Alana Piper and Ana Stevenson (Editors), *Gender Violence in Australia: Historical Perspectives* (Clayton: Monash University Publishing, 2019), 272pp. Paperback. A\$34.99. ISBN: 978-1-925-83530-4.

The increasing willingness seen by victims of domestic, family, and gender-based violence to speak out about their experiences has seen a transformation of the place and acceptance of such violence within Australian society. As a result, the last decade has brought greater political and public attention onto these forms of violence. It is important not to view these perceptible shifts as merely the product of twenty-first century social change or, indeed, that of the twentieth century. Each individual study in the wide-ranging new volume: *Gender Violence in Australia: Historical Perspectives*, curated by historians Alana Piper and Ana Stevenson, confirm that the changes seen today are merely the latest steps in a long progression towards awareness and action. Importantly, it also provides a broader context for violence in the lives of Australians, demonstrating that this is certainly not a recent issue, but merely one that has been, and continues to be, obscured within society.

Gender Violence in Australia is separated into three cohesive sections. The first presents a variety of perspectives on the ways violence has been able to enter the home, beginning with Zora Simic's careful discussion of the considerations required in writing an Australian history of gender violence since 1788. The chapters in this section examine forms of gender violence in the home that are both physical and psychological, including Alana Piper's study of nineteenth century economic abuse of women, as well as Lisa Featherstone on the late twentieth century criminalisation of marital rape. Andy Kaladelfos, investigating familial sexual abuse in the late nineteenth to early twentieth century, and Lisa Durnian's work on conviction rates of children who kill violent fathers in the twentieth century broaden its definition further to include children. It is not merely the domestic sphere that ties these chapters together, but also their attention to the role and importance of silences in such stories of violence, demonstrated by Tanya Evans' fascinating study of the work of family historians in exposing violence by past generations.

The volume's consideration of gender violence in the community demonstrates how patriarchal structures have served to reinforce differing forms of violence in Australian society. Such violence, as the chapters in this section demonstrate, span a variety of cultural and socio-economic groups. The entrance of women into traditionally male environments forms the basis of both Liz Conor's thoughtful chapter about the shift from literal violence on the frontier towards Indigenous stockwomen to the continuing violence in present-day representations and Tanya Fitzgerald's study of the gendered experiences of women in academia. Similarly, Shurlee Swain's feminist reading of institutional sexual abuse in Australia and Raelene Frances' investigation of historical ideas about migrant sex work and sex trafficking both include the role of patriarchal ideas in changing definitions of these categories. Rebecca Jennings' interpretation of anti-lesbian violence as a method of policing gender in the second half of the twentieth century similarly points to the role of traditional ideas about gender and relationships in this form of violence.

The analysis of public voices against gender violence forms the volume's third and final section. Ana Stevenson and Brigitte Lewis reveal that such activism has existed in some form since the nineteenth century, investigating its changing emphases in print and digital media alongside shifts in political and public attention to the issue. Mary Tomsic draws attention to feminist films of the 1970s as another

way that women were able to engage in conversations on gender-based violence. Both studies focus on more recent shifts that have brought these subjects into the mainstream. Similarly, the final chapter of the volume by Jacqui Theobald and Suellen Murray addresses the political decisions, including gradual de-funding of domestic violence services, that pressured the women's refuge movement to move closer to the government for support. All three studies of activism share both positive benefits to greater state involvement and public awareness of gender violence, as well as the new challenges these changes have brought.

The fourteen multidisciplinary chapters in *Gender Violence in Australia: Historical Perspectives* detail the existence of such violence since white settlement and purposefully present links between its appearance in the past and today. This deliberate framing is successful in demonstrating the immense changes that have occurred in the public and political consideration of gender violence. Yet it also unavoidably draws attention to the continuities in such violence, without any sense of resignation, but rather as a 'rallying cry' (p. xix) that explores its far-reaching incidence and effects since white settlement to contextualise the 'national crisis' of gender violence in Australia today.

Effie Karageorgos, University of Newcastle