Martin, *Australia New Zealand*, p. 5.

<sup>49</sup> 'Premier Reid – "There is only room for one Colony in this Stream"', *The Critic*, 5 February 1898, no pagination.

<sup>50</sup> Tan, 'Legal Issues Relating to Water Use', p. 3.

<sup>51</sup> 'Who "owns" the Murray? Federal Conventions 1897–1898', revised 13 November 2009, <http://www.samemory.sa.gov.au/site/page.cfm?u=1382>, accessed 15 May 2012.

<sup>52</sup> Martin, *Australia New Zealand*, p. 50.

<sup>53</sup> de Garis, '1890-1900', p. 227.

irrigation.<sup>54</sup> The agreement passed by close majority<sup>55</sup> though states still argue over the Murray today<sup>56</sup>. ✓

### 3.5 Cartoon: Yah! got it!

#### 3.5.1 Context: Masculine Australia

In this cartoon, a spectacled woman raises her umbrella in triumph calling 'Yah! got it!' with a piece of paper labelled *electors right* attached to her umbrella. Australia and the federation movement were ideologically masculine<sup>57</sup>. The typical Australian was characterised as *him* in literature exemplified in Henry Lawson and Banjo Paterson<sup>58</sup>. Newspapers like the *Bull Ant* in Melbourne printed misogynist rhetoric such as '...what life would be like with this class in the ascendant, it isn't good for the mind of man to dwell upon.'<sup>59</sup> Along with the all-male Australian Natives Association, the founders of federation were known as the *Founding Fathers* with Sir Henry Parkes the *Father of Federation*<sup>60</sup>. Sir John Forrest, a future advocate of women's suffrage in Western Australia initially proclaimed that a woman should not vote as, 'she can't do the heavy work... the colony requires.'<sup>61</sup> Women were second to men in Australia, however the road to equality would begin with suffrage. ✓

Comment [d8]: Identify the cartoon.

#### 3.5.2 Issue: Women's Suffrage

*Yah! got it!*<sup>62</sup> highlights the enfranchisement of women in 1902. South Australia was seen as progressive by advocating women's suffrage in 1894<sup>63</sup>. Western Australia followed suit in 1899<sup>64</sup>. Women across the colonies were involved in the federation movement. The Ladies' Organising Committee helped arrange the Bathurst federation conference. The Womanhood

<sup>54</sup> *Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act 1900* (Cwlth), Chapter IV, s. 100.

<sup>55</sup> Dermody, *A Nation at Last*, p. 40.

<sup>56</sup> 'Victoria, SA in spat over Murray River', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 26 September 2008, <http://news.smh.com.au/national/victoria-sa-in-spat-over-murray-river-20080926-4ojg.html>, accessed 24 May 2012.

<sup>57</sup> Trainor, *Australian Nationalism*, p. 73.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 73.

<sup>59</sup> Marilyn Lake, 'The Power of the Ballet: Raising the Woman Question in Australian Colonies' in *Getting equal: the history of Australian feminism*, St Leonards, 1999, p. 34.

<sup>60</sup> Erin Ihde, '1 January 1901: Australia Federates, Australia Celebrates' in *Turning Points in Australian History*, ed. David Andrew Roberts and Martin Crotty, Sydney, 2009, p. 92.

<sup>61</sup> Audrey Oldfield, '"The Knife without the blade": the gift theory and the legacy' in *Woman Suffrage in Australia: a gift or a struggle?*, Melbourne, 1992, p. 215.

<sup>62</sup> 'Yah! got it', *The Bulletin*, 21 June 1902, no pagination.

<sup>63</sup> Marian Simms, 'The Legacies of Federation: The Case of the 1901 General Election', *Sydney Papers*, vol. 14, no. 1, 2002, p. 158.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 158.

Suffrage League<sup>65</sup> and Women's Federal Leagues were constant participants in fundraising and other roles around the country<sup>66</sup>. Catherine Spence campaigned for a place in the South Australian delegation to the 1897-98 Federal Convention, though unsuccessfully<sup>67</sup>. In the 1890s women's leaders like Louisa Lawson, Maybanke Wolstenholme<sup>68</sup>, Vida Goldstein<sup>69</sup>, and Ida McAulay<sup>70</sup> all campaigned for women's suffrage. Historians debate over the reasons for their success. Some argue that federation gave the suffragist cause impetus, and that women's suffrage was a tool for male politicians to provide order against radical elements of society<sup>71</sup>. Regardless the Commonwealth Franchise Act granted women's federal suffrage in 1902. The remaining states followed with New South Wales in 1902, Tasmania in 1903, Queensland in 1904 and Victoria in 1908 granting women the vote. ✓

### 3.5.3 Issue: Aboriginal Rights

The cartoon includes a segment of text alluding to the plight of indigenous people. Aborigines were regarded as a doomed race and were ignored when planning for the future of Australia was taken into consideration<sup>72</sup>. The few land owning Aborigines eligible to vote were perceived as a political threat. Politicians believed that either pastoralists could encourage Aborigines to political action, or Aborigines themselves may vote together against white interests<sup>73</sup>. The same Act that enfranchised white women cut Aborigines from electoral rolls<sup>74</sup>. This denied them citizenship, social and political benefits, and the right to vote<sup>75</sup>. While the Commonwealth Franchise Act was a celebration for women, it was a blow to Aboriginal rights. ✓

<sup>65</sup> Lake, 'The Power of the Ballet', p. 35.

<sup>66</sup> Martin, *Australia New Zealand*, p. 73.

<sup>67</sup> Dermody, *A Nation at Last*, p. 30.

<sup>68</sup> Lake, 'The Power of the Ballet', pp. 20-39.

<sup>69</sup> Letter from Vida Goldstein to Edmund Barton seeking legislation for female suffrage, 1901, National Archive of Australia, A6, 1901/354, <http://primeministers.naa.gov.au/image.aspx?id=tcn:13-20995>.

<sup>70</sup> Lake, 'The Power of the Ballet', p. 37.

<sup>71</sup> Oldfield, 'the gift theory and the legacy', p. 217.

<sup>72</sup> Matthews, *Federation*, p. 29.

<sup>73</sup> Grimshaw, 'Federation as a turning point', p. 34.

<sup>74</sup> *Commonwealth Franchise Act 1902* (Cwlth), s. 4.

<sup>75</sup> Ihde, '1 January 1901', p. 96.

#### 4. Challenges in Interpreting Political Cartoons

To determine a political cartoon's true message, historians are challenged to investigate the symbolism utilised within its historical context<sup>76</sup>. For example, in the cartoon *Premier Reid – 'There is only room for one Colony in this Stream.'*<sup>77</sup> symbolism represents the questions of New South Wales' claim to riparian rights over the Murray River. First, the author depicts the Murray River as receding, emphasised by George Reid's girth. Secondly, the author also shows Reid holding *Soft Soap*. Overtly this indicates soap for bathing, however, the term has other possible meanings. Soft Soap refers to people who use insincere flattery as a way to cajole others<sup>78</sup>. Reid was known for his 'political slipperiness'<sup>79</sup>. Soft Soap also refers to soft and hard water. As rivers recede, salination levels rise creating 'hard water' in which soft soap struggles to lather<sup>80</sup>. This indicates that Reid is utilising his plentiful *soft* water, while the Murray in South Australia recedes. When viewed in the context of the 1898 Federal Convention where riparian rights were a contentious topic, it can be deduced that the author is condemning George Reid. By using symbolism in context, the author attacks New South Wales' use of the Murray River. ✓

The cartoon *Yah! got it!*<sup>81</sup> demonstrates how the motives of the author must be determined to understand the real message of a cartoon<sup>82</sup>. The text in the cartoon and title point to the enfranchisement of women, and the image shows a woman dancing over this achievement. This suggests the author is celebrating enfranchisement; however two elements suggest alternative motives. Firstly, if the image of the woman is compared to that of Australia in *The Defence View*<sup>83</sup>, we see two different depictions of women. Australia is portrayed as angelic while the suffragette is depicted as a crazy old woman. Secondly, *The Bulletin* was a pro-masculine newspaper well known for its denouncement of women's suffrage<sup>84</sup>. With these

**Comment [d9]:** Yes but what issues/challenges historians find? You need to be more specific.

<sup>76</sup> Elizabeth McGinnis, Meredith Wright, Jan Bishop, and Rosslyn Marshall. 'Cartoon PD in a Package', 2004, <http://john.curtin.edu.au/education/cartoonpd/CartoonPD-Section1.pdf>, accessed 20 May 2012, p. 7.

<sup>77</sup> 'Premier Reid', *The Critic*, no pagination.

<sup>78</sup> 'soft soap', 2012, <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/soft+soap>, accessed 25 May 2012.

<sup>79</sup> Matthews, *Federation*, p. 74.

<sup>80</sup> Viktoria K. Osorio, Wanda de Oliveira, and Omar A. El Seoud, 'Hard Water and Soft Soap: Dependence of Soap Performance on Water Hardness', *Journal of Chemical Education*, vol. 82, no. 2, 2005, p. 257.

<sup>81</sup> 'Yah! got it', *The Bulletin*, no pagination.

<sup>82</sup> Elizabeth McGinnis *et al.*, 'Cartoon PD in a Package', p. 7.

<sup>83</sup> 'The Defence View', *The Critic*, no pagination.

<sup>84</sup> Lake, 'The Power of the Ballet', p. 34.

considerations in mind, it can be deduced that the author actually ridicules women's enfranchisement. ✓

## 5. Conclusion

Many issues impacted the road to Australian Federation. The drive for a united Australia was initiated by concerns over national defence leading to the formation of the first Federal Council. Concerns over jobs and wages united white Australia, leading to racist national policies on immigration. Economic questions highlighted by supporters of protectionism and free-trade, and the quest for majority rule in parliament fuelled the fight between those for and against Federation. The referendums provided the opportunity for many Australians to have a say in how their country would be run and led to the peaceful foundation of a country for the first time. Jurisdiction of the Murray River was cause for concern between South Australia's need for trade and New South Wales' desire for agriculture. Finally women won the right to vote in 1902 while Aborigines were stripped of their rights. Despite these contentious issues, the people of the colonies voted in favour of unification, and Australia was born on January 1<sup>st</sup> 1901. |

Newspapers of the period used political cartoons to address issues as well as give their own opinions. As historians it is important to study these resources to identify their true agendas. By researching context, identifying the symbolism used and discerning the authors' motives we are able to discover the real message of the cartoons.

**Comment [d10]:** Link the points together

## 6. Bibliography

### 6.1 Primary Sources ✓

Alomes, S, and Jones, C. 'Federation' in *Australian Nationalism: A Documentary History*, ed. S Alomes and C Jones, North Rhyde, Collins / Angus and Robertson, 1991, pp. 105-124.

*Commonwealth Franchise Act*, 1902.

*Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act*, 1900.

*Immigration Restriction Act*, 1901.

Letter from Vida Goldstein to Edmund Barton, 1901, National Archive of Australia, A6, 1901/354, <http://primeministers.naa.gov.au/image.aspx?id=tcm:13-20995>.

*Pacific Island Labourers Act*, 1901.

*The Bulletin*, 1901-1902.

*The Critic*, 1898.

**Comment [d11]:** Also include web address or repository from where they were accessed.

### 6.2 Secondary Sources

Bannon, John C. 'The achievement of Federation' *Bulletin (Law Society of S.A.)*, vol. 23, no. 1, 2001, pp. 27-28.

Beasley, Frank R. 'Problems of Federation' *Australia Foreign Affairs*, vol. 13, no. 2, 1935, pp. 328-339.

Clark, Anna. 'The Edmund Barton Syndrome' in *History's children : history wars in the classroom*, Sydney, University of New South Wales Press, 2008, pp. 20-42.

**Comment [d12]:** Include the cartoon titles as well.



de Garis, B. K. '1890-1900' in *A New History of Australia*, ed. F K Crowley, Melbourne, Heinemann, 1980, pp. 216-259.

Dermody, Kathleen. *A Nation at Last : The Story of Federation*, Canberra, Australian Government Publishing Services, 1997.

Evans, Raymond. 'Keeping Australia Clean White' in *A Most Valuable Acquisition: A People's History of Australia*, ed. Verity Burgmann and Jenny Lee, Fitzroy, McPhee Gribble / Penguin, 1983, pp.170-188.

Evans, Raymond. 'White citizenship: nationhood and race at Federation', *Memoirs of the Queensland Museum, Cultural Heritage Series*, vol. 2, 2002, pp. 179-187.

Grimshaw, Patricia. 'Federation as a turning point in Australian history', *Australian Historical Studies*, vol. 33, no. 118, 2002, pp. 25 - 41.

Heseltine, William. 'A dance to the music of time: a look at political relations between Australia and Britain in the first century of federation', *Early Days*, vol. 11, no. 6, 2000, pp. 745-757.

Hirst, John. 'When was our nation born?', *Eureka Street*, vol. 11, no. 4, 2001, pp. 24-27.

Ihde, Erin. '1 January 1901: Australia Federates, Australia Celebrates' in *Turning Points in Australian History*, ed. David Andrew Roberts and Martin Crotty, Sydney, University of New South Wales Press, 2009, pp. 87-99.

Irving, Helen. *The Centenary Companion to Australian Federation*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1999.

Lake, Marilyn. 'The Power of the Ballet: Raising the Woman Question in Australian Colonies' in *Getting equal: the history of Australian feminism*, St Leonards, Allen & Unwin, 1999, pp. 19-45.

Martin, Ged. *Australia New Zealand and Federation 1883-1901*, London, Menzies Centre for Australia Studies, 2001.

Matthews, Brian. *Federation*. Melbourne, Text Publishing, 1999.

Norris, R. *The Emergent Commonwealth, Australian Federation: Expectations and Fulfilment 1889-1910*, Melbourne, Melbourne University Press, 1975.

Oldfield, Audrey. ‘“The Knife without the blade” : the gift theory and the legacy’ in *Woman Suffrage in Australia : a gift or a struggle?*, Melbourne, Cambridge University Press, 1992, pp. 212-230.

Pierce, Peter. ‘Introduction’ in *The Cambridge History of Australian Literature*, ed. Peter Pierce, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2009, pp. 1-6.

Rogers, Edmund. ‘Free trade versus protectionism: New South Wales, Victoria and the tariff debate in Britain 1881-1900’, *Australian Studies*, vol. 1, no. 1, 2009, pp. 1-16.

Simms, Marian. ‘The Legacies of Federation: The Case of the 1901 General Election’, *Sydney Papers*, vol. 14, no. 1, 2002, pp. 156-162.

Smith, Joanne. ‘Twelve hundred reasons why there is no Australasia: How colonisation influenced federation’, *Australian Cultural History*, vol. 27, no. 1, 2009, pp. 35-45.

Tan, Poh-Ling. ‘Legal Issues Relating to Water Use, Agriculture and Natural Resource Management in the Murray-Darling Basin: A Policy History and Analysis’, issue paper no. 1, report prepared for Institute for Rural Futures, Armidale, University of New England, 2002.

*The Sydney Morning Herald*.

Trainor, Luke. *British Imperialism and Australian Nationalism*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1994.

Wellings, Ben. 'Crown and country: empire and nation in Australian nationalism, 1788-1999', *Journal of Australian Colonial History*, vol. 5, 2004, pp. 148-170.

### 6.3 Other Sources

'Australia's Prime Ministers', National Archive of Australia, revised 2012, <http://prime.ministers.naa.gov.au/primeministers/deakin/before-office.aspx>, accessed 25th May 2012.

Blainey, Geoffrey. 'Australia, New Zealand and Federation, 1883-1901', *The English Historical Review*, vol. 117, no. 473, 2002, p. 1016.

Holmes, James. 'Mahan, a "Place in the Sun," and Germany's Quest for Sea Power', *Comparative Strategy*, vol. 23, no. 1, 2004, pp. 27-61.

Lawrence, James. "'The White Man's Burden?' Imperial Wars in the 1890s', *History Today*, vol. 42, August, 1992, p. 45.

McGinnis, Elizabeth, Wright, Meredith, Bishop, Jan and Marshall, Rosslyn. 'Cartoon PD in a Package', John Curtin Prime Ministerial Library, 2004, <http://john.curtin.edu.au/education/cartoonpd/CartoonPD-Section1.pdf>, accessed 20 May 2012, pp. 1-10.

Osorio, Viktoria K., de Oliveira, Wanda and El Seoud, Omar A., 'Hard Water and Soft Soap: Dependence of Soap Performance on Water Hardness', *Journal of Chemical Education*, vol. 82, no. 2, 2005, pp. 257-259.

'soft soap', Dictionary.com Unabridged, 2012, <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/soft+soap>, accessed 25 May 2012.

'Who "owns" the Murray? Federal Conventions 1897-1898', SA Memory: past and present, for the future, revised 13 November 2009, <http://www.samemory.sa.gov.au/site/page.cfm?u=1382>, accessed 15 May 2012.