

TAISIW

The Australian Institute
for Social Inclusion and Wellbeing



THE UNIVERSITY OF
NEWCASTLE
AUSTRALIA

**The Australian Institute for Social Inclusion and Wellbeing (TAISIW)
Invites you to the Book Launch of 'Conjuring Australia' by Dr Nadine Kavanagh**

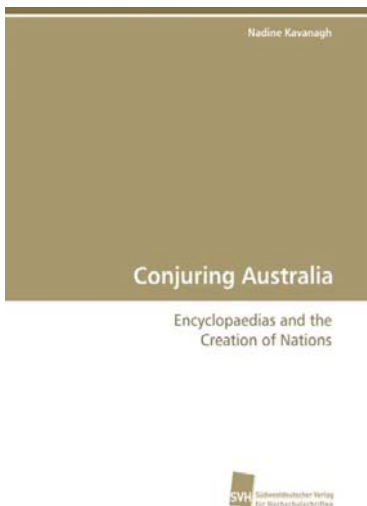
Friday 12 June, 2009
12noon, Treehouse, Shortland Union
The University of Newcastle
University Drive, Callaghan NSW 2308

Speakers

[Professor Terry Lovat](#), Pro Vice-Chancellor, Education & Arts

[Professor Ian Tyrrell](#), Scientia Professor, School of History & Philosophy, University of NSW

[Dr Nadine Kavanagh](#), Research Academic, TAIWIW



SHORT SUMMARY OF THE BOOK

The foundation of the Australian nation was unspectacular: the Commonwealth of Australia came into being with the stroke of a pen on a summer's day in 1901. At the time of federation, the majority of Australians was of British heritage and the mother country was by many still considered 'home'. With no foundation myth or unique defining history or culture to resort to, how could Australians forge a national identity? Nadine Kavanagh presents strong evidence that, surprising as it may be, encyclopaedias played an important role in the Australian nation building process. Contrary to their objective appearance, encyclopaedias have the power, along with other cultural, artistic and educational products, to subtly control and, paradoxically, to change the societies which produced them. Like Prospero, encyclopaedists appear to conjure new realities. Kavanagh argues that the Australian Encyclopaedia, published in 1925/26 by Angus & Robertson in Sydney, was a cultural product with an agenda: to fill the conceptual void left by the unspectacular foundation of the Australian nation.

This book is available now for purchase at [Amazon](#)