

Associate Professor John Carroll  
Chair  
National Museum of Australia Review of Exhibitions and Public Programs  
DCITA  
GPO Box 2154  
Canberra ACT 2601

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Dear Associate Professor Carroll

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to the National Museum of Australia Review of Exhibitions and Public Programs, and to comment with particular reference to the work of the NMA's Schools Programs section.

Briefly, it may be useful for you to know that I have had over 20 years experience in 'school History'. I was a teacher of History at all secondary school levels in Victorian government schools for 13 years, I have been a Board Member of the History Teachers' Association of Victoria for 14 years (ongoing), I was a member of the Monash University team that headed the recent National Inquiry into School History, and I have been Lecturer-in-charge of Methods and Practice of Teaching History with large classes of History-specialist student-teachers for 6 years (ongoing).

The on-site activities and diverse print and electronic educational resources of the Schools Programs section demonstrate current best practice in the teaching of History to a standard rarely seen in cultural institutions:

- They are informed by essential and diverse curriculum perspectives, as found in *A Statement on Studies of Society and Environment for Australian Schools* (1994) which has subsequently informed the SOSE/HSIE curricula of all states and territories
- They contain strong Civics and Citizenship Education dimensions, taking up CCE as the major national educational initiative instigated by *Discovering Democracy* (1998) and which has subsequently informed other national as well as State/Territory CCE programs
- They are rich in engaging Inquiry Methodology where students work purposefully as well as enjoyably 'as historians', drawing their own conclusions from the museum's evidence
- They incorporate Gardner's Multiple Intelligences and Bloom's Taxonomy theories through diverse activities and diverse resources, reflecting an awareness that students learn in different ways and through different types of resources to different levels, then prefer to demonstrate their understandings in equally different ways
- They serve inadvertently as professional development for teachers, many of whom completed their teacher-training long ago and who may not have been

trained specifically in teaching History/SOSE/HSIE. This happens through teachers' work with the high quality education resources distributed before during and/or after school visits, and through teachers being able to observe the students' sessions with Schools Programs staff

- They are supported by a manager and senior program officers who are knowledgeable in the histories they teach as well as literate in contemporary pedagogies. The staff tailor their 'conversations', as appropriate, to meet the needs of academics (History and Education), teachers and, most of all, students
- The NMA Schools Programs print and electronic educational resources, including those that cater for teachers and students who cannot visit Canberra, are of such a high quality in terms of historical/'contemporary society' content, appropriate pedagogy and visual presentation that I regularly use such resources with my student-teachers as exemplars of best practice in the teaching of History.

Yours faithfully

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(Letterhead and signed hard copy to be forwarded by mail.)

