

**1996 Professor Stuart Macintyre
The Necessity of History
The Inaugural History Council Lecture**

ABSTRACT

"History has an ambiguous status in the public culture. It is attached to heritage as a cultural commodity. It forms part of the repertoire of cultural consumption. It operates as a form of self-understanding and assists the negotiation of a diversity of identities and sympathies. It is far less prominent as a source of public understanding. Just as the study of history appears irrelevant to those vocationalists who have turned education into skills training and the production of useful knowledge, so in public life history is frequently ignored by those who seek to shape the future." Professor Stuart Macintyre

The History Council's Charter commits it to advocating for history in public institutions, at all levels of government and in public debate. In delivering the Inaugural History Lecture, 1996, with both critical thoughtfulness and a sense of urgency about the importance of history, Professor Stuart Macintyre has set the tone for what will become the Council's premier annual public event and publication.
Shirley Fitzgerald, President, HCNSW, 1997.

BIOGRAPHY

Stuart Macintyre is a graduate of the University of Melbourne and completed higher degrees at Monash and Cambridge; he has previously held posts at Cambridge, Murdoch and the Australian National University. His principal interests are labour and social history, both in Britain and Australia, the study of social and political change in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and intellectual history. His recent publications include *A History for a Nation: Ernest Scott and the Making of Australian History* (1994).