

Editorial

Anna Wallace and Bernadette Cantrall

There is nothing in the mind that is not first in the senses.

Just as empiricists prioritised the senses in the construction knowledge, our contributors in this edition of *Philament* inquire into the originary and multifaceted meanings (senses?) of sense and sensation. After all, what is sense? We talk of the five or more senses, the physiological methods of perception. We sense pain, we are sensitive creatures, we cling to illusions. Some have heightened senses and experience synaesthesia or are supertasters. Common sense and a sense of humour are considered good qualities. We have a sense of time. A juicy piece of gossip is sensational. An extravagance of visual verbal physical aural olfactory stimuli can send us into sensory overload.

As such, our contributors to this issue responded to many of the aspects of "Sense and Sensation". Alf Seegert's article "Steam of Consciousness" traces the first-person sensory experiences described by Charles Dickens in his "A Flight", a description of a rail journey. He finds that Dickens' prose closely emulates the experience of the journey and its accompanying sensations. Elaine Laforteza's paper "The Racial Fault-Lines of Postcolonizing Sensation" focuses on how the body is sensationalised as a means of constructing racial identity. She does this through a case study of the 2001 deportation from Australia of Vivian Alvarez-Solon. Jo Chipperfield's article explores the sensationalisation of a 1927 police murder in England. Chipperfield's argument is that journalistic narratives of this crime appropriated the characteristics of early twentieth-century detective fiction. James McLeod's piece analyses sight and sound in the films of Terrence Malick, in which unconventional voiceovers evoke unusual sensations and place the auditory at odds with the visual.

The absurdist plays of Mark O'Flynn suggest the tantalising possibility of nonsense as meaningful communication. Jessica Wilkinson's poems, a series of poems that make sense both separately and as a whole, delight

the visual sense in their use of space on the page. Gabrielle Fletcher's piece describes sensations in detail to excite all the senses. Adrienne Sallay's short story "Yellow Sarong" sees returned soldier Tommo confronting sensations that are almost beyond words.

No editorial would be complete without mentioning the work of our collective, and the contributions made by our authors and referees. We've had a large turnover in the *Philament* team since the last edition, and it is testament to the enthusiasm and aptitude of our new postgraduates that we have such a quality issue on offer. So, readers, eyes and ears open. We hope you enjoy it.