

2001 Professor Ien Ang
Intertwining Histories: Heritage and Diversity

ABSTRACT

"The challenge, I believe, is to recognise that the national historical record consists of divergent, unequal but intertwining histories. These intersecting strands of history can never be smoothed into a single national narrative but they nevertheless produce a common symbolic field of interrelated experiences, stories, and memories which we can call our collective heritage. After all, Indigenous and non-indigenous Australians have a very long history of co-existence, a history of ugly conflict and violence but also, often against the odds, of cooperation and cross-cultural exchange. There is room for both pride and shame, celebration and remorse, triumph and tragedy. Perhaps this is what 'reconciliation' is all about: it is about a cross-cultural conversation which could lead to the building of a new, intercultural common ground, where a shared 'heritage' is created and made, rather than simply preserved, through the sharing of different perspectives on the past." Professor Ien Ang

BIOGRAPHY

Professor Ang is Professor of Cultural Studies and Director of the Institute for Cultural Research at the University of Western Sydney. She has published a number of books and essays and recently co-edited *Alter/Asians: Asian-Australian Identities in Art, Media and Popular Culture*. *On Not Speaking Chinese: Living Between Asia and the West* was published at the end of the 2001. She is an expert on media audiences and is internationally renowned for her work in transnational and crosscultural studies, and race and gender studies. While not a trained historian, in the past few years she has engaged intensively with the historical antecedents of multicultural Australia, and in particular with the role and place of Asian migration in the national imagination.