Lesson XII: Australian Literature
Aust Lit: Ab. Oral Lit (before 1788)
English Written Lit soon after 1788
Compassing: indigenous, white, & not always about Aust.
Early works:
Aborigines’ relating to the Dreamtime
White Aust.ns’ relating to adventurous stories about life in the bush, giving valuable insights into the penal colonies & also recording the vernacular language of the common people (esp. Furphy), thus inventing Aust.
Poetry: significant role genre

- Lyrics:
  - Adam Lindsay Gordon & Christopher Brennan, classical allusions (the domain of “high” culture)
- Ballads:
  - Henry Lawson & Banjo Paterson, portraying the bush life which shaped the Aust’n psyche, & thus ‘self-image’
Gordon: poet laureate (celebrating the royal families & the important days in Britain), the only Australian with a monument in Poets’ Corner of Westminster Abbey

Brennan: more philosophical, individual, universal

Lawson & Paterson: folk (bush) ballads, local color, image of Aust
Role of Aust’n writings: Self-Identity

- The bush: alive but alienating, threatening, a nightmare with a blazing sun, life unknown to city dwellers
- Being an Aust’n: struggling for a female place, optimistic interpretation of the bush, new identities (postwar, questioning established identity)
Scandals: the identity of writers

- Lack of modernist poetry
- Highly tendentious account of the subject-matter
- False identity
- Not really Aust’n, not live in Aust
New Trend

- Coming of age occurring in 1973 marked by Patrick White who was awarded the Noble Prize
- James Clavell & Nevil Shute portraying east culture in western viewpoint
- Contemporary Aboriginal Writing: Sally Morgan’s My Place & Jack Davis’ No Sugar
Others

- Science Fiction & Fantasy: Simon Brown, Isobelle, Carmody, etc
- Crime: Kerry Greenwood, Shane Maloney, Peter Temple, etc
- History: Watkin Tench, Charles Bean, Manning Clark, Geoffrey Blainey
- Literary Journals: Meanjin, Overland, Southerly, Westerly, etc
Lesson XIII: Nationalism and the Arts
The early colonial period, Aust’n literature seen through the inherited English eyes & through English literary conventions, as to achieve the status of lit., Aust’n writings should conform to the expectation of the English reader & for the English reader.

In the 1880s, Aust’n literature in abundance, seeing Aust’an life through Aust’n eyes & writings for Aust’an audience.

In the 1890s, Aust’n literature as a means to articulate Aust’n identity by emphasizing the bush life (Lawson & Paterson), employing Aust’n vernacular in the works (Furphy & Dennis), & centering on Aust’an ethics.

Folk lit. like ballads orally circulated among working people in the bush by minstrels.

The Bulletin, a weekly journal, established in Sydney in 1880 under a strongly nationalist, radical, & republican J. F. Archibald & A.G. Stephens had important role to accommodate such writings.

The Bulletin, the most influential & trumpeting nationalism & anti-Imperialism, known as the “bushman’s Bible”
During & since the 1890s, not only literature, but visual arts also emerged as a device to trumpet the sense of nationalism pioneered by Frederick McCubbin, Tom Roberts, Arthur Streeton, & Charles Conder.

These painters are known as the artists of the Heidelberg School, who established a distinctively Aust’n painting tradition which emphasizing outback life.