Literary anonymity and pseudonymity present a conundrum for literary and book historians, not limited to—and in fact, partly produced by—our focus on origins: our urge to ask, as Michel Foucault put it, “From where does [this work] come, who wrote it, when, under what circumstances, or beginning with what design?” On the one hand, we are well aware that the discursive relationship of author and text (what Foucault called the “author function”) has changed over time, and that literary works have often “circulated without authors’ names attached.” On the other hand, the primacy of the relationship of author and text is built into our disciplinary infrastructure: the scholarly editions, library and collection catalogues, bibliographies, special collections, and archives that organize literary history—in part and wherever possible—by extracting “anonymous and pseudonymous texts from their disseminated condition.” The focus in studies of literary anonymity and pseudonymity on particular authors (usually canonical) and categories of authorship (especially women’s writing) both arises from and reinforces this disciplinary organisation. Ultimately, our paradoxically author-centered approach to literary anonymity and pseudonymity explores “composite figures and bodies of work that did not exist and could not have existed in the era in which th[o]se texts were written,” while largely ignoring the many published works that have not been, and may never be, attached to specific authors.

But what is the alternative? How can we study literary anonymity and pseudonymity outside of our existing disciplinary infrastructure? More broadly, how can we study areas of print culture not organized in terms of the relationship between authors and texts, and/or resisting such organization altogether? And even with a satisfactory answer to these questions, how can our analyses progress critical debates arising from our existing author-centered perspective (for instance, regarding the effects of authors’ gender or national origins on the production and circulation of fiction) without naturalizing that perspective and projecting it onto the past? This article describes how the ongoing digitization of print cultural records, and new methods for accessing and analysing digitized documents, brings to our bibliographic attention not only thousands of new works—an issue of scale often noted with respect to digital research—but thousands of titles without authors. In turn, it articulates a new conceptual and methodological framework for exploring literary anonymity and
pseudonymity not predicated on, and hence, not constrained in ways that perpetuate, the
author-centered organization of our existing disciplinary infrastructure.

This article explores this new paradigm for book historical research in three parts, via a
case study of serial fiction in nineteenth-century Australian newspapers. Such publications
constituted a—and most probably the—major source of fiction for the highly literate
populations of colonial readers. Yet until recently, we have had little idea of what fiction
was published in these newspapers or who wrote it, because of the size of the archive, the
prevalence of anonymous and pseudonymous publication, and the ephemerality of this print
culture (which means that, even when a title is identified, authorship is in many cases
unrecoverable). The article’s first part describes a method for identifying literary works in the
digitized archive that does not involve searching for particular titles and authors. Instead, it
uses paratextual terms to identify serial fiction in the millions of Australian newspaper pages
digitized by the National Library of Australia’s (NLA) Trove database. The second part
demonstrates a method for exploring the thousands of stories uncovered that does not
overwrite the ways in which authorship was ascribed, or not, in nineteenth-century Australian
newspapers with bibliographical attribution. This approach allows me to explore issues
relevant to the production as well as the reception of serial fiction in this print cultural
context, and the complex relationships between gender, nationality, authorship, and
readership it manifests. The third and final section presents some initial results of this
analysis, challenging the prevailing view of serial fiction publication in Australian
newspapers as simply derivative of British practices.

I Finding Fiction Without Authors

It has become essentially redundant to note that the digitization of large numbers of historical
documents profoundly transforms the conditions and possibilities of historical research. Most
demonstrations of this potential proceed by searching for particular words or phrases within
digitized collections. Many such studies employ Google Books’ Ngram Viewer, using this
tool to draw conclusions (with varying degrees of caveats) regarding the historical
development of ideas and concepts. Other corpora have also been searched in this manner
to enable historical research ranging from dictionary compilation to the identification of the
trans-Atlantic circulation of jokes in newspapers. While such studies have generated some
excitement, they have also produced concern regarding the quality of the underlying data and
the reliability and historical continuity of the search terms used. These issues are relevant to
any form of digital and quantitative analysis, as will be discussed. My specific concern with
historical research that searches for particular words and phrases in the content of digitized works is that this approach reinforces existing perceptions of the past. To couch the issue in literary historical terms, searching for particular titles or authors—while intuitive—will tend to find the titles and authors we already assume to be present in the historical record.

To avoid this pitfall, researchers are trialling approaches that explore digitized documents, and frequently the growing body of digitized newspapers, in more exploratory—or less predetermined—ways. For instance, the “Viral Texts” project develops algorithms that detect “clusters of reused passages within longer documents in large collections” in order to investigate the culture of reprinting in eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century American newspapers. Its search terms, in other words, are drawn from passages within the historical corpus, not predetermined by the researchers.13 Other projects focus on identifying topological features of books or newspapers, including the relationship between print, white space, and illustration, to identify such phenomena as the publication of poetry,14 or the timing of changes in the formatting and organisation of newspapers.15 This project likewise searches the digitized record in ways not reliant on assumptions about content. It does so by leveraging what James Mussell calls the “generic forms” of periodicals,16 identifying serial fiction in Trove’s database of digitized Australian newspapers by searching for repeated words and phrases that constitute the “paratexts” of those works.17

Describing this process necessitates some background information on Trove, including some of its advantages over other newspaper digitization projects. The NLA’s “Australian Newspaper Digitisation Program” aims “to make freely available online through Trove, as many Australian newspapers published prior to 1955”—and hence, out of copyright—“as possible.”18 At the time of writing (December 2014), Trove provides access to more than 15 million pages from over 800 Australian newspapers,19 making it significantly larger than other national projects of this type.20 For instance, Chronicling America, a partnership between the Library of Congress and the National Endowment for the Humanities, currently contains 8.7 million pages,21 while the British Newspaper Archive, a collaboration between the British Library and findmypast, holds approximately 9.3 million pages.22 Besides its size, a number of features make Trove particularly innovative and useful for historical research. In contrast to Chronicling America, Trove employs the more expensive “article” rather than the “page” form of segmentation in digitization, which facilitates targeted searching of content. The quality of search results is also enhanced by measures implemented to improve the accuracy of Trove’s Optical Character Recognition (OCR) text, including a significant investment in manually correcting the titles, subtitles, and first four
lines of article text. Trove also provides an Application Programming Interface (API) that allows users to export bibliographic metadata and full-text records of search results as csv and text files. Finally, unlike the British Newspaper Archive, which is accessible only via subscription, Trove is freely available to all.

This project’s methodology takes advantage of Trove’s innovative features to identify serial fiction by searching the paratext of digitized articles. The fact that titles, subtitles, and the first four lines of text are manually corrected—and in the process, identified or marked up within the system—both distinguishes this paratext from, and ties it to, particular articles (including serial fiction instalments). It also avoids OCR errors affecting search results relating to this component of articles. In turn, the API enables search results to be automatically harvested and organized in ways that significantly expedite subsequent bibliographical processing and research. In collecting and enriching this data, I am working with Carol Hetherington, a bibliographer employed for three years on this project with funding from the Australian Research Council.

The first term we employed to identify serial fiction in digitized Australian newspapers was “chapter,” which initial trials identified as the most successful for two main reasons: first, it is pervasive as a framing device for fiction and usually appears in the title, subtitle, or first four lines of text; second, it frequently occurs multiple times in the article text (because a single instalment of serial fiction often contains a number of chapters). Both of these features significantly increase the “relevance” of search results relating to fiction (as determined by Trove’s ranking algorithm), pushing them to the top of the list and thus optimizing the process. The initial search was conducted in July 2013, and involved exporting results in sets of 5,000. The first 30 sets of 5,000 results were almost exclusively fiction, with the share of other records to fiction increasing over the next 20 sets. Non-relevant articles in the search results—arising from the multiple uses and meanings of the word “chapter”—included reports of meetings of a chapter of a lodge or religious association, accounts of a chapter in the life of a town or person, and public documents such as deeds of grant and regulations organized in chapter divisions. Based on sampling of the results, after 250,000 files were exported we deemed the share of non-relevant to relevant records too high to warrant further investigation: for this particular paratextual term, the relevance ranking algorithm had exhausted its usefulness.

The full-text and bibliographic metadata exported using the API is substantial (see Table 1) but insufficient for detailed book historical research. Accordingly, after removing duplicates, we manually checked the records to exclude non-relevant results, and to populate
a wide range of additional bibliographical fields (see Table 2). Although time-consuming, this process is far quicker than would be the case without the original, automatic extraction of data and metadata, particularly as it is usually possible to generalize the outcome of a particular manual check to multiple records with the same exported metadata except for slight changes relating to chapter number and chapter title. This process yielded 58,717 unique serial fiction instalments (or “articles,” as demarcated by Trove). These instalments constitute 6,269 titles across 199 nineteenth-century Australian newspapers; or, when stories completed in a single issue are removed (as will be the case for all discussion and analysis that follows), 5,051 titles in 173 newspapers. Of these titles, 3,033 are unique (a number are republished in different newspapers, and in a handful of cases, in the same newspaper years or decades apart).

Table 1: Data automatically exported from Trove using API

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Article ID</td>
<td>A unique identifier for each article in Trove</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heading</td>
<td>The title, subtitle, and first four lines of article text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>The name of the newspaper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title ID</td>
<td>A unique identifier for each newspaper in Trove</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edition</td>
<td>The newspaper’s location and duration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>The day, date, month, and year of the article’s publication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Page</td>
<td>The page number for the article</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identifier</td>
<td>The article’s permanent URL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Page URL</td>
<td>The permanent URL for the page where the article appears</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correction Count</td>
<td>The number of crowd-sourced corrections to the article</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formatted Text</td>
<td>The full text of the article with paragraph breaks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plain Text</td>
<td>The full text of the article without paragraph breaks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Data manually added to records exported from Trove

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trove Title</td>
<td>The title given in the newspaper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common Title</td>
<td>The title commonly used in literary history</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trove Name</td>
<td>The author’s name given in the newspaper (including “Unattributed”)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common Name</td>
<td>The author’s name commonly used in literary history, if discoverable (otherwise “Unknown”)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Name/s</td>
<td>Other names used by or given to the author found during bibliographic research (to improve database searchability)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional Information</td>
<td>Especially regarding the title and author uncovered during bibliographic research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signature Details</td>
<td>Other titles by the same author listed in the newspaper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>The author’s gender, if discoverable (otherwise “Unknown”)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nationality</td>
<td>The author’s nationality, if discoverable (otherwise “Unknown”)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nationality Details</td>
<td>Other information about nationality, including where authors were born, or spent considerable time, in countries other than their designated “nationality”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Number</td>
<td>Self-explanatory; usually derived from the API “Heading” metadata</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Title</td>
<td>Self-explanatory; usually derived from the API “Heading” metadata</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Source</td>
<td>Details on any information sources used</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short</td>
<td>To indicate stories that are completed in a single newspaper issue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trove Source</td>
<td>Showing the source of the serial fiction identified in newspapers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Publications</td>
<td>Showing other periodicals that have published the same title</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
These results greatly enhance our bibliographic record of serial fiction in nineteenth-century Australian newspapers. However, they do not constitute a complete record of this literary and print cultural phenomenon for multiple reasons. Although I expect that “chapter” will prove the most useful, the intention as the project continues is to use other paratextual terms—including “our serial story,” “our storyteller” and “the novelist”—to search Trove, and to do so until the results demonstrate a high level of repetition with what is already indexed. Not only do I expect these subsequent searches to identify other serial fiction, but since the original “chapter” search was conducted (July 2013) other newspapers have been digitized, so the same search—conducted today or in the future—would uncover additional titles.

Even with these additional newspapers digitized since mid-2013, Trove does not contain all Australian newspapers, nor even complete holdings of the newspapers that have been digitized. Indeed, Trove does not incorporate many of the nineteenth-century newspapers that published the most Australian novels. It is by no means certain that these same newspapers would also contain the largest amounts of serial fiction generally; and the number of Australian novels published in these newspapers is small compared with the fiction identified in this study. Nevertheless, the absence of these newspapers from this study does highlight some of the many gaps in the digitized record. Other causes of incompleteness arise from the nature of the newspaper archive prior to digitization (missing editions, sections, or even entire titles, as well as missing, illegible or damaged pages) and from the digitization process itself (although the well-known difficulties presented by OCR errors on search results are largely avoided as a result of Trove’s investment in manual correction, other problems arising from digitization include zoning issues and a small number of additional omissions of newspaper editions and sections had an impact on our results). And even if it were possible to identify all the serial fiction in Australian newspapers, such an archive would still miss the many other means by which Australians accessed serial fiction—and other reading materials—in the nineteenth century, including through overseas magazines and journals.

While the impossibility of completeness is not—and should never be—grounds to proceed with quantitative analysis regardless of the underlying quality of the data, these results provide a robust basis for analysing the publication and reception of serial fiction in nineteenth-century Australian newspapers for a number of reasons. The range of newspapers searched in the process described above is broadly representative because of Trove’s careful selection policies. As a reflection of this, the 177 newspapers that contain serial fiction
include country and regional as well as metropolitan newspapers, and the number of
newspapers for each colony is broadly commensurate with population levels of the period.\textsuperscript{34}
In addition, even if the “chapter” search has not uncovered all the serial fiction in these
digitized newspapers, our focus on paratext, and the search term used, provide a sound basis
for claiming a representative sample: it is very unlikely, in other words, that a newspaper
would use “chapter” to frame a particular type of serial fiction but not others.\textsuperscript{35}

A final argument for the representativeness of the serial fiction identified in this study
relates to the close correlation between the established understanding of such publication in
Australian newspapers and overall trends in the data collected in this study. The established
account, built on decades of detailed and important bibliographic and editorial research into
particular newspapers, is as follows. While rarely featuring serial fiction prior to the 1850s,
newspaper editors in that decade began to emphasize prose over poetry.\textsuperscript{36} However, it was
not until the 1860s, and especially from the late 1870s, that serial fiction became more
common. In particular, rapid population growth in the 1860s increased the market for
colonial newspapers,\textsuperscript{37} and from the late 1870s, new print and distribution technologies were
introduced that encouraged newspaper editors to grow their circulations.\textsuperscript{38} The publication of
serial fiction in Australian newspapers grew rapidly through the 1880s and early 1890s, as
syndication agencies entered the market, providing newspapers with ready-made sheets of
fiction and other reading material.\textsuperscript{39} Yet this boom-time for serial fiction in Australian
newspapers was relatively short-lived, and underwent a precipitous decline in the final years
of the nineteenth century, because of a series of “fundamental changes in the modes of cultural
production.”\textsuperscript{40} Chief among these was the shift in the orientation of British publishing from
expensive three-volume books to much cheaper paperback editions, a transition that greatly
increased the availability in Australia of cheap fiction in book form, thus undermining the
importance of newspaper fiction for readers.

Figure 1, showing the overall number of serial fiction titles identified using the
methods described above (and counting titles each time they are published, as I will do for all
results in this paper),\textsuperscript{41} indicates the close correspondence between data in this study and the
established history. Scant offerings in the 1830s (8 titles), 1840s (26) and 1850s (33), are
followed by considerable growth from the 1860s (86) to the 1870s (460), 1880s (1,820) and
1890s (2,383). The majority of titles published in the 1890s appeared in the first half of this
decade, with serial fiction falling from a high point of 301 titles in 1893 to 204 and 219 in
1898 and 1899 respectively. While correlation is by no means confirmation—of either these
individual studies or this broader analysis—it is encouraging in terms of the overall viability
of this paratextual method and the underlying quality and representativeness of the data it has yielded. In this sense, rather than being a weakness of the study, the fact that many major newspapers were not included in this search has a notable outcome: it suggests that the previously described trends were occurring across the colonies, not just in metropolitan centers.

II A Spectrum of Authorship

Whatever its relationship to the unknowable totality of serial fiction published in nineteenth-century Australian newspapers, the outcome of this “chapter” search and our subsequent bibliographic work on these results provides a rich body of data to explore this print cultural context: specifically, to investigate both literary anonymity and pseudonymity, and a literary system containing multiple anonymous and pseudonymous works.42 Analysing how authorship was ascribed in relation to this serial fiction reveals not simply that some stories were attributed to specific authors and others were not, but a spectrum of possibilities between these two poles. This spectrum emphasizes the difference between the association of author and text that underpins our disciplinary infrastructure and organizes much of our approach to literary anonymity and pseudonymity, and the “author function” expressed in the publication and reception of serial fiction in nineteenth-century Australian newspapers. I argue that we need to take this difference seriously: to not allow bibliographic determinations of authorship to erase the way in which authorship was inscribed in publications. For the
pursposes of quantitative analysis, doing so requires the creation of two epistemologically distinct—though overlapping—datasets: one with which to explore authorship as it pertains to literary production and the global circulation of fiction in the nineteenth century; the other to model some of the ways in which serial fiction was experienced by contemporary readers; together to investigate the complex ways in which gender and nationality intersect with authorship and readership, and the implications of this intersection for understanding literary culture of the period.

Twenty-nine percent of serial fiction titles identified via a “chapter” search were published without attribution, and an additional handful (seven titles, or 0.1 percent of the total) were published under the name of an editor or translator only. While this statistic seems to leave a little over 70 percent—a clear majority—of attributed titles, the range and nature of attributions for serial fiction in nineteenth-century Australian newspapers seriously complicates this assumption. Many titles were published under pseudonyms, which in some cases are obvious. “A Bilious Marksman,” “A Bush Naturalist,” “A Gippslander,” “A Lincolnshire Clergyman,” “A London Man,” “A Member of Oxford University,” “A Mildura Lady,” “A New York Detective,” and “A Now Living Ex-Convict” are just some of the many examples of obvious pseudonyms attached to serial fiction in this print context. Others are slightly less obvious (for instance, “Mark Antony,” “Dan De Quille,” and “Captain East Grey”); while others, still, are only identifiable as pseudonyms following additional research (examples in this category include “Johnny Ludlow” for Ellen Wood, “Hugh Halcro” for Katherine A. Wardlaw, and “Christian Reid” for Frances Christine Fisher Tiernan). Some author names—such as “Captain Lacie”—appear pseudonymous before research aligns them with historical individuals. Approximately 10 percent of serial fiction titles in this study are attributed to pseudonyms of these types.

Once again, however, this seemingly clear statistic belies the complexity of any clear differentiation between pseudonym and attribution in this print cultural context. For instance, should the many author names comprised only of initials—“G.A.W.,” “G.G.D.,” “H.B.,” “H.E.,” “H.F.T.G.”—be considered attributions or pseudonyms? Are these initials intended to conceal the author’s identity; or to be decipherable only to particular individuals, or even to a range of readers at a particular place or time; or all of the above, in different instances? Is a woman using what is presumably her husband’s name (for example, “Mrs. Walter Allingham”) employing a pseudonym or following an established naming convention, one that might even make her more identifiable in a society where men were more likely to be public figures? In some cases, the same form of nomenclature—such as the use of an
honorific and a surname to designate the author, as with “Rev. Dr. Lano,” “Captain Armstrong,” “Mrs. Baer,” and “Miss Bird”—can have multiple different effects, which can be difficult, if not impossible, to determine conclusively. Because we have been unable to align these author names with historical individuals we do not know if they are pseudonyms or not: are they a means of emphasizing status or position in society; a form of authorial discretion; an in-joke for particular readers; or again, all of the above, in different instances? Certainly, for some authors the use of an honorific and surname—such as “Mrs. Oliphant”—is both employed because of, and intended to signal, the author’s fame. To add to the complexity of authorial attribution in this context, all of these examples, and others, may come with or without signatures: that is, a list of other works “By the author of” the title in question. Moreover, titles that are published without attribution in one instance, or published only with a signature or initials, can be published with a pseudonym or under the author’s “real name” elsewhere. This specific aspect of authorial attribution should warn us against interpretations that assume authors decided—or were even aware of—how their stories were attributed.

As the above discussion aims to show, authorial attribution of serial fiction in these nineteenth-century Australian newspapers is complex. Not only are there many forms of attribution, but names within the same category can have completely different—even opposing—functions and/or effects. Bearing this complexity in mind, Table 3 identifies 15 categories of author name employed for such fiction, as well as the number of titles in each and their proportion of the whole. This spectrum of authorial attribution—and specifically, the fluidity of the relationship between author and text that such a range indicates—shows that authorship, in the sense of a definite link between an historical individual and a written text, did not provide the organizing framework for this print cultural context. As Meredith McGill says of the antebellum American context, this was a “system in which literature circulated and was read without reliable recourse to the author as originator and principle of coherence.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number of Titles</th>
<th>Percentage of Titles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attributed</td>
<td>1302</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>… with signature</td>
<td>807</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Editor/Translator</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honorific and surname</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>… with signature</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honorific, initials and surname</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>… with signature</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Author name categories for serial fiction in nineteenth-century Australian newspapers
Again with their multiplicity and internal complexity in mind, Figure 2 gathers these forms of attribution into three broad groups to explore shifts in the author function for serial fiction in Australian newspapers over the nineteenth century. Specifically, serial fiction is categorized as either “Attributed” (titles ascribed to an author name that appears authentic, including author names comprised of a first name and surname; an honorific and a surname, with or without initials; or initials and a surname); “Pseudonymous” (incorporating both obvious and discovered pseudonyms as well as titles attributed to an author name composed of initials only); or “Unattributed” (encompassing titles where no name, or only that of an editor or translator, is given). The graph also shows the proportion of titles in each category published with a signature. As already discussed, very little serial fiction has been identified prior to the 1860s, so proportional results prior to this decade should be interpreted with that scarcity in mind.
In accordance with the well-established transition from anonymous to named authorship across the nineteenth century, including in the newspaper press, the proportion of “Attributed” titles increases significantly, from only 13 percent in the 1830s to almost 60 percent in the 1890s. Despite this overall trend, the proportion of “Unattributed” titles—which declines from 65 percent in the 1830s to 30 percent in the 1890s—remains surprisingly high. This overall trend toward the attribution of fiction is also somewhat complicated by the large number of “Pseudonymous” serial fiction in the 1850s, as well as the relatively large proportion of such titles in the 1870s (15 percent), 1880s (17 percent), and even 1890s (11 percent). Yet trends in the proportion of titles given a signature clearly support the claim of an increasing alignment of fiction with a specific individual. The “signed” category for “Unattributed” titles grows until the 1870s (to more than 10 percent of all serial fiction). Although emphasizing title over author, the growth in this form of attribution nonetheless suggests that, even when not named, authors were increasingly understood as relating to and uniting a specific oeuvre of works. The significant growth in signatures for “Attributed” titles from the 1870s to the 1880s and 1890s (from 5 to 18 and 25 percent), concurrent with a fall in this proportion for “Unattributed” titles, implies a further strengthening in this relationship between author and oeuvre.

This survey of authorial attribution for serial fiction in nineteenth-century Australian newspapers quickly leads us toward a well-established debate regarding anonymous and pseudonymous publication: namely, were women less likely to use their “real” names? Given the supposed preference of Australian readers for British fiction—discussed in more detail shortly—these categories of authorial attribution might also prompt questions regarding their relationship to nationality: were British authors less likely to be published anonymously or pseudonymously than their Australian counterparts? What about American writers? Such questions, however, confront us with the fundamental challenge of working with a print culture where the separation of author from title is not simply a past condition: that is, an “enigma” of original publication that has been resolved. In contrast, in many cases we do not know, nor do we have any hope of discovering, the identities of the authors of these titles.

At this point a number of possible ways forward present themselves, all with their own particular problems and complications, as well as recommendations. The most obvious—because adopted in many literary and book historical projects—is to explore these questions with respect to those authors whose identities have been ascertained. This is the case with 61 percent of titles identified via the “chapter” search. Figure 3 shows this sub-
A sample of “Known Authors” (the solid line) in relation to the overall number of titles (the dotted line). Although the former is considerably smaller, both datasets clearly produce the same general shape. Despite this correlation, there are good reasons to expect that this “Known Authors” subset does not provide a reliable basis for generalizing about serial fiction publication in nineteenth-century Australian newspapers. As studies of library lending patterns attest, authors whose works were widely read historically may or may not be well known today: this is one way of saying that the practices and debates that produce any particular historical author as a known figure for contemporary scholarship do not necessarily bear any relationship to the status of that author’s works in their original publishing contexts. Equally, the main claim of many existing studies of literary anonymity and pseudonymity, that certain categories of author—particularly women writers—were more (or less) likely to sign their works, suggests another reason why restricting our analysis to “Known Authors” would yield a selective rather than generalizable sample: in other words, historical analyses specifically understand anonymous and pseudonymous publication as not a random sample.

![Figure 3: Number of Serialised Fiction Titles Per Year, in Total and by "Known" Authors, 1830 to 1899](image)

An alternative approach would be to proclaim the conception of authorship operating in this print cultural context as so different from ours as to render an exploration of this topic untenable. The optimal strategy, this logic would suggest, is to find new questions, categorical frameworks, and approaches to elucidate the workings and values of this print cultural context. Rather than grouping literary works by their authors, or author-attributes (for...
instance, Australian writers, or nineteenth-century women writers), these new arrangements, or oeuvres, might include: serial fiction that appears in the same newspaper (in a particular period, or as a whole) or in the same type of newspapers (for instance, of a particular region or price bracket); titles that are reprinted extensively; or those that are strongly advertised or highly illustrated. Alternatively, one could read stories of the same genre or theme together, regardless of the author’s identity; or, less traditionally, one could explore the networks of references established for readers by the use of signatures, or details regarding sites of previous publication for serial stories. Such approaches have a number of benefits. They align serial fiction with particular features of the original publication event, and thus enable consideration of contexts of reception as well as production; they also suit the increased scale of evidence and analysis enabled by digital resources and methods. Such approaches also provide a means for moving beyond key critical impasses in contemporary literary and book history including: the ahistorical strictures of the literary canon and continuing influence of a romantic conception of authorship; the at times empowering but often ghettoizing alignment of gender with women’s writing; and the continuing power of the nation to organize and limit our understanding of literary and book history. Rather than devising strategies for challenging these critical categories from within an author-centered perspective, we might decide that this very perspective is the source of the problem, and reject its primacy and the ahistorical categories it projects.

While I think the plethora of “authorless” works that new digital resources and methods promise to uncover will require that non-author-centered approaches play a much greater role in literary and book history in future, simply removing the author as a category of analysis is not desirable. In relation to serial fiction in nineteenth-century Australian newspapers, two key reasons exist for making this assertion. First, even if readers of the time did not know authors’ identities, those very identities—that is, authors’ gender and nationality, not to mention their class, age, education, where they lived, and so on—still profoundly influenced what they wrote and how, where they published and how, whether and how much they were paid, and so on. For the interchange it signals between society and literature, information regarding who wrote particular works remains an important framework for literary and book history. Second, while authorship—in the sense of the direct and unquestionable association of a particular individual and a particular body of work—appears largely irrelevant to the publication and reception of serial fiction in this print cultural context, this does not mean readers had no relationship to or interest in the origins of stories. In many
cases, gender and nationality are inscribed in the publication event, and functioned as important framing devices for the contemporary reception of these titles.

Most obviously, a significant proportion of author names, including pseudonyms, are clearly “male” or “female,” regardless of whether that gender corresponded with the author’s “real” identity. As well as being explicitly gendered, some pseudonyms associate the author with a particular place, either directly—as with “A London Man,” “A Linconshire Clergyman,” “A Mildura Lady,” or “A New York Detective”—or indirectly—as with “A Bush Naturalist,” “A Member of Oxford University,” or “A Now Living Ex-Convict.” Other aspects of the paratext emphasize national origins. “Australia/n” is one of the most frequently recurring words in the titles of serial fiction in nineteenth-century Australian newspapers;\textsuperscript{51} and fiction is often advertised as written “especially” for a particular newspaper, strongly implying that the author is local (or, at the very least, visiting). Other ways in which newspapers signal the national origins of stories include identifying them as translated into English from specified languages; including sub-titles that associate stories with particular national contexts (“An Australian Story,” “A Tale of British Heroism”); acknowledging titles as republished from particular, overseas newspapers or magazines (or less frequently, Australian ones); and advertising copyrights purchased from overseas, particularly British, publishers. Finally, stories with a prominent setting suggest, in the absence of other clues as to nationality, that they originate from that part of the world. As with the gender of author names, these indications of nationality may or may not align with the actual national origins of story and author.\textsuperscript{52} Whatever their relationship to the author’s “true” gender or nationality, these signals within the paratext and text of serial fiction would clearly—and were often clearly designed to—convey a message to nineteenth-century readers about the origins of these titles.

Both notions of origins or authorship—that which ties specific works to particular historical actors, and that which is inscribed in publication events—are important for understanding serial fiction in nineteenth-century Australian newspapers. In particular, information about actual authors can help us understand the conditions under which this fiction was produced and how it circulated globally in the nineteenth century; alternatively, the ways in which authorship was inscribed can help us understand the conditions under which it was published and read in the colonies. Because these different manifestations of authorship relate to different contexts, simply combining them is not appropriate. This approach would require that we privilege either production or reception: in other words, that we either use the actual gender and nationality of authors when known, and the inscribed
gender and nationality otherwise, or vice versa. On the one hand, the fact that these two manifestations of authorship can and do contradict each other means that the resulting dataset would be distorted in ways that would be difficult to identify and accommodate. For instance, in a situation where most known authors were women, and most anonymous authors were women writing under male pseudonyms, these two sets of data would work against each other and produce unreliable answers to questions about either production or reception. More specifically, the fact that combining these two manifestations of authorship would almost certainly be done by using the actual gender and nationality of authors when known, and the inscribed gender and nationality of authors in other cases, shows the extent to which this approach would invite the projection of our current conception of the primacy of the relationship of author and text onto a historical context, and the related privileging of production over reception in literary and book history.

To avoid these problems, and to propose a mode of analysis that attends to both production and reception, in the analysis that follows, I employ two distinct datasets. The first, “Known Authors,” contains only that 61 percent of titles whose authors we have been able to identify definitively. The second, “Inscribed Titles,” represents serial fiction in terms of gender and nationality as it is inscribed in the nineteenth-century publishing context. It does this conservatively: only listing a gender when the author name is obviously “male” or “female”; only noting nationality when it is explicitly signalled by the paratext or text. In total, 49 percent of titles are linked to an authorial gender through this process and 69 percent to a nationality (leaving 51 and 31 percent “uninscribed” in these categories respectively). Obviously, this second dataset is explicitly subjective: that is to say, it represents, in and of itself, a set of arguments about the ways in which nineteenth-century readers would have interpreted publication events. In addition to noting that all data are the result of a subjective (set of) process(es)—capta rather than data, as Johanna Drucker would have it—53—I make both datasets available for others to determine the soundness of these multiple assessments.

III Intersections of Production and Reception

While the overall trend in the publication of serial fiction in Australian newspapers tallies with existing accounts of this phenomenon, as discussed in relation to Figure 3, data on both “Known Authors” and “Inscribed Titles” contradicts prevailing conceptions of how gender and nationality shaped nineteenth-century authorship and publishing, in Australia and more broadly. Put simply, in terms of both the known identities of authors, and as gender and nationality are inscribed in the publication events, there is a lot less fiction by women than
would be expected based on current accounts of the gendering of serial fiction in the nineteenth century, and considerably more Australian fiction than would be expected based on key arguments arising from the “transnational turn” in Australian literary studies. I argue that trends in the gender and nationality of authors help to explain one another, and together, challenge an assessment of serial fiction in Australian newspapers as simply derivative of British literary and print culture.

We are accustomed to understanding authorship of nineteenth-century serial fiction as female-dominated, with numerous studies of both British and American contexts emphasizing the high proportion of women writers. Often, this gender disparity is attributed to the devalued status of the novel as a literary form at this time—with serial publication especially low in the cultural hierarchy—and the related construction of novel readers, particularly in serial form, as predominantly women. In direct contrast to this established account, serial fiction in nineteenth-century Australian newspapers is significantly male-dominated. Only 34 percent of titles in the “Known Authors” subset are by women, compared with 66 percent by men. On the one hand, gender trends in the “Inscribed Titles” dataset emphasize that the author’s gender was not a primary framework through which serial fiction was received by colonial readers, in that the authorship of 51 percent of all titles is not inscribed as either “male” or “female.” On the other hand, of the titles where the author name is clearly gendered, a substantially higher proportion are “male” than “female”: 32 as opposed to 17 percent. Indeed, if we consider only these titles, the proportions of “male” and “female” authors in the “Inscribed Titles” dataset match the proportions of male and female authors in the “Known Authors” dataset, with 66 percent of titles by “men” and 34 percent by “women.”

Tables 4 and 5 show the average gender proportions in five-yearly periods, for “Known Authors” and “Inscribed Titles” respectively. As noted previously, the number of titles published in the early decades is relatively small, and proportional results should be interpreted in that light. In respect to “Known Authors,” gender proportions over time indicate only one five-year period (the late 1850s) when more serial fiction in Australian newspapers was by women than men. For “Inscribed Titles,” the proportions of serial fiction by both “male” and “female” authors increase over time, as a result of increased attribution of fiction (discussed in the previous section). However, when only titles inscribed with gender are considered, gender proportions (in brackets) closely match those of “Known Authors.” In only one five-year period (again, the late 1850s) are more titles by “women” than “men,” and at all other times, the proportion of titles by “men” significantly exceeds that by “women.”
Gender trends over time signal another notable feature of the Australian context. Based on existing studies of the relationship between cultural value and authorship, we would expect the proportion of serial fiction by men to increase over the nineteenth century, as the novel became a more prestigious literary form. In Australian newspapers, the opposite occurs. For titles in both datasets, the proportion by women/women increases—albeit gradually, and unevenly—over the nineteenth century. Data on gender for “Known Authors” and “Inscribed Titles” thus suggests a number of important and surprising conclusions: not only was there much more serial fiction by men than women in Australian newspapers than we would expect based on existing understandings of nineteenth-century fiction, but this gender trend moved in the opposite direction in Australia to that which has been observed in other Anglophone markets. Moreover, and notwithstanding the substantial presence of
pseudonymous and anonymous fiction in nineteenth-century Australian newspapers, readers were explicitly presented with predominantly male-authored titles.

Trends in the nationality of authors also contradict existing understandings of Australian literary and print culture and its relationship to Britain. In the past two decades, Australian literary studies has undergone a profound “transnational turn.” As with many nation-based approaches to literature, there has been recognition that Australian literary history is not directly equivalent to literature by Australians. Yet in the Australian context, this turn has arguably gone further than elsewhere, with a number of recent assessments of Australian literary history proclaiming the lack of interest of nineteenth-century readers in local fiction, and a marked preference for British writing. In Elizabeth Webby’s words, “for much of the nineteenth century and indeed afterwards, Australian readers were mainly interested in books by English authors.” This argument has been based on analyses of various lending and institutional reading records, and has stood as a significant empirical and book historical counter to the field’s earlier literary nationalist focus. Previous accounts of serial fiction in Australian newspapers support this general argument, with Elizabeth Morrison, for instance, estimating that at least four-fifths of the novels in Australian newspapers were by overseas authors.

The national origins of serial fiction identified via a “chapter” search challenges this estimation of the presence of local fiction in nineteenth-century Australian newspapers and
brings into question the view that readers of the time had no interest in local writing. Analysis of the nationalities of “Known Authors” shows that much of the fiction published in this context was British. From the 1830s to the early 1850s, nearly all the fiction we have identified is British, although there was a surprisingly high proportion of titles from non-Anglophone countries toward the end of this period. As Figure 4 shows, the proportion of British serial fiction in Australian newspapers remained high throughout the nineteenth century. Moving in five-yearly averages from the late 1850s to the late 1890s, titles by British authors constitute 63, 43, 62, 47, 46, 56, 52 and 54 percent of the records in the “Known Authors” subset.

Yet as this graph also demonstrates, British titles were by no means the only serial fiction published in nineteenth-century Australian newspapers. On the one hand, the presence of fiction from a range of countries—especially America—shows that editors did not limit themselves to British writing in sourcing fiction from overseas. (Moving in five-yearly averages from the late 1860s to the 1890s, American fiction constitutes 21, 31, 20, 15, 22, 30 and 17 percent of titles in the “Known Authors” subset; fiction from “Other” countries—namely, Canada, France, Germany, New Zealand, Russia and South Africa—makes up 21 percent of titles by “Known Authors” in the 1860s, but otherwise comprises between one and six percent of the total.) On the other hand, Australian serial fiction comprises a substantial proportion of the “Known Authors” dataset, particularly in the late 1850s and early 1860s, and in the late 1870s and early 1880s. In five-yearly averages from the late 1850s to the late 1890s, Australian authors are responsible for 38, 36, 15, 18, 30, 39, 21, 12 and 23 percent of the titles whose authorship we have been able to verify.

This higher than anticipated incidence of Australian serial fiction in colonial newspapers need not be due to the interest of local readers in local writing: such fiction was also, almost certainly, cheaper, and more readily available than overseas fiction (especially as Australian newspapers—unlike their American counterparts—appear to have abided by British imperial copyright law in publishing overseas writing). Trends in nationality for “Inscribed Titles,” however, suggest there was a demand for local fiction, and that its presence was probably even greater than these relatively high proportions of “Known” Australian authors indicate. Whereas, of “Known Authors,” 22 percent of titles overall are Australian, as opposed to 52 percent British, of “Inscribed Titles,” 27 percent are “Australian” compared with 32 percent “British.” (Excluding those titles not inscribed with nationality, the respective results are 39 and 46 percent.) As with gender, nationality trends for “Inscribed Titles” follow the same general shape over time as for “Known Authors,” but with
significantly higher—and sometimes dominant—proportions of “Australian” fiction. Specifically, while “British” serial fiction dominates (the very small number of publications) in the 1830s and early 1840s, in the late 1840s and early 1850s significantly more titles are “Australian” than “British” (42 and 30 percent as opposed to 21 and 20 percent).

![Figure 5: Proportion of "Inscribed Titles" by Nationality, 1855 to 1899 (five-year averages)](image)

Figure 5, showing the proportions of “Inscribed Titles” by nationality from the late 1850s to the late 1890s, indicates that this dominance of “Australian” titles continues in the late 1850s and early 1860s (when 45 and 44 percent of titles are inscribed as “Australian” as opposed to 23 and 19 percent as “British”). “British” serial fiction is again dominant from the late 1860s to the late 1870s (when, in five-yearly averages, 44, 40 and 37 percent of titles are in this category). Yet the proportion of “Australian” titles grows throughout this period (from 20 to 24 and 32 percent), and again exceeds the proportion of “British” titles in the early 1880s (when 36 percent of titles are “Australian” compared with 33 percent “British”). In the late 1880s, an equal proportion of serial fiction in nineteenth-century Australian newspapers is inscribed as “Australian” and “British” (32 percent), while in the 1890s, “British” titles again exceed the proportion of “Australian” (in this decade, 21 and 22 percent of titles are “Australian” compared with 29 and 31 percent “British”). In this latter decade, however, the proportion of titles not inscribed with a nationality exceeds any other category. The much lower proportions of both “American” and “Other” fiction in “Inscribed Titles,” compared with their respective counterparts in “Known Authors,” is largely due to the increased
number of titles under consideration. However, the proportion of “American” fiction is further reduced by the fact that a number of prolific American authors wrote fiction that explicitly presented itself as “British.”

If Australian serial fiction was of no interest to local readers, and only included in colonial newspapers because it was cheaper and easier to access, we would not expect editors to emphasize its presence. The high proportion of fiction inscribed as “Australian”—often in ways that advertise the originality and localness of the content—indicates that such a market did exist. In this respect, while colonial lending libraries and literary institutions might have privileged British fiction, they did so in the context of a newspaper industry that clearly saw a role and a market for local writing. The Australian publishing context helps explain why the category of “Known Authors” would tend to underestimate the presence of Australian writers. Until well into the twentieth century, book publication was rare in Australia, and newspapers provided one of the main outlets for local authors. Because book publication is the primary vehicle through which literary works and authors enter bibliographical records, it is much more likely that Australian authors would be lost to literary history than their British and American counterparts. In overcoming this bias, attention to the inscription of authorship can offer new and valuable perspectives on literary history.

Obviously, this discussion only scratches the surface of what can be done with this data on serial fiction in nineteenth-century Australian newspapers. These results remain to be analysed in terms of trends in gender and nationality—for “Known Authors” and “Inscribed Titles”—in individual newspapers and newspaper categories (according to price, periodicity, circulation, metropolitan or provincial basis, and so on) and in relation to characteristics of the fiction such as genre and themes presented. Nevertheless, this synoptic account clearly shows that the colonial publishing and reading market was not only different from Britain’s and America’s, but decisively and deliberately so. In particular, based on gender trends we can say that, when sourcing fiction from overseas, newspaper editors must have sought out less common writing by men (given that serial fiction in Britain and America was female dominated) and/or inscribed fiction in this way. Editors make decisions to increase the circulations of their newspapers, so this gendered selection/inscription of fiction strongly suggests there was a demand—or at least a perceived demand—not only for local writing, but for fiction by men. Determining the source of this demand is complex. What is clear is that, of all the serial fiction published in nineteenth-century Australian newspapers, Australian titles were the most male-dominated. In the “Known Authors” dataset, 79 percent of Australian titles are by men. This relationship of gender and nationality suggests that the
preference for male-authored fiction, perceived and responded to by newspaper editors, was both driven and met by local writing. Australian literary culture, from this perspective, did not imitate or even follow British or American trends, but forged a distinctive local identity.

That is, unless we are mistaken about dynamics relating to gender and nationality in British and American periodicals, for our understanding of such phenomena is almost entirely based on those same approaches that produced a conception of serial fiction in Australian newspapers as predominantly British. I am referring, in particular, to arguments based on specific—usually canonical—authors and other individual examples; contemporaneous anecdote; and sampling of particular (often “small” or literary) magazines. The capacity of new digital resources and methods to explore archives in ways that extend beyond individual examples, and do not rely on our existing, author-centered disciplinary infrastructure, has the potential to change entirely the way we approach, explore, and understand anonymity and pseudonymity, as well as literary and print history more broadly.

Of such quantitative and digital methods, it is often remarked that they simplify our understanding of history and culture because they impose a small number of categories onto complex and multivocal cultural phenomena. This is often the case. However, the same is true of much non-quantitative and non-digital scholarship. In particular, I have suggested that our disciplinary infrastructure, and the critical inquiries it encourages and builds upon, produce a paradoxically author-centered view of literary anonymity and pseudonymity. A focus on authorship has enhanced our understanding of how gender and nationality shape aspects of literary and print cultural production; but at the same time, it has obscured and negated features of the historical context we are trying to understand. From this perspective, new digital methods for searching and analysing print culture in ways not predicated on searching for particular authors and titles do not simplify but extend our understanding of the past. Such methods require us to approach literary anonymity and pseudonymity as something other than an enigma and an absence: to perceive them, instead, as a constitutive and dynamic feature of the circulation and experience of literature in the past. Digital and quantitative approaches, far from destroying the nuanced and human elements of humanities research, can in such ways provide a more exploratory and less prescriptive means of engaging with our print cultural record.
Notes


2 Foucault has received some justifiable criticism of the specifics of his historical claims regarding the emergence of the contemporary author function. See, for example, Robert J. Griffin, “Introduction,” in The Faces of Anonymity: Anonymous and Pseudonymous Publication from the Sixteenth to the Twentieth Century, ed. Robert J. Griffin (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 3–4.


4 McGill, American Literature, 3.

5 For instance, Meredith McGill considers the issue in relation to the work of Charles Dickens, Edgar Allan Poe, and Nathaniel Hawthorne (McGill, American Literature).

6 For instance, Easley, First-Person Anonymous.

7 McGill, American Literature, 3.

8 Lending libraries were few and far between and book ownership was rare, but newspapers—many of which contained serial fiction—were cheap, plentiful, and available throughout the colonies. See Paul Eggert, “Robbery Under Arms: Introduction,” in Robbery Under Arms, by Rolf Boldrewood, ed. Paul Eggert and Elizabeth Webby (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 2006), 134; Katherine Bode, Reading by Numbers: Recalibrating the Literary Field (London: Anthem Press, 2012), 46–47.

9 As I have discussed in more detail elsewhere, adult literacy levels were much higher in the Australian colonies than in Britain (see Katherine Bode, “Graphically Gendered: A Quantitative Study of the Relationships between Australian Novels and Gender from the 1830s to the 1930s,” Australian Feminist Studies 23. 58 (2008): 440). For instance, S. Nicholas and P.R. Shergold state that “[i]n England in the second quarter of the nineteenth century, only 65% [of people] could sign their names on the marriage register; in contrast, 75% of English convicts transported to New South Wales could read or write” (S. Nicholas and P.R. Shergold, “British and Irish Convicts,” in The Australian People: An Encyclopedia of the Nation, its People and their Origins, ed. James Jupp [Oakleigh: Cambridge University Press, 2001]: 21). Voluntary migrants had even higher literacy levels than convicts, with 93% of assisted English women immigrants to Australia able to read or write, compared to 48% of women in England able to sign their name on a marriage registry (Deborah Oxley and Eric Richards, “Convict and Free Immigrant Women Before 1851,” in The Australian People: An Encyclopedia of the Nation, its People and their Origins, ed. James Jupp [Oakleigh: Cambridge University Press, 2001]: 33).

10 Such studies follow in the wake of an article in Science announcing the field of “culturomics” (Jean-Baptiste Michel, Yuan Ku Shen, Aviva Presser Aiden, Adrian Veres, Matthew K. Gray, The Google Books Team, Joseph P. Pickett, Dale Hoiberg, Dan Clancy, Peter Norvig, Jon Orwant, Steven Pinker, Martin A. Nowak and Erez Lieberman Aiden, “Quantitative Analysis of Culture Using Millions of Digitized Books,” Science 331,


My focus on text-based searches enabled by the Trove interface means my conception of “paratext” in this article is limited to the linguistic elements that surround, introduce, and signal serial fiction in Australian newspapers, rather than the broader material features discussed by Jerome McGann (including typefaces, margin sizes, prices, and page format). As Gerard Genette and Marie Maclean note, paratext is “the means by which a text makes a book of itself and proposes itself as such to its readers, and more generally to the public.” Although this definition focuses on the book, their view of paratext as not “a limit or sealed frontier” but “a threshold, or … a ‘vestible’ which offers to anyone and everyone the possibility either of entering or of turning back,” represents a good description of the way in which the paratext of serial fiction—as a generic form within another (the newspaper)—both marks out and encourages entry to the fictional text. See Jerome McGann, *The Textual Condition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 13; Gerard Genette and Marie Maclean, “Introduction to the Paratext,” *New Literary History* 22, no. 2 (1991): 261.


By the end of January 2015, Europeana Newspapers—which aggregates historic newspapers from 23 European countries—will enable users to perform full-text searches across 10 million newspaper pages, with metadata records available for an additional 20 million pages (http://www.europeana-newspapers.eu/).


The API used in this initial search was developed by Tim Sherratt prior to him becoming manager of Trove in late 2013. It allowed him to perform a number of provocative experiments with the Trove data, as reported on his blog (Tim Sherratt, Wragge Labs, blog, http://wraggelabs.com/). An official API is now available through the Trove website (National Library of Australia, “Trove Help Centre: API Overview,” accessed 1 August 2014, http://help.nla.gov.au/trove/building-with-trove/api).

These stories are excluded from analysis to maintain a focus on serial publication, a phenomenon that Elizabeth Morrison rightly describes as “sui generis,” that is, having “its own characteristics and effects—seen in the agencies and contractual arrangements involved, in the demands, over time, on the form of composition and regularity of submission, in the presumed or documented relationships between text and reader, and so on” (Elizabeth Morrison, “Retrieving Colonial Literary Culture: The Case for an Index to Serial Fiction in Australian [or Australasian] Newspapers,” Bibliographical Society of Australia and New Zealand Bulletin 13, no. 1 [1989]: 28). Such stories have not been removed from the database entirely because, in some instances, a work that is completed in a single issue in one newspaper goes across multiple issues in another (some of these instances could be described as short stories with chapter divisions; others are akin to novellas, running over ten or more pages in the case of some special supplements). This bibliographic field allows us to retain those one-off publications for subsequent comparison.

This count combines newspaper names as they change over time. For example, the Healesville Guardian and its subsequent incarnation, Healesville Guardian and Yarra Glen, are included as one title. The change in the number of newspapers included in the study when fiction completed in one issue is excluded suggests that some newspapers included fiction of only this type.

A download of all title-level data used in this paper is available at https://katherinebode.wordpress.com/articles-chapters/.

The title of the first published book version is traditionally given bibliographic primacy, and we follow this practice, where possible, in according a “Common Title” to fiction in Australian newspapers. Where we are
unable to identify this version (often because the title has never been published as a book) we use the earliest title that appears in Trove.

29 Once this high degree of repetition is achieved, we will sample newspapers to explore if there is serial fiction we have not discovered and why, and to perform additional searches if necessary. Plans are also underway to create a platform to enable community members already involved in correcting Trove text to focus their attentions on serial fiction, thus improving, adding to and enriching the database. We anticipate that the database, which will be freely available for anyone to use, edit, download, and analyse, will be launched in late 2016.

30 This list includes the Sydney Mail (weekly companion to the Sydney Morning Herald), which was the largest newspaper publisher of Australian novels in the nineteenth century, and the Leader, fifth largest publisher of Australian novels, which has been digitized only from 1914 to 1918. The second largest newspaper publisher of Australian novels, the Australian Town and Country Journal (companion to Sydney’s Evening News), has been digitized and is included in the results discussed here. Also now digitized, but not included in these results because of the timing of our search, is the Australasian (supplement to the Melbourne Argus). The largest periodical publisher of Australian novels overall, the Australian Journal, will not be digitized by the Australian Newspaper Digitisation Program because it is a monthly (at first, a fortnightly) magazine rather than a newspaper. For a detailed discussion of newspaper serialization of nineteenth-century Australian novels see Bode, Reading by Numbers, 34–43; 52–56; 113–120; 128–130; and Katherine Bode, “‘Sidelines’ and Tradelines: Publishing the Australian Novel, 1860 to 1899,” Book History 15 [2012]: 93–122).

31 For instance, the largest newspaper publisher of nineteenth-century Australian novels, the Sydney Mail, published only 33 titles between 1860 and 1889 (see Bode, Reading by Numbers, 36).

32 As Laurel Brake has discussed in detail, supplements were particularly vulnerable to omission from both the original archiving process, and subsequent remediations of the archive, including the creation of microfiche copies, the versions from which the majority of digitized records are produced (Laurel Brake, “Lost and Found: Serial Supplements in the Nineteenth Century,” Victorian Periodicals Review 43, no. 2 [2010]: 111–18).

33 When Morrison surveyed the newspapers published in the Australian colony of Victoria, of the almost 400 country titles she identified, only incomplete files remained for many, and for approximately five percent, no copies at all were available (Morrison, “Retrieving Colonial”).

34 The breakdown of newspapers by colony reflects the population distribution of Australia in the nineteenth century: specifically, 63 of the newspapers are from New South Wales, 50 are Victorian, 21 are South Australian (which at the time included the settlement of Darwin and the area now known as the Northern Territory), 20 are from Queensland, 13 are Western Australian, and 9 are Tasmanian.

35 A significant exception to this rule is the non-English language newspapers in Trove, which probably do not use the word “chapter.”


37 Bode, Reading by Numbers, 37–39.

41 While this approach might seem, at first glance, to constitute a form of double-counting, in that some titles are published multiple times, it usefully represents publication in a highly segmented market (few of these newspapers would have shared readers), while capturing the different ways in which the same titles were presented, in terms of the forms of attribution used and information these inscribed.
42 The Trove search sometimes returns results where (manually inputted) title information is available but the text is yet to be digitized. Such results constitute one percent of the titles discovered during our “chapter” search, and are excluded from the following results because, without the digitized newspaper page, it is not possible to determine how authorship is presented.
43 Captain Lacie is identified as a “celebrated Australian writer” in an illustrated article in the Bunyip (see http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/97578456).
44 McGill, American Literature, 144.
45 See for example Brake, Print in Transition.
46 The relationship of women writers to anonymous and pseudonymous publication—and through this, to issues ranging from publicity and propriety to labor conditions and ownership of property—has been the subject of considerable debate for decades. Gaye Tuchman argues that, until 1880, men were more likely to use a female pseudonym than women were to use a male or gender-neutral name (Gaye Tuchman, with Nina E. Fortin, Edging Women Out: Victorian Novelists, Publishers and Social Change [London: Yale Press, 1989], 53; see also Terry Lovell, Consuming Fiction [London: Verso], 82; Catherine A. Judd, “Male Pseudonyms and Female Authority in Victorian England,” in Literature in the Marketplace: Nineteenth-Century British Publishing and Reading Practices, 2nd edition, ed. John O. Jordan and Robert L. Patten [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998]). There was also a tradition of men using female pseudonyms in the eighteenth century because critics were perceived as more forgiving of women writers (Margaret J.M. Ezell, “‘By a Lady’: The Mask of the Feminine in Restoration, Early Eighteenth-Century Print Culture,” in The Faces of Anonymity: Anonymous and Pseudonymous Publication from the Sixteenth to the Twentieth Century [New York and Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003]). On the other side of the debate, the shame associated with middle- and upper-class women earning a living—and the nineteenth-century perception of “[w]omen novelists … as inferior to male writers”—is perceived as making women significantly more likely than men to assume a pseudonym, especially a gender neutral one. See Ellen Miller Casey, “Edging Women Out?: Reviews of Women Novelists in the Athenaeum, 1860–1900,” Victorian Studies 39, no. 2 (1996): footnote 6; John Sutherland, Victorian Fiction: Writers, Publishers, Readers (London: Macmillan, 1995), 156, 159–60.

As I will discuss, it is impossible to answer this question for serial fiction in Australian newspapers using this data because the authorship of so many titles remains unknown. Nonetheless, for those we have identified, it does appear significantly more common for women to use male pseudonyms than vice versa.
Examples of this practice include: "Lawrence L. Lynch" (for Emma Murdoch Van Deventer); "Hero Strong" (for Clara Augusta Jones Trask); "Hugh Halcro" (for Katherine A. Wardlaw); "John Strange Winter" (for Henrietta Eliza Vaughan Stannard); and "Fabian Bell" (for Frances Edwina Cotton).

47 Foucault, “What is an Author?,” 15.


49 Even a brief analysis of the most common words in titles indicates the extent to which genre organized this category of print culture. In the overall list of 5,051 titles, “romance” and “love” appear 217 and 175 times respectively. Other terms suggestive of genre categories include “mystery” (149), “adventure/s” (80), “secret” (77), “detective” (52), “crime” (46), and “tragedy” (45). This analysis was done using Voyant, with the in-built English stop-words list. For full results see http://voyant-tools.org/tool/CorpusTypeFrequenciesGrid/?corpus=1407958110849.2114&stopList=stop.en.taporware.txt&extendedSortZscoreMinimum=.


51 “Australia/n” appears 223 times in the full list of 5,051 titles. For full results of this Voyant analysis see http://voyant-tools.org/tool/CorpusTypeFrequenciesGrid/?corpus=1407958110849.2114&stopList=stop.en.taporware.txt&extendedSortZscoreMinimum=.

52 We have discovered a number of cases where the title or subtitle specifically describes a story as of one nationality, when its author is of another. For example Carmeline: or, The Convict’s Bride: A Romance of England and Australia Founded on Fact is by American author Francis Durivage; Found Guilty; Or, Ralph Chandos’ Fate: A Stirring Tale of the Early Days of Botany Bay is by American Leon Lewis; Bob Martin’s Little Girl: An Australian Novel is by British author David Christie Murray; The Miner’s Partner, prominently set in Colorado, is by British author Henry Tinson; and The New Editor: An Episode in the History of Warrener’s Gulch, California is by Australian author Harold H. Stephen. We have also identified cases where fiction was specifically localized for publication in the colonies. For instance, “Old Sleuth’s” novel, “The American Detective in Russia,” was serialized in several Australian newspapers as “Barnes, the Australian Detective.” Andrew King’s analysis of the London Journal confirms that fictional titles and settings were changed depending on where stories were republished (Andrew King, The London Journal, 1845–83: Periodicals, Production and Gender [Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004]).

53 Johanna Drucker, “Humanities Approaches to Graphical Display,” Digital Humanities Quarterly 5, no. 1 [2011]: np. For a recent discussion of the many ways in which data is never “before the fact” see the essays in “Raw Data” is an Oxymoron, ed. Lisa Gitelman (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2013), especially Lisa Gitelman and Virginia Jackson, “Introduction,” 1–14; Rosenberg, “Data Before the Fact.”


An early and still influential example of such analysis is Gaye Tuchman’s study of gender trends in the submission and acceptance of novel manuscripts by the publisher Macmillan in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (see Tuchman, with Fortin, Edging Women Out).


Four titles in the late 1840s were by French authors and one in the early 1850s was by a Russian; of course, these are very small numbers, and the fact that they constitute relatively high proportions of publication
overall—75 percent in the late 1840s and 25 percent in the early 1850s—emphasizes the fact that serial fiction did not yet have a strong presence in Australian newspapers at this time.

While I have no explanation for the drop in serial fiction by Australian authors in the late 1860s, it is likely that the presence of syndicated fiction in the Australian market contributed to the decline in local writing in the early 1890s. Not only was there a substantial growth in serial fiction by American authors at this time, likely sourced by international agencies, but American titles were twice as likely to be republished in this period than at other times (because the data in this study counts a title each time it is published, it is this tendency for republication that produces much of the growth in American fiction in this period).

In a recent and important exception to the lack of research into copyright regimes operating in the Australian colonies, Sarah Ailwood and Maree Sainsbury show that, “overwhelmingly, Australian colonial legislatures adopted an approach to copyright law and policy that strictly adhered to British imperial interests, often to the detriment of local readers and authors and losing sight of the desirability of balancing rights and interests” (Sarah Ailwood and Maree Sainsbury, “Copyright Law, Readers and Authors in Colonial Australia,” Journal for the Association of the Study of Australian Literature 14, no. 3 [2014]: 1, accessed 15 December 2014, http://www.nla.gov.au/openpublish/index.php/jasal/article/view/3271/4094).

The high proportion of fiction not inscribed with any nationality in this decade may relate to what Dolin has described as the turn-of-the-century emergence of large volumes of fiction produced for “global Anglophone markets,” unmarked by nationality and intended “for mass consumption by a readership indifferent to the boundaries of nation-states or the bonds of empire” (Dolin, “Fiction and the Australian Reading Public,” 155).

Sensation novels by authors such as (house name) Bertha M. Clay, Harriet Lewis, and Mrs Georgie Sheldon are frequently set in England, depicting aristocratic characters, castles and country homes, and missing heirs.

In comparison, 56 percent of American titles are by men as are 65 percent of British titles. A comparison of trends in gender and nationality is more complex for the “Inscribed Titles” dataset, because many titles that are inscribed with a gender are not inscribed with a nationality and vice versa. However, for those with inscriptions in both categories, “Australian” titles are the most male-dominated of these three nationalities, with 67 percent by “men,” followed by “American” (64 percent) and “British” (54 percent) fiction.