

National Museum of Australia 'Review'
Submission from the Australian Studies Program
University of New South Wales

The Australian Studies Program at the University of New South Wales wishes to voice our strongest possible support for the National Museum of Australia. Australian Studies is a multidisciplinary program, examining many diverse aspects of Australian history, culture and society, and involving a wide cross section of the academic community. Our students are equally diverse and this year alone number several hundred.

We are agreed that

The National Museum is one of this country's great cultural institutions. Its exhibitions, programs and displays are thought-provoking and challenging and it has proved an excellent teaching resource for hundreds of our students. We oppose any move to sanitise or simplify this searching and engaging 'conversation' with Australia's past.

We are deeply disturbed that the Review Committee has declined an offer by the Australian Historical Association to nominate a suitable representative to serve on the committee. The National Museum was originally designed with the widest possible public and expert consultation. Similarly, the failure of the Review Committee to include any teachers or history educators breaches the Museum's founding commitment to reach out to Schools and play an active role in shaping and informing the School curricula.

It is our fear that this review is driven by a political agenda which will diminish and compromise the integrity of the National Museum. The curators and historians that established the Museum have worked to the highest possible professional standards and deserve our respect and confidence. To interfere in this work is entirely unacceptable.

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This letter of protest has been circulated amongst all the Schools and Faculties that contribute to the Australian Studies Program.