Capturing Chloe:

Reimagining a Melbourne Icon

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Figure 1: Lefebvre, Jules Joseph. 1875. *Chloe.* oil on canvas.

Melbourne: Young and Jackson Hotel.

Photograph: Peter Nicholson.

I declare that this thesis is my own account of my research and contains as its main content work which has not previously been submitted for a degree at any tertiary institution. The research exploring the involvement of Australian Aboriginal soldiers from Western Victoria during World War 1, and cultural consultation with Victorian artist Vicki Couzens, was approved by Murdoch University's Human Research Ethics Committee: Approval Number 2012/168. An earlier version of the "Preface" to the exegesis was published in my peer-reviewed paper "Reimagining a Melbourne Icon: Jules Lefebvre's *Chloe*" in *Writing the Ghost Train: Refereed Conference Papers of the 20th Annual Australasian Association of Writing Programs Conference 2015.* This paper was informed by research undertaken for my thesis, and a number of revised and expanded paragraphs from the original paper are incorporated into chapters of the exegesis, however, they only comprise a small portion of the overall thesis.

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Katrina Kell

Date: 23rd August 2018

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Abstract

The nude painting *Chloe,* created in 1875 by French artist Jules Lefebvre, which has hung at Young and Jackson Hotel since 1909, is a much-loved Melbourne cultural icon. *Chloe* has been the subject of controversy and mythologising, particularly in relation to the Parisian model who sat for the painting. This production-based thesis, through a work of historical fiction and an exegesis, imaginatively renders and recontextualises Lefebvre's *Chloe* to illustrate how these myths have, in part, contributed to reductive portrayals and interpretations of both the painting and its model.

The manuscript "Capturing Chloe" is a fictional narrative tracing *Chloe*'s impact on an Australian family during World War One, and the volatile world of Jules Lefebvre's Parisian model, as she and other proletarian women determine to challenge the social and political forces that oppress them in the aftermath of the Second French Empire and the Franco-Prussian War.

The exegesis uses textual analysis and historical research to interrogate the origins of *Chloe*, and the source of myths that have variously constructed or constituted identities for the painting's model. While exploring shifting ideas about the model's identity since the painting's debut in 1875, this analysis demonstrates the significance of textual artefacts in the ongoing process of reinterpreting and remaking *Chloe.* The exegesis explores an anecdote Lefebvre shared about his model, and a tale the Anglo-Irish writer George Moore wrote about "Lefebvre's Chloe" in his memoirs. This work describes Moore's student days in Paris, and his mythologising of a young woman who, I propose, may have been the model for *Chloe.*

By recontextualising, reimagining and rewriting myths about *Chloe*'s model, and exploring the painting's origins and its reception by Australian viewers throughout

the decades, this thesis contributes new insights into and an original understanding of

one of Australia's most celebrated cultural icons.

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Figure 2: Kell, Katrina. 2014. *Chloe Kelly.* oil on canvas.

Imagination is more important than knowledge. Knowledge is limited.

Imagination encircles the world.

——Albert Einstein

There is no agony like bearing an untold story inside you.

——Zora Neale Hurston, *Dust Tracks on a Road*.

Preface

Capturing Chloe: Genesis

I first heard her name one cool September evening. It was over dinner, on a first date, at Subiaco's Witch's Cauldron restaurant. I was sharing dreams of *la vie de bohème* with Neil, a young man-about-town, who had recently returned to Perth after years in those mighty 'big smokes' of Melbourne and London.

"It's strange," I remember saying, between nibbles of garlic prawns, "a model sat for my latest painting but everyone's certain it's a self-portrait. My mother has a theory; she claims artists subconsciously paint themselves. The model didn't resemble me at all, so perhaps there's something in that."

Neil seemed impressed. "You're studying for a Diploma in Fine Arts. Well, I suggest you go and see *Chloe*."

"*Chloe?*"

"Yes," he said, with a smile. "You'll find her in the saloon bar at Young and Jackson Hotel, opposite Flinders Street Railway Station in Melbourne. She's a nude," he said as an afterthought, "and quite beguiling; couldn't believe my eyes when I first saw her hanging there."

"Ah! So, it's *that* kind of painting."

Neil shook his head. "No, there's nothing distasteful about her. *Chloe*'s one of the finest examples of academic art you could hope to lay your eyes on, and heaven help the person who shows her disrespect. The regulars at that pub would never stand for it. It's a mystery, that's for sure; *Chloe* could be hanging in the Louvre but through an odd twist of fate, she's found her home with a bar-full of knockabouts."

"Well,' I said, intrigued, "one day I hope to see her."

Neil poured another glass of chardonnay and the conversation wandered. We were married within the year and on our honeymoon road trip "over east" we spent a few days in Melbourne, but *Chloe* was never mentioned. Footy season was in full flight and a new job waited for Neil in Sydney. The ensuing years passed swiftly, my marriage to Neil ultimately ended, but in a corner of my subconscious, memories of that conversation about *Chloe* were waiting, because one night, in a fitful sleep, I dreamt I had written her story.

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Introduction

At the centre of this doctoral thesis is a new creative artefact, a novel-length fictional manuscript entitled "Capturing Chloe," informed by new discoveries relating to Jules Lefebvre's *Chloe* and this painting's enduring impact on its Australian viewers. Due to the word limit of my doctoral project, "Coda" Part Four of "Capturing Chloe," is included in the appendix to the fictional component of the thesis. The second component is an exegesis that examines and discusses aspects of the diverse range of texts which inform "Capturing Chloe," and new insights they can offer into the mythical and cultural significance of *Chloe*. Some of these historical texts are written in French, and all translations are my own, unless otherwise stated. Archival research and textual analysis provided a methodological framework for interrogating the origins of *Chloe*, and the source of myths that have contributed to perceptions about the character of Jules Lefebvre and his enigmatic Parisian model. Additionally, by exploring critical reviews of the painting over the decades, and researching the historical background and political ideology of both the artist and his model, this analysis shows the significance of textual artefacts in the process of reinterpreting, recontextualising and reimagining *Chloe* in a fictional context. In relation to this, I discuss how an intuitive and imaginative response to the "gifts" my historical research uncovered, were crucial elements of my writing methodology during the creation of "Capturing Chloe."

In this introductory chapter of my exegesis, I focus on the historicity of *Chloe* and the painting's mythological status within Australian pub culture. Synchronicities between *Chloe*'s model and Ned Kelly form part of this discussion, and the role of "play" in recontextualising and reimagining an iconic artwork. I also look at dream

inspiration as an element of creative writing methodology, and the Illusion of

Independent Agency (IIA), a phenomenon that fiction writers sometimes experience

during the creation of their narratives. In the final section of the introduction, I consider

the epistemological challenges faced by creative writing researchers within the context

of the Academy, and conclude with an outline of the topics explored in subsequent

chapters of this exegesis.

Chloe: Historical Background and Context

Chloe, the nude painting by Jules Lefebvre, made its debut as Exhibit 1298 at the 1875

Paris Salon, an annual French "state-sponsored exhibition of contemporary art" (Bretell

1987, 3), held at the Grand Palais des Champs-Elysees, where paintings, sculptures and

prints were displayed in every available space and corner (1987, 3). *Chloe*'s creator, the

academic painter Jules Joseph Lefebvre (1834-1911), was born in the French village of

Tournan, Seine-et-Marne, and spent his boyhood years in Amiens (Vento 1888, 304), a

northern city in the heart of the Somme courageously defended by Australian soldiers

during World War One (Fischer 2014, 88). At *Chloe*'s first unveiling in the Australian

colonies, the painting received a Special First Degree of Merit medal at the Sydney

International Exhibition of 1879, and high praise from the judging committee (Watson-

Kell 2016):

> Lefebvre's "Chloe" displays great skill in classic composition; it is a strong unswerving
>
> study of the female form, is well drawn, and comes boldly off the canvas. It is of a too
>
> real type to be god-like, but is honest and truthful, and treated in a chaste and perfectly
>
> natural manner.[1]

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[1] 1881. *The Official Record of the Sydney International Exhibition 1879*, 458. Sydney: Thomas Richards,
Government Printer.

The following year, at an exhibition embracing modernism and announcing that "Melbourne was ready to take its place in the world" (Holt 1994, 115-134), *Chloe* was awarded First Class Honours at the 1880 Melbourne International Exhibition (*Argus* 1881, 7) and the painting received positive reviews in the press (*Argus* 1880, 34):

> The "Chloe" of the Chevalier J. J. Lefebvre, a pupil of Cogniet, was exhibited at the Salon in 1875, and is the finest study from the nude in any of the galleries. It displays that fine modelling which is the rule rather than the exception among French artists, and results from a systematic course of training in the life schools.

A final report prepared by the commissioners of the 1880 Melbourne International Exhibition was presented to the Parliament of Victoria. The report states that 1,329,297 visitors attended the event between 1st October 1880 and 30th April 1881, a number far exceeding the total population of Victoria at the time, and, according to the commissioners, the exhibition had "taught the people of this and the adjacent colonies much of which they were previously ignorant" (Australia, Parliament of Victoria 1881, 5). However, there was another historical incident which coincided with *Chloe*'s debut in Melbourne, the trial and execution of Edward Kelly, the notorious bushranger, for the murder of Mansfield policeman, Thomas Lonigan, at Stringybark Creek in the Wombat Ranges (*The Argus* 1880, 6).

Chloe and Ned Kelly: A Shared History of Rebellion

On the overcast spring day when the 1880 Melbourne International Exhibition opened to considerable fanfare, Australia's most mythologised figure was in no position to view the artworks on display in the galleries. From 26 August, 1880, until his execution on November 11, 1880, Ned Kelly languished in a cell at Old Melbourne Gaol, a prison situated less than 500-metres from the Royal Exhibition Buildings in Carlton Gardens (Jones [1995] 2008, 367). Ned Kelly remains a divisive figure in Australian history, a

murderous villain who Geoffrey Robertson, the human rights barrister, has equated with a terrorist jihadist (Robertson 2013, 21-25), but to a substantial number of Australians, Kelly is a legendary folk hero and champion of the underdog (Seal 1980, 9-15). Ian Jones, one of Kelly's most respected biographers, suggests the convicted murderer and outlaw gang member was "a bushranger turned political visionary" (Jones [1995] 2008, 263-264), a man whose dream was an Australian republic, a nation free from British rule and the injustices suffered by the rural underclass at the hands of the squattocracy and a corrupt police force ([1995] 2008, xvi). In the course of my research journey, I recognised there were intriguing echoes between Ned Kelly's rebellion against a system of imperial injustice ([1995] 2008, 263-264), and the discovery that *Chloe*'s Parisian model Marie may have had links with "a gang of low confederates" (Hooper 1876, 220-221). The legend of Ned Kelly has been "endlessly reinterpreted and challenged" (Huggan 2009, 142-154) by scholars and historians, and also reimagined in the novels *Our Sunshine* (1991) by Robert Drewe and *True History of the Kelly Gang* (2000) by Peter Carey.[2] However, the resonances between Ned Kelly's story and *Chloe*'s political historicity were not explored by either Drewe or Carey in their works of historical fiction. During the period of *Chloe*'s creation, Paris was still recovering from France's defeat in the Franco-Prussian War, and the brutal oppression of the Paris Commune, the bloodiest reprisal by a European government on its citizens in nineteenth-century history (Wilson 2007, 2). Kelly was born in 1855, while Marie, according to Lefebvre,

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[2] In his novel *Our Sunshine,* Drewe offers a nuanced and "impressionistic" interpretation of the Kelly legend, exploring Ned's criminality within the context of colonial repression and trauma (Huggan 2009, 142-154). Peter Carey reimagines Ned's inner-world in *True History of the Kelly Gang,* rendering "a complex network of competing ventriloquisms in which the fiction of 'Kelly's voice' is projected onto other, equally fictional narrative voices" (2009, 142-154). Carey has acknowledged Ned's "Jerilderie Letter" as a vital source of inspiration, and claims he emulated the outlaw's written voice in the novel (O'Reilly 2007, 488-502). In his autobiography *How to Make Gravy* (2010), iconic Australian singer/songwriter Paul Kelly discusses the influence of Ned's "Jerilderie Letter" on Carey's *True History of the Kelly Gang.* Paul Kelly also evoked the literary potential of Ned's legend in his song *Our Sunshine* (written with Michael Thomas) in the first two lines of the lyric: "There came a man on a stolen horse / And he rode right on to the page" (Kelly [2010] 2011, 352-358).

was born in 1856-57 (Hooper 1876, 220-221), which makes the young people contemporaries. Kelly, the son of an Irish convict, claimed his family had been persistently persecuted by the Australian Colonial authorities (Jones [1995] 2008, 263-264), while Marie, my research revealed, was a working-class girl from Paris (Hooper 1876, 220-221), who may have witnessed, and escaped, the massacres by Versailles government troops during the oppression of the Paris Commune (Wilson 2007, 6):

> Hundreds of women were shot or deported to the penal colonies in Cayenne and New Caledonia, many for simply being out in the street poorly dressed or for carrying a milk bottle thought to be filled with paraffin.

Considering the geographic distance between them, these two young people would not have met. Nevertheless, due to their shared history of class oppression, and the synchronicity of their 1880 Melbourne "hangings," I drew on the allegorical association when I evoked an old man's memory of seeing *Chloe* on the day of Ned Kelly's execution in "Capturing Chloe."

The Role of Play in Reimagining an Iconic Artwork

The intriguing links I intuited between Australia's most notorious bushranger and *Chloe*'s Parisian model, links which may appear implausible when considering each subject independently, requires me to a discuss my methodology as a creative writer of historical fiction, and the central importance of intuitive "play" as a strategy and process. Julienne Van Loon, an award-winning novelist and researcher, has explored the potential of "play in fostering innovation, experimentation and new knowledge" (Van Loon 2017) in the realm of creative practice research. In her analysis of Lev Vygotsky's 1933 essay on the "psychology of play," Van Loon critiqued his claim that "rules" are an essential element of play, a conclusion he had reached after observing a "role-playing" game between two young sisters. Initially affronted by Vygotsky's

claim, Van Loon later recognised the value in his argument, especially if she inverted his theory and proposed "there is no such thing as rules without play" (2017). I was intrigued by the ideas Van Loon presented in her analysis, particularly when her thoughts on the role of play in research turned to a "painting with the title 'Two Sisters' by Joan Eardley" (2017). Employing the "sister" theme of Eardley's painting to interrogate Vygotsky's theory, Van Loon describes the pleasure Eardley experienced in the sketching phase of her creative process and how (2017):

> The serendipitous aspect of drawing emphasises the immersive, non-teleological elements of the process, or what we might think of as the playful or imaginative. Sketching and drawing is here a form of play that satisfies and sustains and has no definitive outcome . . . Painting, on the other hand, must be perfected. It moves towards a point in the future in and through which it will be deemed complete. It could be said that it moves towards displaying its contribution to the discipline, and hence towards knowledge.

I have included an image of my oil painting *Chloe Kelly* (2014) in Figure 2 of this exegesis, because the "playful" process of creating the painting was a method of synergising my research as I created the fictional character of *Chloe*'s model. Rendering the painting was an intensely immersive process, an imaginative merging of the radical histories of Ned Kelly and *Chloe*, two Australian cultural icons. In a fascinating article on how to "read" Ned Kelly's armor, Penelope Ingram writes (2006, 12-19):

> As a bushranger, outlaw, son of a convict, Ned is robbed of a transcendent subject position, a position that representation both requires and enacts, and is forced into the material realm of embodiment. Ironically, however, it is through this embodiment that Ned ultimately represents himself.

Ingram's study exposed interesting parallels between Ned Kelly and *Chloe*'s model, and she states "there is no doubt that Kelly is mythologised . . . we are, it seems, not simply

fascinated by the story of Ned, but I would argue with the body of Ned" (Ingram 2006, 12-19). Ingram explains that the interest in Kelly's body had its origins in the practice of "phrenology" in the nineteenth-century, particularly its perceived potential for explaining criminal behaviour (2006, 12-19). Following his execution, Kelly's body was dismembered, and "portions of the corpse" (2006, 12-19) were allegedly souvenired by members of the medical community (Jones [1995] 2008, 324). But how, one might ask, does Ned Kelly's post-mortem dismemberment align with *Chloe*'s model?

One of the most troubling findings of my doctoral research was a quote by Jules Lefebvre, a quote where he claims his model's corpse was dissected at a Paris hospital (Hooper 1876, 220-221). Creating the painting *Chloe Kelly* was a method of recontextualising her history, both consciously and intuitively, as I processed what I was learning about the ill-fated model's story. Marie's watchful "gang-gang cockatoo" is emblematic of the confederate "gang" Jules Lefebvre claimed she was involved with (Hooper 1876, 220-221), one of the knowledge "gifts" my research revealed and is discussed later in this exegesis (Webb 2015, 180). *Chloe Kelly* was my personal homage to Marie, and the inspiration she offered me as a creative writing researcher and practitioner. As I breathed new life into her image through paint and brush strokes, I evoked a strong-willed young woman who was oppressed but never broken, a woman who bore no resemblance to the reductive myths usually associated with the original painting. By extension, recuperating and embodying a strong female character to represent *Chloe*'s model is a core element of this thesis, and particularly of "Capturing Chloe" its creative production component.

Chloe: "Shameless Minx" or "Psychic Virgin"

It seems unlikely that Ned Kelly would have been aware of *Chloe*'s existence, unless, of course, he was given access to the Melbourne newspapers. Journalists penned lengthy articles in praise of the exhibition and the emerging sophistication of the Victorian colony, and "most prestigious of all the exhibits were the artworks" (Young 2008, chap. 12). Reviewers urged exhibition attendees to view the French Court in the Fine Art Gallery as a source of education and cultural enlightenment, and the nude paintings as a locus of learning (Holt 1994, 122). However, after the 1880 Melbourne International Exhibition closed its doors and the eminent surgeon Dr Thomas Fitzgerald (latterly Sir Thomas Fitzgerald) purchased Jules Lefebvre's painting *Chloe,* the public's progressive attitude towards the nude art form proved to be short-lived. In May 1883, Fitzgerald loaned the painting to the National Gallery of Victoria (NGV) where it was displayed "cautiously in a dim corner" (Holt 1994, 122-125), and once the gallery began opening its doors on Sundays, a passionate debate erupted in the press over the propriety of displaying a French nude painting on the Sabbath.
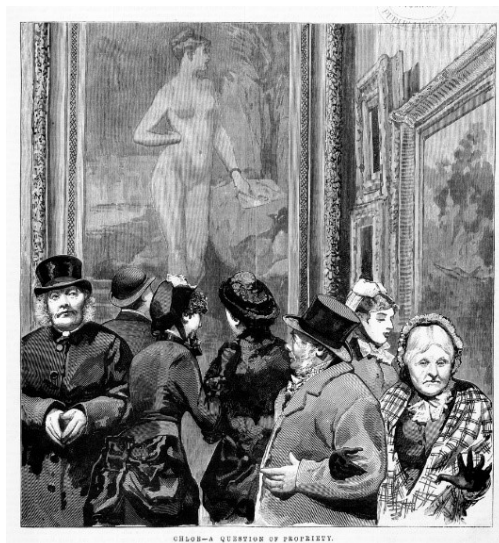
Figure 3: Syme, David and Co. 1883. *Chloe – A Question of Propriety.* print: wood engraving. Melbourne: State Library of Victoria. Accession Number: IAN13/06/83/81.

Finally, exhausted by the fracas, Fitzgerald wrote to "the trustees of the gallery, requesting that 'Chloe' may be returned to him" ('Tuesday, May 29' 1883). In her seminal essay on the 1883 NGV Sunday opening scandal, Stephanie Holt (1994, 134) concluded:

> 'Chloe' was a shameless minx to some, a psychic virgin to others: a painting to be offered to an eager public to enlighten and elevate . . . Perhaps it is appropriate that this eruption of passions, this irresolvable conflict over such an enigmatic work . . . should have been so abruptly and inconclusively terminated with Fitzgerald's reclamation of the picture.

In the wake of the NGV scandal, Fitzgerald loaned his controversial painting to the Adelaide Gallery. Following a three-year period in South Australia, he hung *Chloe* at his private residence in Melbourne. However, from the painting's prominent position in the surgeon's front parlour, *Chloe* was visible to pedestrians as they passed by his window, and once again, a public outcry erupted (Carroll 1989, 11). Removed from the public gaze, the painting remained in relative obscurity until Fitzgerald's death in 1908 on a sea voyage between Townsville and Cairns (*Argus* 1908, 4). In 1909, when publican Henry Figsby Young paid the trustees of Fitzgerald's estate 800 pounds for *Chloe*, he installed the painting in the saloon bar of Young and Jackson Hotel in Melbourne as "an additional attraction" (*Daily News* 1909, 13). Eight decades later, *Chloe* was so synonymous with the famous hotel that an amendment was applied to Historic Building No. 708 on the Victorian Heritage Register of Historic Buildings to include "the painting 'Chloe' by Jules Lefebvre" (Australia, Victorian Heritage Register 1989):

> The hotel is historically significant for the public display of the painting Chloe since 1908 [*sic*]. Chloe not only helped to promote the hotel but also came to symbolise popular resistance to conservative Victorian values.

A submission to the National Trust of Australia (Victoria) claimed *Chloe* had featured in overseas newspapers and was possibly Australia's most famous painting and "a nude version of the Mona Lisa"[3] (Watson-Kell 2016). The following quote from a newspaper article during World War One, demonstrates the importance of Young and Jackson Hotel to one unfortunate Australian soldier (*Castlemaine Mail* 1918, 2):

> Private A. P. Hill, a Castlemaine soldier, who was killed in action some time back, sailed from Melbourne in the troopship Demosthenes in December 1915, and when leaving the shores of Australia young Hill and a comrade named Baker put a message in a bottle, and cast it upon the ocean . . . in January 1918, the bottle came ashore . . . "Demosthenes, 31/12/15. To the finder of this bottle—take it to Young and Jackson's, fill it, and keep it till we return from the war . . . (We are on our way).

The famous hotel and its "world-known painting Chloe" (*Table Talk* 1919, 4), proved irresistible for men and boys returning from the fighting. However, the Defence Department ordered the hotel's closure to prevent it serving soldiers who had returned to an Australia ill-prepared to accommodate them (1919, 4). *Chloe*'s significance to soldiers during World War One is explored creatively in "Capturing Chloe," and the phenomenon continued between the world wars, when enjoying a drink with *Chloe* became a popular ritual for male visitors to Melbourne (*Recorder* 1934, 3). By the commencement of the Second World War, *Chloe* and Young and Jackson Hotel were so embedded in Australian military mythology, the 2/21st Australian Infantry Battalion[4] included them in their official march song (Argus 1940, 5):

> It's a long way to Bonegilla
>
> It's a long way to go

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[3] *Submission Concerning Young and Jackson's Hotel*. 1988. National Trust of Australia (Victoria). July 13, 1988, 7.

[4] Australian War Memorial: https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/U56064. On February 2, 1942, B and C Companies of the 2/21st Australian Infantry Battalion were massacred by Japanese forces at Laha Airfield on the Indonesian island of Ambon.

It's a long way to Bonegilla

To see the Murray flow

Good-by Young and Jackson's

Farewell Chloe too

It's a long way to Bonegilla

But we'll get there on STEW.

In 1945, West Australian traveller Peter Graeme compared *Chloe*'s iconic status to the Sydney Harbour Bridge: "Chloe is to Melbourne what the Bridge is to Sydney. From the soldier's point of view of course" (Graeme 1945, 15), and he confirmed *Chloe*'s significance to Australian servicemen when he wrote: "All over Australia you meet men who have seen her. She is a soldier's pilgrimage when in Melbourne. . . Chloe belongs to the Australian soldier" (1945, 15). Graeme shared his initial response to the painting, and described how he recognised in *Chloe* "a strange mystic hold that is explained only when you find yourself applauding the artist for having painted her just when he did" (1945, 15). Towards the end of his story, he recalls the day he met a soldier at Young and Jackson Hotel. The soldier was holding three drinks and after he carried them from the crowd he "stood in front of Chloe. One after the other he drained them" (1945, 15). When Graeme offered the soldier another drink, and enquired why he had drunk three beers in quick succession, the soldier explained he was keeping a promise (1945, 15):

Keepin' a promise we made to Chloe—three of us—twelve months ago when we were goin' North—to have a drink with her when we came back.

He paused.

"Here's the best," he said, and I nodded in agreement.

"Where's your mates?" I asked.

He was looking at Chloe as he answered, as though explaining their absence.

"I buried 'em at Scarlet [*sic*] Beach."

Graeme's article supports my theory that the tradition of visiting Young and Jackson's, and having a drink with *Chloe,* brought comfort to many soldiers. The soldier Graeme described had lost two of his comrades at Scarlett Beach, and drinking a beer in their honour with *Chloe* may have assisted his grieving process. As Graeme concluded in his poignant tale, *Chloe* may have been "the symbol of the feminine side of his life. That part which he puts away from him, except in his inarticulate dreams" (1945, 15). Graeme's reference to dreams within the context of suppressed memory, leads me to a further discussion of my creative writing methodology, specifically the combination of intuitive writing and historical research that is at the heart of my doctoral project.

Inspiration from Dreams and Myths: Elements of a Creative Writing Methodology

In the preface to this exegesis, I refer to a dream that revived my memories of the painting *Chloe*, a dream that inspired me to rewrite *Chloe* mythologies in a work of historical fiction. In *Dreams, Myth, and Power,* John Hughes writes: "The connection of dreams to myth is an ancient one . . . the epic of Gilgamesh tells us that the link is at least 5,000 years old" (2017, 161-176). Invoking Plato's *Timaeus* and *Theaetetus* dialogues, and the Ancient Greek philosopher's theory about a conflation between the dream state and consciousness, and the notion that dreams may be a form of storytelling (1888, 159; 1997, 176), Hughes (2017, 161-176) claims the mythic connotations of a dream only become apparent once the dreamer awakens. Although theories about dreams and their meaning have evolved throughout the ages[5] "the connection between

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[5] Aristotle: "The dream proper is a presentation based on the movement of sense impressions, when such presentation occurs during sleep, taking sleep in the strict sense of the term" (Aristotle n.d., translated by J. I. Beare). Sigmund Freud: ". . . every dream reveals itself as a psychical structure which has a meaning and which can be inserted at an assignable point in the mental activities of waking life" (Freud [1900] (1978), 1).

myth and dreams never retreats far from view (Hughes 2017, 161-176). Moreover, in a

study of the link between myth and dreams, Anthony Stevens (1997, 4) concludes:

> Every night we enter a mythic realm, a dark, primordial labyrinth, inhabited by the
>
> gods and ghosts of our ancestors . . . such figures commonly take on contemporary
>
> guises, but the new myths that our dreams fashion out of them are the old myths of
>
> humanity presented in modern dress.[6]

This "mythic realm" (1997, 4) that Stevens describes, the unfettered wandering of the

mind during the dream state, reflects how my memories of *Chloe* were recuperated.

There was an allegorical quality to my dream, a sense that here was an untold story I

needed to explore as a creative writer. Perhaps dreams once inspired the Anglo-Irish

writer George Moore (1852-1933), the author of a widely appropriated *Chloe*

mythology concerning the young artist model named Marie, a woman he claimed was

"Lefebvre's Chloe" (Moore [1888] 1972, 128-129). Moore draws on the hereditary

"mythic realm" (1997, 4) in his memoir *Confessions of a Young Man*, and when he

narrates "as the older version of the young man" (Grubgeld 1994, 37) he once was, he

evokes for his readers:

> A central myth of recreation . . . his story's factual basis provides the substantive
>
> miracle to this myth of self-birth, proclaiming its author's faith in the self-generative
>
> capacity.

Moore's reimagining of his youthful identity, allowed him to reinterpret and recast his

memories as he narrated them into a new reality. He appears to have welcomed "the

senses and emotions as receptive elements" (Grubgeld 1994, 41) and he was able to

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[6] Stevens draws on the dream theories of C. G. Jung and others in his book *Private Myths: Dreams and Dreaming* (1997). Furthermore, clinical psychologist and dream scholar Joan Schon claims "Jung argued that the value of dreams lies not only in what they reveal about the past but also in what they reveal about the future. Dreams contain 'the germs of future psychic situations and ideas' (Jung 1964, 38). They may symbolically depict the dreamer's unfulfilled potential, unrealised parts of the self, the solution of a current conflict or the likely outcome of current behaviour patterns. Jung distinguished between retrospective and prospective interpretations, and preferred to focus on the latter (Schon 2016, 76-108).

draw on them in his writing. Similarly, remaining "receptive" to my *Chloe* dream, a dream that lingered long after waking, inspired me to explore "the story of that dream" (Plato 1997, 176) and to recontextualise *Chloe* mythologies in this doctoral thesis:

> *I was seated in a comfortable chair reading an antiquarian novel; an elegant, somewhat hefty volume, replete with full cloth-binding and gold lettering on the spine and cover. The book was called "Chloe's Child" and my name was on the front cover. In the midst of the dream, I found myself questioning the novel's title. Who was the eponymous "Chloe" and why had I written her story? Before I could solve the puzzle, a white cockatoo alighted on the book and a tangled forest sprang up around me.*

The dream left me with a sense of unfinished business, and throughout the following morning, two words reoccurred insistently — "Chloe" and "cockatoo". There were no women in my life named Chloe, however, the white cockatoo that disrupted my dream, and its Antipodean symbolism, seemed to imply she may be Australian, and memories began to resurface about a conversation I once had about a nude painting in a pub in Melbourne.

After a quick search on the internet, I discovered an image of *Chloe* on the Young and Jackson Hotel website. The image was accompanied by the following commentary (Young and Jackson Hotel, n.d.):

> She is *Chloe,* the famous nude portrait which has graced the walls of the Young and Jackson Hotel since 1909 . . . Her history involves transformation, death, intrigue, love, war, depression and passion. Chloe now hangs in Chloe's Bar, so you can enjoy a drink or a meal while you admire this true Australian icon.

Intrigued, I read the brief history of the painting on the hotel's webpage. The article, with no bibliography, claimed *Chloe* was painted in Paris in 1875 by Jules Joseph

Lefebvre, an eminent French academician. The inspiration for the painting, the article revealed, was a brief extract from a poem by "the romantic 18th-century poet Andre Chenier" (Young and Jackson Hotel, n.d.). It appeared the identity of *Chloe*'s model remained a mystery, except "she was approximately 19 years old at the time of painting" (n.d.), and that she had died after making "a soup of poisonous matches" (n.d.) and consuming it, because of "unrequited love" according to the article.[7]

Enlarging the *Chloe* image on my laptop screen, I studied the young woman's profile—her troubled eye, the forlorn expression, and I began to wonder about the tragic aspects of the model's story: was there any evidence to support the hotel's claims, or was it simply conjecture and mythology? I was curious about the historical origins of the painting, and whether there were any reliable accounts on the lived-experience of that particular artist's model in late-nineteenth century Paris. The unusual context of the painting's public display was also intriguing. How did an academic French artwork end up on the wall of a popular pub on the busiest intersection in Melbourne, when it could be displayed in the Louvre or some other eminent gallery? As I stared at the model's face, I was already reimagining her story.

There are well-documented examples of authors who have drawn inspiration from their dreams, including Mary Shelley and *Frankenstein*, Robert Louis Stevenson with *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde,* and the award-winning West Australian author Joan London, who, during a paralysing fallow period when she started to fear her writing career was over, dreamt she would write a new novel and her "dream had a title 'Gilgamesh'" (Culture and the Arts WA, n.d.). Margaret Atwood has also written about

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[7] In my fictional manuscript "Capturing Chloe," Marie and her Italian friend Selena discuss the use of phosphorus matches as an abortifacient. In Europe, during the nineteen-century, "women would scrape the heads off perhaps one hundred matches, dissolve them in coffee, and drink the brew. In Sweden between 1851 and 1903 there are on record over fourteen hundred cases of phosphorus poisoning in attempted abortion, the victim surviving in only ten cases" (Shorter 1991, 211). Until the early-twentieth-century, phosphorus was still used as an abortifacient, and was "generally taken in the form an infusion of the heads of the phosphorus matches" (Ploss, Bartels and Bartels 1935, 520).

the dream vision she experienced while bird-watching in Australia, a vision which inspired her novel *Oryx and Crake,* and she argues "most fiction writing has to have an element of dream vision twisted into its roots" (Atwood 2004, 513-517). Steve Healey, a poet, essayist and scholar of Creative Writing pedagogy, champions the value of dreams and imagination as valuable tools in a writer's armoury, and he encourages his students to "Think of your voice as your mind telling a story about where it has been, or what has passed through it . . . thoughts, memories, dreams" (Healey in Peary and Hunley 2015, 183), an approach which encapsulates my own approach to creative writing research and practice. I also agree with Joan London and Margaret Atwood that "dream visions" can provide the seeds for a work of fiction, and these kernels of inspiration often lead to "years of research" (Culture and the Arts WA 2015, n.d.) and the ongoing process of fine-tuning a narrative's structure, voice and details (Atwood 2004, 513-517). This certainly proved to be the case during the reimagining and recontextualising of Lefebvre's *Chloe* and its historicity in my novel "Capturing Chloe."

The visionary dream that led me to *Chloe*, and its seed of inspiration, had spread its roots in my imagination. There was a simmering anger in the model's expression, an edge of defiance in her raised left shoulder, suggesting an attitude that seemed to imply she had scant regard for what viewers might think of her. My initial response to the painting *Chloe* was largely intuitive, but that intuition provided the impetus to discover whatever I could about the painting's historicity. Therefore, it is important to emphasise that an intuitive process and meticulous research were both vital during the construction of this thesis and its creative work.

In a critique of Christopher Frayling's seminal essay *Research in Art and Design* (1993), and whether there can be "research" value, or otherwise, in "the gathering of reference materials" (Frayling 1993, 1-5)—those discoveries writers may draw upon to

create verisimilitude in their fictional narratives—Jen Webb asks whether the "fact-checking" (2015, 14) undertaken by creative writers, combined with their intuition and imagination, has the potential to generate new knowledge. Evaluating the epistemological implications of Hillary Mantel's meticulous research for the Mann Booker Prize winning novels *Wolf Hall* (2009) and *Bring up the Bodies* (2012), Webb concluded it was a permutation of historical research and Mantel's own "wild imaginings" (2015, 15), that enabled her to write her extraordinary historical novels, and although "for historians, truth is what is valued: for novelists, it is the *texture of truth* that matters; and sometimes matters more than the truth itself" (2015, 17). Meticulous research was crucial to Mantel's creative practice, her delving into the history of Tudor England, its politics and its people, but her aim, as a novelist of historical fiction, was to draw on the historical record to imaginatively render Thomas Cromwell and the epoch he inhabited. In *Representation and the Imagination* (1981) the eminent literary scholar Daniel Albright considers Irish writer Samuel Beckett's admission that art is incapable of representing reality, and concludes, paradoxically, that it is this awareness that "leads Beckett . . . to a kind of realism" (1981, 164):

> His verisimilitude is not of the processes of sensation and apprehension, the exact grasping of the object beheld, but a verisimilitude of the processes of inventing and transcribing . . . A long written work must have the impossible appearance of being an ordained whole, as if it somehow pre-existed before its writing. Beckett abolishes this simulacrum . . . instead, he seems to rejoice in the surprise he feels at what comes out of his pencil, like a small child trying to catch himself at the very instant of falling asleep.

During close reading of the historical sources that informed "Capturing Chloe," I experienced a similar phenomenon. Those surreal moments of discovery relating to the painting, or its model, when Marie's character would jump into my head and I was reaching for my pencil. In *Don't Ask Me What I Mean*, a collection of essays written by

renowned poets over a fifty-year period, the Irish poet Seamus Heaney explained the complex synergy of intuition, memory and knowledge (Harris 2008) involved in his creative writing process (Brown and Paterson 2003, 102):

> In the writing of any poem, there's . . . your understanding towards intuition and images down there in the memory pool . . . the remembered thing starts off a chain reaction of words and associations, and . . . what you need is the whole of your acquired knowledge . . . You need them to come to your aid and throw a shape that will match and make sense of your excitement.

During the development of "Capturing Chloe," my search for the "texture of truth" (Webb, 2015, 17) involved both archival and on-site research at locations in France and Australia. It was an immersive process that revealed the political, social and mythical implications of *Chloe*'s history, and provided the knowledge "gifts" I required to imbue my novel with historical verisimilitude. Close analysis of my research findings, combined with an intuitive and "playful" response to these discoveries, allowed me to reimagine, recontextualise and remake *Chloe* mythologies in a work of historical fiction.

The Illusion of Independent Agency

Another intuitive aspect of the methodology that produced my fictional manuscript "Capturing Chloe," relates to a visionary or illusory phenomenon sometimes experienced by creative writers when they are immersed in the inner-worlds of the characters they have created. During the research and development stage of my thesis project, I was invited to discuss my creative writing research on a literary festival panel. The first topic each author was required to discuss was our research methodology, including the systems we relied upon to manage our research data: those "materials collected in the course of the research project" (Webb 2015, 180), data from a diverse

range of sources; the "gifts"[8] that will inspire, inform and enrich our creative narratives, and ultimately culminate in a "collection of all the materials in our project that may be of value to the researchers who follow us" (2015, 181). Following the methodology discussion, we were encouraged to share the "inspiration" for our current work-in-progress. When the time came for me to speak, I revealed the inspiration for "Capturing Chloe" had appeared to me in a dream, and following a lengthy period of research and development, and several drafts of experimental writing, the characters I had created appeared to be guiding the narrative. I commented that I was often surprised by how they behaved in the times and circumstances I placed them in. Moreover, I had experienced this "illusory or visionary" phenomenon on other occasions, during the writing of my two earlier novels,[9] those moments when the narrative seems to come "alive" and it can feel, on an intuitive level, as if the characters are controlling the story. At this point in the panel discussion, there was an audible sigh from a fellow writer, an award-winning author, who, it was soon revealed, believed I was being disingenuous about the nature of my creative writing experience. Giving voice to her apprehension, she conceded there were other authors who had made similar claims, but she suspected these writers were also being dishonest, because an author must, at all times, be "consciously" in control of their characters' thoughts and motivations. Unfortunately, as the panel was about to conclude, there was insufficient time for further discussion on "The Illusion of Independent Agency (IIA)" (Taylor, Hodges and Kohanyi 2003, 361-380) and its role in creative writing practice. Nevertheless, in a ground-breaking study on IIA as experienced by fiction authors, and whether authorial IIA may correlate, to some degree, with an author's experience of imaginary friendships during childhood,

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[8] Jen Webb, Researching Creative Writing, (Newmarket: Frontimus Ltd, 2015), 180-181. Webb writes "*Data* comes from the Latin *datum*, which means 'given'. Over the centuries we have inferred from that the meaning 'things given'. The data is therefore a gift – the something that has been given to us by our research practice and research subjects."

[9] Katy Watson, *Juice* (Fremantle: Fremantle Arts Centre Press, 2000). Katy Watson-Kell, *Mama's Trippin'* (Fremantle: Fremantle Arts Centre Press, 2006).

imagination scholars Marjorie Taylor, Sara D. Hodges and Adele Kohanyi (2003, 361-380) discovered:

> Fictional characters are often experienced by their creators as having their own thoughts, feelings, and actions. The essence of this conceptual illusion is the sense that the characters are independent agents not directly under the author's control.

Taylor, Hodges and Kohanyi (2003, 361-380) provide convincing examples of IIA as described by eminent writers, including John Fowles, J.K. Rowling and Alice Walker, the African-American feminist author of *The Colour Purple* (cited in Taylor, Hodges and Kohanyi 2003, 361-380):

> Just as summer was ending, one or more of my characters—Celie, Shug, Albert, Sofia, or Harpo—would come for a visit. We would sit wherever I was, and talk. They were very obliging, engaging, and jolly. They were, of course, at the end of their story but were telling it to me from the beginning.

Another example of the IIA phenomenon appeared in *The Guardian* newspaper, in an article by George Saunders, winner of the 2017 Man Booker Prize for his novel *Lincoln in the Bardo,* where he described how characters he had created began performing as independent actors:

> The rules of the universe created certain compulsions, as did the formal and structural conventions I'd put in motion. Slowly, without any volition from me . . . characters started to do certain things, each on his or her own . . . these imaginary beings started working together, without me having decided what they should do (Saunders 2017).

Furthermore, in her paper *The Play of Research: What Creative Writing has to teach the Academy,* Creative Writing scholar Julienne van Loon (2014) states:

> My own experience of immersion . . . feels very much like an altered state, or at least a mode of thinking/being that is splintered or detached from other more normalised or cohesive understandings of time and selfhood.

Van Loon describes "the sense of one's writing being 'peopled' by others" (2014), and she draws support from Creative Writing scholar Paul Magee's paper "Is Poetry Research?", *Text Journal 13*:2, where the poet Alex Skovron claims "the writing is coming out of the writer, of course, yet in a strange way it also isn't" (Skovron cited in Magee 2009 and Van Loon 2014). What Skovron and Van Loon describe closely mirrors my own experience during the writing of "Capturing Chloe": that imaginative immersion in a historical epoch, while vicariously living inside the head of a fictional character, which can feel like an "altered state" (Van Loon 2014), or a hallucinatory episode. Van Loon argues for the importance of play and imagination as valid forms of creative writing research when she quotes feminist writer Helene Cixous from *The Newly Born Woman* (1975): "I become, I inhabit, I enter . . . inhabiting someone, at that moment, I can feel myself traversed by that person's initiatives and actions" (cited in Van Loon 2014). Moreover, in her appraisal of the phenomenon described by Cixous, author and creative writing scholar Jeri Kroll claims (2006, 197-209):

> As we immerse ourselves in the act of writing we become readers of what we have written, too, and are carried along in the flow, submerging our authorial identity as we 'let the work take over', 'let the characters have their heads', or their voices.

The experiences Cixous and Kroll describe may sound "illusory," but I agree with Van Loon that they are an undervalued and important element of creative practice research; however, it can be a process that is difficult to elucidate, quantify and defend within traditional academic research paradigms (2014). In her doctoral thesis *Relations of Power and Competing Knowledges Within the Academy: Creative Writing as Research*, Sue North also examines the "undervaluing" of creative writing in terms of its "knowledge" potential. North references Freud when she posits that "the 'whole host of things' a creative writer knows is drawn from the unexplored unconscious" (2004, 124), and, based on her extensive research study, concludes (2004, 256):

A creative narrative is a worthy contribution to the field in its own right . . .

creative writing can be re-evaluated as useful knowledge in a number of ways, not least

in terms of the importance of cultural value to the whole social field.

When reflecting on my doctoral thesis, comprising both a creative and exegetical component, I suggest "Capturing Chloe" contributes new knowledge "in its own right" (2004, 256) by recontextualising and reinterpreting the cultural significance of Jules Lefebvre's *Chloe* in a fictional remaking of the painting's complex historicity.

Researching Historical Fiction

Dream visions, IIA and the role of imagination in creative writing research are not the central themes of this exegesis; however, they played a significant role during the research and development of "Capturing Chloe," and were an integral element of the creative writing methodology which produced the production component of this thesis. Initially, I was reluctant to reveal that "Capturing Chloe" had emerged from something as ephemeral as a dream, concerned that creative writing scholars would consider my admission naive, or even worse, disingenuous. Nevertheless, on deeper reflection, I realised it would be unethical to dismiss the origins of my doctoral research project, because, had I ignored the dream, rather than responding to it intuitively, "Capturing Chloe" and this exegesis on the narrative possibilities of Jules Lefebvre's *Chloe* could not have been realised. In *Researching Creative Writing,* Jen Webb explores the epistemological challenges of creative writing research as experienced within the Academy. Building on the work of nineteenth-century philosopher Auguste Comte, Webb discusses what could be considered rigorous or "valid" approaches to creative writing research, methodologies that can withstand critical interrogation and "vindicate" the knowledge potential of creative writing research within scientific scholarly paradigms. While acknowledging that knowledge drawn from reliable sources, and

reinforced by a rational argument and empirical evidence, are the approaches "most likely to be discussed, described and reported in a research thesis" (Webb 2015, 65-66), the role of intuition during scholarly research tends to be undervalued. Moreover, Alex Seago's study into effective research methodologies for postgraduate students working in creative disciplines found "the process of discovery in much successful research work is, in reality, a combination of rigorous methodology *and* the following up of intuitive, imaginative 'hunches'" (Seago 1995, 5), a position supported by Jeri Kroll and Graeme Harper's claim that "creative writing involves imagination, practice and critical engagement, working together, questioning and supporting each other (2013, 1-13).

In her non-fiction book *Searching for the Secret River,* Kate Grenville meditates on the reasons why she rejected a sole reliance on "verifiable" historical records when creating characters and scenarios in her seminal novel *The Secret River.* Grenville describes the discovery of two letters while she was researching at the Public Records Office in London—the first letter had been written by a condemned man, William Boon, and the second letter by a General Watson to Lord Hawkesbury appealing, on Boon's behalf, for clemency. Grenville shared the visceral reaction she experienced as she began copying the words from William Boon's letter ([2006] 2007a, 46):

> It seemed I was re-living his anguish. The poor man's thoughts were all over the place, from God to the price of a horse and cart in the same moment. I could hear the sweaty terror of what was happening, the panic to end this bad dream, the desperate effort to think clearly.

Grenville eloquently demonstrates the way in which a two-hundred-year-old letter, a letter written in the desperate voice of a common man facing his execution, allows the reader to "experience" his tragic fate on a deeply human level. This, of course, begs the question: would the terrible nuances and intensity of William Boon's experience have been included in the official ledger entry recording his execution? To create an

immersive picture of historical figures and events, Grenville implies that a writer of historical fiction should not rely solely on the lists of names, dates and facts they encounter in official records, but rather, a more nuanced and empathetic picture of past human experience may be gained by reading personal letters, memoirs and diaries, texts which reveal and share the intimate thoughts and lived experience of individuals from earlier periods. William Boon's heartfelt letter gave Grenville entre to the inner-turmoil of his terrible story, allowing her to imagine, in the "here and now" ([2006] 2007a, 47), how it may have "felt" to live through Boon's times, the fear and terror of facing death with only the slimmest hope of clemency. A slim hope that depended on his own letter of appeal and a reference from a benevolent general being forwarded by "some minion of Lord Hawkesbury . . . to the original trial judge", a public officer far removed from the everyday trials and tribulations of a common working-class Englishman ([2006] 2007a, 47):

> All the way back to the hotel on the tube it was as if William Boon was beside me, a living, speaking man. My search for facts about Wiseman had been fruitless. They were there, somewhere, and if I knew more about how to look, I might even have found them. But my meeting with William Boon was telling me I didn't have to approach the past in a forensic frame of mind. I could *experience* the past—as if it were happening here and now.

Grenville's assertion that she could "experience" the past imaginatively provoked an articulate but strident response from the eminent historian Inga Clendinnen in her essay "The History Question: Who Owns the Past?" After considering Grenville's comments about the historical research she conducted for *The Secret River*, Clendinnen formed the assumption that Grenville believed authors of historical fiction were able to present a more nuanced and empathetic picture of past human experience than academically trained historians: "Grenville sees her novel as a work of history sailing triumphantly

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beyond the constrictions of the formal discipline of history writing (Clendinnen 2006, 1-72). However, in an essay responding to Clendinnen's critique, and similar criticisms from Mark McKenna in his essay "Writing the Past," Grenville disputed both these historians' assertions that she had claimed to "have written history" (Grenville 2007b, 66-72):

> Here it is in plain words: I don't think *The Secret River* is history—it's a work of fiction. Like much of fiction it had its beginnings in the world, but those beginnings have been adapted and altered to various degrees for the sake of the fiction.

Although my exegesis explores the complexities of reimagining and remaking *Chloe,* a late-nineteenth century French painting, and the importance of understanding the historical background of the artwork and the individuals involved in its creation, this thesis is not primarily concerned with the ongoing "history wars" debate. Like Grenville's novel *The Secret River*, "Capturing Chloe" is essentially a work of fiction, but a work of fiction that would not have been possible without carefully researched narratives written by eminent historians including Hollis Clayson, Gay Gullickson, John Merriman, Bertrand Taithe, Steven Naifeh and Gregory White Smith, Jan Critchett, Lieut.-Colonel A. T. Paterson, and many others whose work will be acknowledged at various points in this exegesis. In his classic magnum opus *Truth and Method,* the German philosopher Hans-Georg Gadamer considered the paradoxical challenges a researcher faces when attempting to interpret and gain meaning from historical sources, "for what is true of the written sources, that every sentence in them can be understood only from its context, is also true of their content" (Gadamer 1975, 156). Consequently, to gain a comprehensive understanding of *Chloe*'s historical background, and the painting's impact on a range of Australian viewers, the close analysis and comparison of a diverse range of textual artefacts was integral to my recontextualising of *Chloe*'s

historicity in this doctoral project. Additionally, an eclectic quilt-making[10] methodology involving the piecing together of clues combined with my intuitive interpretations of the gaps between them, culminated in a reimagining and remaking of myths in my novel "Capturing Chloe."

Structure of the Exegesis

The exegetical component of the thesis comprises four chapters, including this introductory chapter outlining my creative writing research and methodology. In Chapter Two, I discuss the research I conducted into the historicity of Jules Lefebvre's *Chloe* and the ways my discoveries shaped and informed the creative component of this thesis. Analysis of key texts also recuperated valuable female perspectives on the lived-experience of proletarian Parisian women in the years preceding and during *Chloe*'s creation. In *Paris in Despair* (2002), Hollis Clayson discusses the diversity of artwork produced during the winter Siege of Paris (1870-71) and the suffering portrayed in these images inspired scenarios in "Capturing Chloe." Similarly, the memoirs of the "Red Virgin" Louise Michel revealed the courage of proletarian women during the 1871 civil war in Paris. Michel's "female" perspective of the revolution and its violent oppression by government forces, painted a picture of the brutality *Chloe*'s model may have witnessed during her teenage years. Imagining how these traumatic events may have affected her, informed aspects of her character and scenarios in "Capturing Chloe." The importance of Anglo-Irish writer George Moore's oeuvre to my doctoral thesis is also introduced in this chapter, particularly the significance of his memoirs and the insights they provide on the artists and writers who inhabited the milieu in which *Chloe* was

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[10] American author Janet Burroway describes "quilting" as taking the "kernel of the thing you are going to write, and you continue to doodle and noodle around it, seeing what will emerge." See *Imaginative Writing,* New York: Penguin, 210-222.

created. Likewise, the significance of articles published by the American journalist Lucy Hamilton Hooper is discussed, including information Jules Lefebvre shared with her about the character and fate of *Chloe*'s model, details which inspired my reimagining of the young woman. In Chapter Two, I also discuss some of the letters Vincent van Gogh wrote when he was a young gallery attendant in Paris between 1874 and 1876. These letters were invaluable during the writing of "Capturing Chloe," particularly Van Gogh's descriptions of the artworks at the 1875 Paris Salon where *Chloe* was first exhibited. In the latter pages of Chapter Two, I discuss the historical research I conducted for the Australian World War 1 thread of "Capturing Chloe," including *Chloe*'s impact on Australian soldiers and the government policies that actively encouraged Australian women to send their men to war.

Chapter Three focuses on the origins of *Chloe* myths and the ways these mythologies have contributed to perceptions of the painting and the identity of Lefebvre's model. Felipe Fernandez-Armesto, Marina Warner and Stephen Knight inform a discussion on the way myths evolve to mirror the mores of a culture, and why myths about women, historically, tend to be constrained by limiting stereotypes (Fernandez-Armesto 2004, vi; Warner 1981, 3; Knight 2015, 1). Interrogating the veracity of *Chloe* myths was a crucial aspect of my creative writing research, and this filtering of apparent truths from uncertain allusions informed my reimagining of *Chloe*'s model in "Capturing Chloe." The work of art historian Frances Borzello demystified the stereotypes assigned to artist models in the nineteenth-century, and the role of social class and gender in these perceptions. Borzello's work was particularly valuable when contextualising claims about *Chloe*'s model published in colonial newspapers in the late-nineteenth-century, and also George Moore's reminiscences of "Lefebvre's *Chloe*" and Lefebvre's claim about her links with "low confederates" (Hooper 1876, 220-221). A focus on artist model stereotypes informs my discussion of

Tracy Chevalier's bestselling novel *Girl with a Pearl Earring* (1999), and Chevalier's characterisation of Vermeer's working-class model Griet, particularly in the context of historical verisimilitude in a work of fiction. Chapter Three concludes with an examination of Jules Lefebvre's character and his political ideology, and whether the popular myth about his love affair with *Chloe*'s model may have stemmed from reductive stereotypes of female artist models.

Chapter Four explores the significance of George Moore's memoirs and the clues they may provide about the identity of *Chloe*'s model. This section reviews Moore's oeuvre and includes a biographical profile of the writer. Moore's propensity for fictionalising his own identity, and that of his compatriots, precedes an analysis of his autobiographical story "The End of Marie Pellegrin" (1906) and also an anecdote he replicated in his later memoir *Hale and Farewell! Vale* (1914). According to Moore, his friend Louis Welden Hawkins once associated with "Lefebvre's Chloe," and insights into Hawkins's political ideology may support the artist's claim that his model had links with "low confederates" (Hooper 1876, 220-221). Based on my research, it appears possible that Lefebvre's model may have been Marie Pellegrin, the beautiful card-playing rebel George Moore reminisced about in his memoirs, a young woman who not only loved the *voyous* (thugs) of Montmartre, but was also the intimate friend of Victorine Meurent, the model for Manet's *Olympia* (1863). The 1870s were oppressive years in Paris, particularly for the women of Montmartre who were pilloried for the pivotal role they played in the formation of the Paris Commune (1871). By challenging mythologies which have neglected the political, social and artistic milieu in Paris leading up to *Chloe*'s creation, Chapter Four shines new light on Lefebvre's masterpiece and the multifarious life, and ultimate fate, of his young Parisian model.

In the conclusion of my exegesis, I discuss the challenges I experienced during the rendering of Jules Lefebvre's *Chloe* in a work of fiction. I also include examples of

the painting's impact on individual viewers, examples which establish *Chloe*'s mythic status within the context of Australian culture. This section leads to a concluding discussion on the creation of "Capturing Chloe," and how drawing on a solid foundation of historical research, and responding intuitively to my discoveries, allowed me to recuperate and reimagine the lived-experience of *Chloe*'s model in a fictional context.

The following chapter of the exegesis, *Researching and Remaking Chloe Narratives,* elucidates the immersive process of historical research and textual analysis which enabled me to reinterpret myths and preconceptions about Jules Lefebvre's *Chloe,* and the Parisian model who sat for the painting.

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Researching and Remaking Chloe Narratives

My research into the historical origins of Jules Lefebvre's *Chloe,* and analysis of the diverse range of material I discovered, informed the historical and political context for my novel length manuscript "Capturing Chloe." In this chapter, I discuss textual artefacts which offered insights into the Parisian world of Jules Lefebvre and the model who sat for *Chloe*. My research revealed interesting echoes between the warfare associated with the painting's history, and *Chloe*'s manifestation as a "mythic war maiden" to generations of Australian servicemen. Ultimately, it was a fusion of historical research and an intuitive remaking of *Chloe* narratives, which led to new interpretations and understandings of one of Melbourne's most celebrated cultural icons and the demystifying of entrenched myths about the model who sat for the painting.

When Ann Heilmann and Mark Llewellyn studied the "growing trend towards historical fiction in women's writing" (2004, 137-152) they found:

> The immediacy of the historical to the contemporary, of the need for women to redress
> . . . the past—a female past either outside of or silent within the male tradition—in order
> to look to the past, past the present and towards the future, is an essential function of the
> women's historical novel.

The untold "female past" of Lefebvre's *Chloe* was the inspiration for this doctoral project. Who was the "voiceless" female Lefebvre once painted so masterfully, this enigma whose lived-experience remains locked in the "great dark book" of history (Gadamer 1875, 156)? Over the decades myriad myths have been inscribed on her naked body, but my rendering of untold *Chloe* stories would be filtered through a female lens, as I reimagined the iconic painting in a work of historical fiction.

The Narrative Potential of a Great Artwork

During a curator presentation on the *First Cloud* (1887), a painting by the English artist William Quiller Orchardson, Dr Ted Gott, Senior Curator of International Art at the National Gallery of Victoria, shared his personal reflections on the narrative potential of a great artwork (Gott 2015):

> . . . this is what I love about great works of art, at base entry level we're absorbed in a beautiful piece of painting, a wonderful narrative even if we don't know what the story is, you are looking at a bravura piece of creativity in terms of craftsmanship, painting technique and composition, but then the more you learn about the artist and the narrative in the picture, you can go off on another journey, so I like to think that great works of art are like a railway station, you can keep coming back to them but each time you can take a different journey, it just depends upon which track you switch to . . . the painting is the starting point and the journey that you take is where your mind chooses to go . . . so it's a never-ending journey.

The "railway station" metaphor Gott creates to elucidate the narrative potential of a great artwork, and the painting's ability to take its viewers on any number of different journeys, resonates with my intuitive responses to Jules Lefebvre's painting *Chloe*. Not only for the research journey and inspiration this beautiful art work has gifted me, but also in terms of where the painting is situated, opposite Flinders Street Railway Station in Melbourne. The metaphor also speaks to the myths *Chloe* has birthed over many decades, myths I have explored, and at times, challenged, in my novel-length manuscript "Capturing Chloe."

Chloe: An Imaginative Journey into War and Revolution

Chloe, the great artwork by Jules Lefebvre, is the primary text and inspiration for the themes explored in this doctoral thesis centred on the creation of a new

creative writing artefact. According to my research findings, the painting has ignited the imagination of viewers ever since its arrival in the Australian colonies. However, I suggest the gaze of male hotel patrons over the course of several decades, may have contributed to reductive myths about *Chloe*'s model and the painting's historicity. *Chloe* was created during an oppressive period in modern French history, only three years after the brutal repression of the Paris Commune, a "revolutionary municipal government established by the people of Paris in reaction to class inequality and France's humiliating defeat in the Franco-Prussian War" (Wilson 2007, 3).

In *Paris in Despair: Art and Everyday Life Under the Siege (1871)* Hollis Clayson explores the Franco-Prussian War through the lens of artistic imagery. Clayson reveals how the siege transformed artistic expression, encouraging innovation and fresh techniques during a time of trauma and upheaval. She also describes a disturbing "gastronomic" event that occurred during the winter siege, when Castor and Pollux, two "beloved" zoo elephants, were sacrificed under the pretext of feeding the starving population. In her discussion of the picture *Les Elephants du Jardin* found in Gustave Dore's sketchbook*,* Clayson claims the image "depicts the moment when an elephant is conducted out of its zoo shed to be shot by a marksman" (2002, 175), and, in her analysis of the symbolic inferences imbedded within the image, concludes (2002, 175-76):

> The elephant could be a figure for the privileged classes themselves. . . another kind of imaginary cannibalism may have lurked within the oft told (if distorted) tale of ordinary Parisians being linked to the savage image of the innocent, slaughtered zoo animals.

Figure 4: Anonymous. 1871. *Le Siege de Paris. Abattage d'un des Eléphants du Jardin d'Acclimatation.* print: graphic arts. Paris: Musée Carnavalet, Histoire de Paris.

Clayson suggests the killing of Castor and Pollux may have been "distorted" or perhaps a myth: however, accounts of the elephants' slaughter appeared in the Australian Colonial newspapers. One Paris correspondent recounted how an "explosive bullet . . . produced a terrible haemorrhage in the bowels" (*Australian Advertiser* 1871, 3) of Pollux, and that Castor had cried out in pain before collapsing "upon his knees" (1871, 3). The journalist confessed that one of his English friends had eaten Castor's flesh at a Parisian restaurant, and "when eaten with – or rather concealed by – sauce *Madere*" (1871, 3) the elephant tasted "delicious." He also commented, somewhat sadly, that the young elephants had delighted the children of Paris when they took them for rides around the Bois de Boulogne (1871, 3). I have my own treasured memories of riding a zoo elephant, inhaling its musky scent as we trundled around the zoo grounds, my mother's smile as she waved from the path beneath us. As I studied the confronting

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image in Figure 4, showing an executed elephant in its death throes, I could imagine Marie, the future model for *Chloe,* being traumatised by the slaughter of the elephants she had loved and ridden as a child, and how this event could influence her fictional life, and drive the radical choices her character makes in "Capturing Chloe."

The Siege of Paris ended when the Government of National Defence "signed an armistice on 28 January 1871" (Tombs 1981, 2), long after the poor citizens of Paris had resorted to eating dogs, cats and rats[11] in their desperate efforts to stave off starvation (*South Australian Register* 1871, 6). By late February 1871, the proletariat had completely lost faith in their government, amid fears a monarchy would be restored after French leader Adolphe Thiers "agreed to the annexation by Prussia of Alsace and Lorraine . . . and an indemnity of 5,000 million francs" (Wilson 2007, 4) to be paid to the German conquerors. When simmering disillusionment erupted on the streets of Paris, working-class women of Montmartre played a crucial role in the formation of the Paris Commune. The insurrection was vividly recounted by the radical schoolmistress and Communard Louise Michel in her memoir *La Commune* (1898, 164):

> Nous morts, Paris se fut levé. Les foules à certaines heures sont l'avant-garde de l'océan humain. La butte était enveloppée d'une lumière blanche, une aube splendide de délivrance. Tout à coup je vis ma mère près de moi et je sentis une épouvantable angoisse ; inquiète, elle était venue, toutes les femmes étaient la montées en même temps que nous, je ne sais comment . . . les femmes se jettent sur les canons, les mitrailleuses ; les soldats restent immobiles. Tandis que le général Lecomte commande feu sur la foule, un sous-officier sortant des rangs se place devant sa compagnie et plus haut que Lecomte crie : Crosse en l'air ! Les soldats obéissent. C'était Verdaguerre qui

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[11] Towards the end of November 1870 "a rat market opened up at the Place de l'Hotel de Ville, with rats selling for 10-15 sous, or one-third to one-half of a National Guardsman's daily salary." See David A. Shafer. 2005. *The Paris Commune*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 49.

fut pour ce fait surtout, fusille par Versailles quelques mois plus tard. La Révolution était faite.

(We had died, Paris had risen. The crowds at certain times are the vanguard of the human ocean. The hill was enveloped in a white light, a splendid dawn of deliverance. Suddenly, I saw my mother near me, and I felt a terrible agony; she was worried, she had come, all the women had climbed up at the same time as us, I do not know how . . . the women threw themselves on the guns, the machine-guns; the soldiers remained motionless. When General Lecomte commanded them to fire on the crowd, a non-commissioned officer from the ranks stood in front of his company and louder than Lecomte shouted: Butt in the air! The soldiers obeyed. It was Verdaguerre, who, for this fact specifically, was shot by Versailles a few months later. The Revolution was made.)

Michel's poetic imagery elicits the emotional intensity of the historic moment, the fearlessness of the Montmartre women as they use their bodies to reclaim the cannons Versailles troops had been ordered to recover. Her fear for her mother's safety is evident as the drama unfolds, as is her awe when the women's brave act turns the troops against their general. In the wake of the Montmartre insurrection, municipal elections were held in Paris on 26 March 1871, giving the Paris Commune the mandate to govern. According to David Shafer (2005, 108), the Commune was radical in its commitment to resolving inequities suffered by working-class Parisians, but it was also driven by socialist imperatives. In its first two months of government, it introduced "a number of measures for the benefit of the Parisian workforce" (Wilson 2007, 8), including "the reimbursement of debts" and "the provision of a state education for women and children" (2007, 8). However, by late May 1871, Commune leaders, suspected rebels and many innocent working-class citizens were being massacred by Versailles troops in a brutal government repression. The final death toll "may have reached as high as 35,000" (Merriman 2014, 253). Within the limitations of this exegesis, a detailed

history of the Paris Commune and its violent repression will not be possible. Nonetheless, the implications of the Commune are significant when considering the history of Jules Lefebvre's *Chloe*, because "the trials, executions and deportations continued until 1875-76" (Wilson 2007, 1), during the period of *Chloe*'s creation. Revolutionary women were portrayed in the press as lethal *petroleuses*, or petrol carriers, not only in France, but around the globe, assigning blame on working-class women for the destructive acts perpetrated by Versailles troops during the repression of the Commune (Gullickson 1996, 177):

> Many ascribed the fires to prostitutes. The *New York Herald* wrote floridly . . . about the 'loose women of Paris, those debased and debauched creatures, the very outcasts of society . . . knowing no shame, dead to all feeling . . .' who had set the fires.

In the Parisian chapters of "Capturing Chloe," the main protagonist is a young Frenchwoman, Marie Peregrine, who, after three years of enduring blackmail for her role in the Paris Commune, escapes from her uncle's servitude and agrees to model for Jules Lefebvre's *Chloe.* Marie is portrayed as the orphaned daughter of Noemi, a woman who loses her life defending Montmartre Cemetery during the repression of the Paris Commune, and my response to the anguish I intuited in *Chloe*'s expression, combined with a growing awareness of the trauma the model may have experienced in her girlhood, allowed me to recontextualise and reimagine her lived-experience in "Capturing Chloe."

Louise Michel: The "Joan of Arc" of the Paris Commune

Over the course of two research trips to France, I explored archives, museums and historical sites as I immersed myself in *Chloe*'s history during the development phase of "Capturing Chloe." This combined methodology of "in-the-field" investigation, and

analysis of the textual artefacts my research was unearthing, enabled me to make "the intuitive leaps and creative shifts . . . to heighten the artistic quality of the work and develop its knowledge potential" (Webb and Brien 2011, 186-203). During this exploratory research and development phase, I discovered the memoirs of Louise Michel, a revolutionary Montmartre schoolmistress who was a central figure in the Paris Commune. Michel's descriptions of the deprivations suffered by proletarian Parisians during the Franco Prussian War, and her poetic rendering of the Siege of Paris and the brutal civil war that followed (Michel 1981, 56-88), richly informed the creative development of the Parisian chapters in "Capturing Chloe."

Louise Michel was committed to social justice, animal rights, and she was a fierce opponent of the guillotine (1981, 25). Nevertheless, she also admitted she once dreamt of assassinating the French emperor, Louis-Napoléon Bonaparte (1981, 54):

> I would have killed my tyrant without feeling any distress. Millions would have been spared if he had died. Someone promised me an entrée to him; even to kill him I wouldn't have requested a formal audience. But I got that entrée only after Bonaparte had left for the war and was no longer in Paris.

Still, Bullitt Lowry and Elizabeth Ellington Gunter, the translators of Michel's memoirs, found "she never made any concrete plans to murder" (Michel 1981, x), and her "emphasis on the spontaneous uprising of the people kept her, indirectly, from demanding the use of terror (1981, x). Shortly after the Second French Empire collapsed on 4 September 1870, Paris was surrounded by the Prussian army. Louise Michel "continued as best she could to take care of her students on Rue Oudot" (Thomas 1980, 64), while her school served as an asylum for children orphaned in the war with Prussia. Michel's efforts to feed the orphans were supplemented by donations from Georges

Clemenceau[12], the neighbourhood doctor and acting Mayor of Montmartre (Thomas 1980, 64-65, Hyndman 1919, 14-79).

When I analysed Louise Michel's memoirs, and read about her life in Edith Thomas's excellent biography, I could imagine Marie, *Chloe*'s working-class model, being a protégé of this woman who believed "dream and action were the same, and, in her mind . . . indistinguishable" (Michel 1981, xii). I translated excerpts from the *Memoires de Louise Michel* (1886), and her poem *Les Vengeurs,* which she wrote to reflect "the fury of the revolutionary people of Paris" (Thomas 1980, 71-72). A few lines of these translated works were woven into the dialogue of Michel's character in "Capturing Chloe." Likewise, excerpts I translated from Georges Clemenceau's biography *M. Clemenceau Peint par Lui-même* (1929) are integrated into his speech in "Capturing Chloe" to imbue the narrative with historical verisimilitude.[13]

Figure 5: History Signage: Jardin d'Acclimatation, Bois de Boulogne, Paris. Photo: Katy Kell.

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[12] Georges Clemenceau, Prime Minister of France (1906-1909, 1917-1920).
[13] Jean Martet. 1929. *M. Clemenceau Peint par Lui-même.* Paris: Albin Michel.
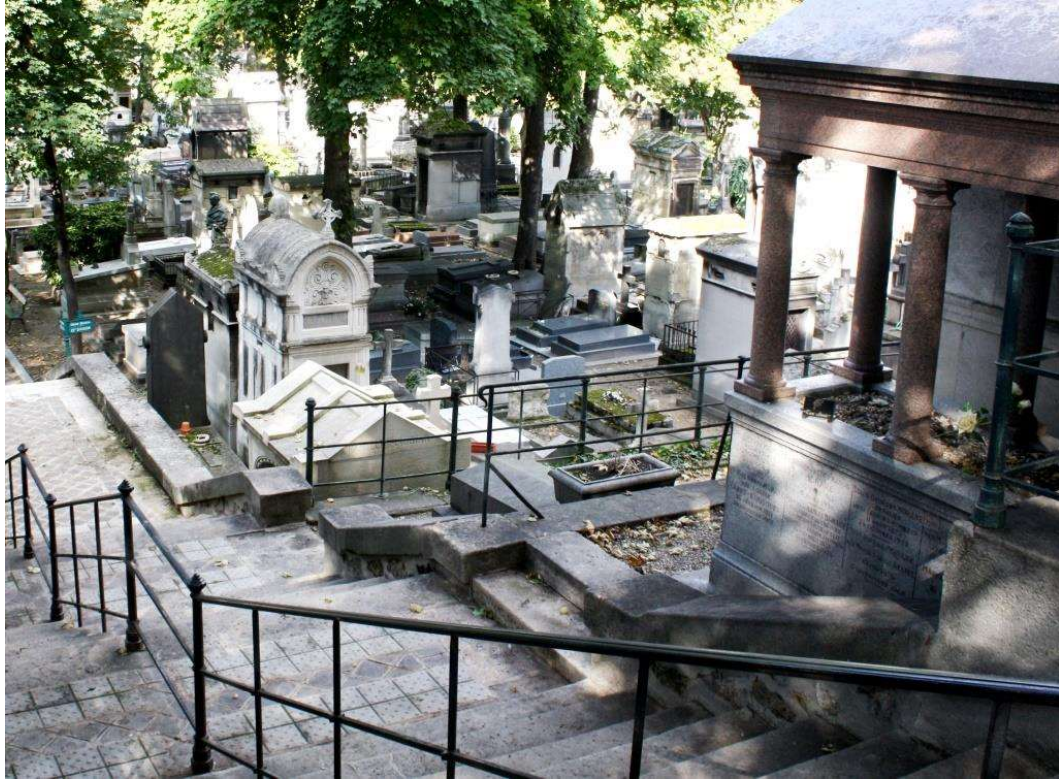
Figure 6: *Mausoleums at Montmartre Cemetery.* Paris. Photo: Katrina Kell.

Communards unsuccessfully defended the cemetery against the Versailles in May 1871.

Research on the aftermath of the Commune revealed a repressive regime of "moral order," a period when women, more often than men, were targeted by the authorities. In 1872, at a benefit for the Association for Women's Rights, a letter of support from Victor Hugo was "the highlight of the evening. Women, he argued, were virtual slaves. There are citizens, THERE ARE NOT CITIZENESSES. This is a violent fact; it must cease" (Sowerine 2001, 29-30). Nonetheless, less than a year after Hugo's appeal for the fairer treatment of women, the Association for Women's Rights was barred from holding further meetings (2001, 29-30). This dark chapter in modern French history, and the possibility that restrictive government policies may have impacted the lived-experience of *Chloe*'s model, inspired Marie's journey from oppressed teenager to artist model in "Capturing Chloe."

1874-1875: Writers and Artists in *Chloe*'s Paris—George Moore, Paul Verlaine, and Louis Welden Hawkins

According to my research findings, the Anglo-Irish writer George Moore (1852-1933) and his artist friend Louis Welden Hawkins (1949-1910) are the only individuals, other than Jules Lefebvre, who are known to have associated with *Chloe*'s model (Moore [1888] 1872, 129; Frazier 2000, 489 n.). Consequently, I was inspired to create fictional characters to represent both Moore and Hawkins in "Capturing Chloe." I also drew on Moore's reminiscences of bohemian Paris as I created settings and scenarios in the novel, and wove his appreciation of Paul Verlaine's poetry into the narrative as a bridging device between the Australian and Parisian sections of "Capturing Chloe." During 1874 and 1875, the period of *Chloe*'s creation, Moore and Hawkins were both art students of Jules Lefebvre at the Académie Julian in Paris. Moore described his friend Hawkins as "not only tall, strong, handsome, and beautifully dressed . . . but he could speak French like a native" (Moore [1888] 1972, 58). In his memoir *Confessions of a Young Man* (1888), Moore fictionalised Hawkins "as the dashing Marshall" (Koval 2010, 13), and used the pseudonym "Edwin Dayne" to portray himself in the book's first English edition. However, in subsequent versions of his memoir, Moore elected to use his own name, as he believed "sincerity is the soul of confession" (Dick 1972, 2). Moore's descriptions of his life in Paris during the mid-1870s, and what he reveals about an "exciting and fertile period of French intellectual history" (1972, 3), were crucial to my reimagining and recontextualising of Lefebvre's *Chloe* in a work of fiction. When Moore abandoned art lessons at the Académie Julien, evidently due to a lack of talent, he engrossed himself in the writings of Hugo, Gautier, Turgueneff and Baudelaire, and modern French poets including Mallarme, Verlaine, Rimbaud and Coppée (Moore [1888] 1972, 93-117). The poetry of symbolist poet Paul Verlaine left

an indelible impression on the young writer, so much so, that he dedicated an entire chapter to Verlaine in *Impressions and Opinions* (1891), a book of art and literary criticism. Describing his only encounter with the troubled poet, Moore wrote "Verlaine is of all men of genius . . . the least fitted to defend himself in the battle of life" (Moore 1891, 99), and he was shocked by the appalling conditions and the debauched state he found the poet in (1891, 103):

> In a dark corner, at the end of a narrow passage . . . we discovered a door. We knocked. A voice made itself heard. We entered and saw Verlaine. The terrible forehead, bald and prominent, was half covered by a filthy nightcap, and a nightshirt full of the grease of the bed covered his shoulders; a stained and discoloured pair of trousers were hitched up somehow about his waist. He was drinking wine at sixteen sous the litre.

Moore speculated that Verlaine may have been blind to his squalid surroundings, and that writing, for the poet, was essentially an "unconscious" process. On the day of his visit, Verlaine had given Moore "an abominable description . . . of the sonnet he was pondering" (1891, 105), but later, when he sent Moore's friend the poem for review, it was "a most divinely beautiful sonnet" (1891, 105). To emphasise his point, Moore quoted the last six lines of *Parsifal*, the poem Verlaine had written in response to Wagner's opera *Parsifal* (Booth 2015, 139-141).

As I wrote the narrative of "Capturing Chloe," I used Moore's appreciation of poetry to connect "Dayne" Moore's fictional character, with Marie, the model for *Chloe*. I translated Verlaine's poem *Clair de Lune* (1869), to create an echo between the Australian and French sections of the novel, as Dayne listens to Debussy's "best-loved piano piece" (McCallum 2017) at Young and Jackson's in 1916, and his thoughts return to the evening in Paris when he recited *Moonlight* to Marie at Afrodille's brasserie.

In the "Introduction" to her annotated edition of Moore's *Confessions,* Susan Dick claims it is "important to keep in mind the mixture of fact and fiction which makes

up the book" (1972, 5). There was a playfulness in Moore's approach, a creative flexibility, and as I reflected on the pseudonym he created to hide his identity, I felt "Edwin Dayne" would be an ideal name for the character loosely based on him in "Capturing Chloe." Likewise, as Moore had claimed in his *Confessions* that "Marshall/Hawkins" was involved with the model for *Chloe* (Moore [1888] 1972, 129), I created the name "Weldon"[14] for the character inspired by Louis Welden Hawkins. George Moore's body of work has informed the Parisian chapters of my novel, and his memories of a woman who may have been "Lefebvre's *Chloe*," will be discussed in Chapter Four "Mythologising Identity: George Moore's 'The End of Marie Pellegrin'."

Lucy Hamilton Hooper: A Female Perspective of *Chloe*

In her autobiography *Dust Tracks on the Road*, Afro-American novelist and folklorist Zora Neale Hurston described her writing research as "formalized curiosity. It is poking and prying with a purpose. It is a seeking that he who wishes may know the cosmic secrets of the world and they that dwell therein" (Hurston [1942] 1984, 175). Hurston's early research methods were unfulfilling, but when she finally took risks and talked to the people who held the stories and songs she was seeking, she found she could "show the wealth and beauty of the material to those in the field" and she knew "her job was well done" ([1942] 1984, 175-194). Hurston paved the way for Afro-American female writers and scholars, a woman who was prepared to venture alone into "dangerous" communities, collecting the lost stories and songs of her people. She also became a central figure "in the Harlem Renaissance of the 1920s, one of the most important black literary movements of the twentieth-century ([1942] 1984, x).

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[14] I adopted an alternative spelling of 'Weldon' for the character inspired by Hawkins. In early drafts of "Capturing Chloe," I used the name "Marshall," the pseudonym George Moore gave Hawkins in *Confessions of a Young Man*. However, as another minor-character in the novel is named "Marshal MacMahon," I changed Hawkins's fictional name to Weldon to avoid confusion for readers.

I include Zora Hurston's story in this chapter because her "face-to-face" research methodology reflects the approach of an earlier American writer, a woman whose articles provided a rare female perspective of Jules Lefebvre's painting *Chloe*. While researching with librarians in the archives of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France in Paris, I accessed an article by Lucy Hamilton Hooper, an American writer who resided in Paris at the time of *Chloe*'s creation. When I encountered more of Hooper's work in a University of Michigan digital archive, it became evident her insights on Parisian art and culture, and her revelations about *Chloe*'s model, could enrich and inform the narrative development of "Capturing Chloe." By reimagining and remaking *Chloe*'s model in a work of historical fiction, I was "asserting a voice: not *the* voice" (Heilmann and Llewellyn 2004, 137-152) of a woman whose voice is absent from the annals of history, because as Heilmann and Llewellyn found in their study of why women rewrite and re-read history (2004, 137-152):

> For all its playfulness . . . historical fiction has a strong political resonance especially for women and ethnic writers: the imperatives behind female and ethnic (re)writings of history are inescapably different from those of white men.

Heilmann and Llewellyn's finding resonates with my project: a rewriting of *Chloe* as an active female subject, in a work of historical fiction exploring the painting's unusual location at a working-class pub in Melbourne. For over half-a-century, the saloon bar at Young and Jackson Hotel where *Chloe* was originally situated was an exclusively male domain, and with the exception of the nude artwork, members of the female gender were not welcome. It was only in the latter years of the 1960s, that women began "invading a man's world to admire the famous nude" (Keep 1967, 14).

The exclusion of women in *Chloe*'s early Australian history led me to question whether myths about the painting may have derived from men's fantasies about the

sexual availability of artist models (Borzello 1982, 5), because, as renowned mythographer Marina Warner points out (Warner 1985, 37):

> On to the female body have been projected the fantasies and longings and terrors of generations of men and through them of women, in order to conjure them into reality or exorcize them into oblivion . . . Walking through Paris, you can see the caryatids speak; if you can unlock the silence of the stone, you can begin to see why they take the form they do, and what effect they might have.

By reinterpreting and remaking Lefebvre's nude painting, I was creating a "voice for the silenced Other" (Heilmann and Llewellyn 2004), in this case *Chloe*'s unidentified model, to recuperate "the unaddressed past" (2004), albeit in a fictional context. As I read Lucy Hooper's articles on the culture and politics of mid-1870s Paris, and the details Lefebvre revealed to her about the girl who modelled for *Chloe*, Marie's character in "Capturing Chloe" began to take shape in my imagination.

An American in Paris

Born in 1835, Lucy Hamilton Hooper was the daughter of a prominent Philadelphian businessman. Her childhood was a privileged one, and at nineteen years of age she married businessman Robert E. Hooper, and the newlyweds set up home in Philadelphia (Willard and Livermore 1893, 392). Hooper's literary talent was complimented by her commitment to social justice, and in 1864, on publication of her first volume of poetry, she donated one hundred copies of the book "for the benefit of the sanitary commission" (1893, 392). In 1872, after her husband suffered "financial losses in the stock market and from the Boston fire" (Simon 2000, 460), Hooper "entered upon literary pursuits for a subsistence" (*Philadelphia Enquirer* 1893), contributing articles to the "Lippincott's Magazine" while working as the journal's assistant editor (Willard and Livermore 1893, 392). Robert Hooper was so distressed by the decline in his personal

fortunes, he wrote a letter to Ulysses S. Grant, the incumbent American president. President Grant was responsible for enacting Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, and he was reputed to be "sensitive to the needs of the people" (*The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education* 2009/2010, 26-27). Following an awkward interview with the American leader, Hooper made this appeal for a consular position (Simon 2000, 460):

> I feel it to be my duty to make you an explanation. Since my troubles I have suffered from nervous prostration, & yesterday when you kindly granted me an interview, I was so very nervous I hardly knew what I did . . . I have spent several years in Europe & have been actively employed in business for 25 years, and feel I could do justice to any appointment you might entrust me with. I leave my application in your hands hoping for your kind consideration & favourable reply.[15]

On March 11, 1873, after waiting three months with no reply, Hooper wrote again to President Grant. This time his letter must have made an impression, because in January 1874, he was appointed Deputy-Consul General of the United States in Paris (2000, 460). When Lucy Hooper accompanied her husband to France (*Philadelphia Enquirer* 1893), she became the Paris correspondent for a number of American journals and newspapers (Willard and Livermore 1893, 392). In the preface to *A Woman of the Century* (1893), a book of biographical sketches of notable American women including Lucy Hooper, its female editors opined (1893):

> The nineteenth century is the woman's century. Since time began no other era has witnessed so many and so great changes in the development of her character and gifts and in the multiplication of opportunities for their application.

Willard and Livermore's vision for women in "every department of life and work" and "the marvellous promise of the twentieth century" (1893), has yet to be fully realised in

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[15] *The Papers of Ulysses S. Grant Volume 23: February 1 - December 31, 1872.* December 3, 1872: Hooper, Washington, D.C., wrote to Ulysses S. Grant.

the twenty-first-century (Iversen and Rosenbluth 2010, 169). However, Hooper, who published journalism, novels, poems, art criticism, plays and translations, achieved remarkable success for a female writer in the late-nineteenth-century.

Figure 7: Anonymous. n.d. *Lucy Hamilton Hooper.* photograph.

Reproduced in *A Woman of the Century: Leading American Women in all Walks of Life.*

As the Hoopers embraced their new life in France, they became popular figures in the American colony, regularly welcoming visitors to Paris into their home, whatever their political persuasions (*Chicago Tribune* 1886, 6). Lucy Hooper's first year in Paris was a productive one. Her pieces on Parisian life and culture appeared regularly in American

journals and newspapers, including an article about her meeting with Victor Hugo, the writer who was her "favourite among all modern authors" (Hooper 1874a, 202-205). Hooper praised the "self-revealing" nature of Hugo's poetry, comparing his oeuvre to Byron and Goethe, and she admitted after mastering the French language she had "wept her eyes out over Les Misérables" (1874a, 202-205). Hooper's sympathy for the new French Republic was made transparent when she wrote of her "indignation" about the behaviour of the right-wing press and their attacks on Victor Hugo (1874a, 202-205):

> The manner in which party-spirit has led the Legitimist and Bonapartist press to attack the great poet in his lonely and sorrow-stricken old age . . . and now the shafts of party malice can find no better target than the sorely-wounded heart of France's greatest living poet, and the greatest novelist that all the passing centuries have ever given her. It is reported, and I believe with truth, that the reason that Victor Hugo refuses to allow any of his last-finished and as yet unpublished plays to be produced upon the French stage, is, that he knows the hatred of the anti-Republican part would cause them to eagerly seize upon so admirable a chance of wreaking their spite upon him, and the failure of the piece would be a foregone conclusion. 'I will not,' the dramatist is reported to have said, 'yield up the children of my brain to the mercy of hostile and partisan fury.'

In her first paper on the Paris Salon of 1875, Hooper sang the praises of Jules Lefebvre's *Chloe,* describing it as "one of the loveliest nude figures in the exhibition" (Hooper 1875b). In her second critique of the Salon, she claimed it was a "relief to turn . . . to the exquisitely pure and charming 'Chloe' of Lefebvre" (Hooper 1875c) after viewing the colossal painting *En Avant* by Betsellere (1875), which depicted the incumbent monarchist French president Patrice MacMahon astride his horse and brandishing his sword over brutalised warriors (1875c).

Figure 8: Betsellere, Emile. 1875. *En Avant!* oil on canvas. cote F/21/7645, fol. 5.
Paris: Archives Nationales Database.

Hooper's admiration for Lefebvre's oeuvre eventually led her to his studio (Hooper 1876, 220-221, Milner 1988, 127), and she revealed details of the visit in her "From Abroad" column in the *Appletons' Journal* (Hooper 1876, 220-221):

> Does any lover of art, in an ecstasy before some fine painting representing Eve, Venus, or some undraped nymph, ever question himself or herself respecting the probable fate of the model from whose living beauty the artist has won the charm of his picture?
>
> Chance has recently made me acquainted with the history of one of those radiant originals whose graces have been immortalized by art. When visiting the studio of the celebrated artist recently, I paused in admiration before the original sketch of that exquisite image of pure and girlish loveliness, the "Chloe," that was one of the gems of the last Salon, and that in photographic reproduction has proved so immensely popular.

I was intrigued by Hooper's interest in the identity of *Chloe*'s model, and also her acknowledgement of the contribution the model had made to the "charm" of the artist's painting. Hooper's prose is at times "flowery," reflecting the period the piece was written in, but her curiosity about *Chloe*'s model betrays a progressive outlook,

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considering women's lives, throughout history, have often been portrayed "through male-authored narratives" (Cooper and Short 2012, 3). Moreover, it was evident Hooper was a storyteller, her article unfolding like the script for a "play" as she shared Lefebvre's revelations about the fate of his young Parisian model (Hooper 1876, 220-221):

> 'The model who sat to me for that picture,' said M. Lefebvre, 'was but seventeen years of age; and so exquisite was her form in outline and proportion, that I was scarcely obliged to alter or idealize a single line. She sat to me during the entire winter, and in the spring I quitted Paris to travel through Holland and Belgium. On my return I found that the poor young creature was dead. She was a girl of more refinement and elevation of sentiment than is usually to be found among persons of her position, and, being in the hands of a gang of low confederates, they had attempted to force her into a way of life from which her soul revolted.'

The discovery of Hooper's article, and what Lefebvre had revealed to her about the identity and alleged fate of *Chloe*'s model, was a watershed moment in my doctoral project. Up until this point in my research, the only "first-hand" account of the model I had found was the anecdote in George Moore's *Confessions*, a story which offered no specifics about the woman's age or, indeed, her social status. Lefebvre's claim that she was seventeen, and also the timing of her death in Paris, also differed from the commentary on Young and Jackson Hotel's website. If Lefebvre's assertions were accurate, *Chloe*'s model was two years younger when he painted her, and the girl had died within months of *Chloe*'s debut at the 1875 Paris Salon. Lefebvre's comment concerning his model's "position" implied she was proletarian, a crucial detail during development of her character in "Capturing Chloe." My research also revealed that Lefebvre moved comfortably in privileged circles, while his model, if his claim was true, was entangled with "a gang of low confederates" (Hooper 1876, 220-221). Lefebvre's revelations were disturbing, but it was conceivable his words may have been

filtered, or even skewed, through Lucy Hooper's journalistic perspective. This raised some thought-provoking questions. Did the artist tell Lucy Hooper his sad story for a reason? Was he myth making in order to distance himself from his model's "dangerous" links with "low confederates" (1876, 220-221)? After I learnt more about Lefebvre's politics and his anti-republican ideology, I decided to explore these questions in "Capturing Chloe." Lefebvre's loyalty to Napoleon III and the deposed Second French Empire, and the criticism his portrait of the Prince Imperial attracted at the 1874 Paris Salon, will be discussed in more depth in Chapter Three of this exegesis.

Hooper's insights into Jules Lefebvre and the possible fate of *Chloe*'s model were not her only contribution to my project, her depictions of the Parisian winter and its impact on poor Parisians also informed the fictional manuscript (1876, 220-221):

> Snow, cold, and dampness have been the atmospheric rule in Paris for a fortnight past.
>
> It seems strange to hear of persons dying of cold, and of others fainting from cold in the streets, when the thermometer has never once sunk below fifteen degrees . . . But people here, and especially those of the lower orders, seem to have no idea of guarding against the cold by putting on extra clothing. The *bonne* and the *grisette* go out as usual with uncovered heads . . . and very few add so much as a shawl to their in-door garments.

Hooper exposed the terrible suffering of carriage horses in the inclement conditions, and she claimed the working horses of Paris had a much harsher existence than American horses (1876, 220-221):

> The day of the storm over three hundred horses slipped and fell, and many of them were so badly injured that they had to be killed. Most of these, of course, were those most melancholy of Parisian drudges, the cab-horses, but there were some valuable animals that shared the same fate, including the superb dapple-gray carriage-horses of the Russian Prince Orloff.

Lucy Hooper remained permanently in Paris until her death in 1893. In one of her American obituaries, she was described as a "brilliant Philadelphia woman who won literary laurels" (*Philadelphia Inquirer* 1893), and based on the diversity of her literary output, this was hardly an overstatement. Among the many articles she wrote in 1875, was one recounting her excursion into the Parisian sewers. Hooper claimed she "felt very much like Dante at the commencement of his infernal pilgrimage" (Hooper 1875a, 429-431), as she descended the "corkscrew" staircase, while "overhead, on either side, like gigantic black serpents, we beheld the huge pipes that supply Paris with water" (1875a, 429-431). In another article about the Les Halles Centrales markets, she described the "fabulously fine salmon" (1874b, 816-818), but she was appalled at the cruel treatment of the animals, particularly when she witnessed "hundreds of live rabbits . . . the poor, pretty, frightened creatures are being sold by the box . . . fastened with slats nailed across the box" (1874b, 816-818). She also challenged the negative stereotypes of market-women who were often portrayed as "fierce old harridans" (1874b, 816-818), and when I read her description of a "tall girl, proclaiming so eagerly the excellence of her fresh-gathered mushrooms . . . as perfect a specimen as one would wish to see of a low-born beauty" (1874b, 816-818), I could visualise Marie, the model for *Chloe*, that Parisian girl who Jules Lefebvre had seemed to imply was a "low born beauty".

Hooper's excellent paper on the "Art Schools of Paris" provided a wealth of information about the culture of the Academie Julian, the art school in the Passages des Panoramas where Marie is employed as a model in "Capturing Chloe." Hooper described the frenzied atmosphere at the academy on the day assigned for the hiring of models, when "the staircase leading to the studio . . . is invariably thronged with applicants of all descriptions and both sexes" (Hooper 1892, 59-62). She explained why "a good many young work-girls take to this occupation" (1892, 59-62), and she praised

the intelligence of an artist model who "can throw herself into the character and the circumstances of the person she is called upon to represent" (1892, 59-62). Hooper found the female students of particular interest, and she credited Rodolphe Julian as the pioneer of quality art tuition for women (1892, 59-62):

> I do not think that I have ever seen a more attractive picture than was presented by this studio at the moment of my visit; the groups of young girls, each diligently at work at her easel, the fair-tressed or dark-locked young heads turned with absorbed interest toward the model who formed the subject for the day, and the model herself, motionless as a statue, on the high platform in her graceful and unforced attitude.

Much of my research on this doctoral project is indebted to the work of Lucy Hamilton Hooper, a ground-breaking American woman who "contributed stories, articles and poems" (Willard and Livermore 1893, 392) on the culture, society and politics of late-nineteenth-century Paris, and shared her invaluable female perspective of Jules Lefebvre's *Chloe* and the painting's young Parisian model. However, it is unlikely Hooper would have been aware that the young man who was destined to become "one of the most famous artists in the history of Western Art" (Van Gogh Museum, n.d.), also attended the 1875 Paris Salon at the Palais des Champs-Elysées where she admired *Chloe* and other artworks.

Vincent van Gogh: A Young Hollander in Paris 1874-1875

In October 1874, when he was 21 years old, Vincent van Gogh was transferred from Goupil and Cie's London gallery to the company's illustrious Parisian headquarters. Vincent's Uncle Cent (Vincent) was a partner in the five-story gallery, a "grand empire-recherche style" (Naifeh and Smith 2011, 6) mansion located at 9 Rue Chaptal, only two blocks from Jules Lefebvre's studio on Rue de la Bruyere (Watson-Kell 2016). The Goupil and Cie gallery "commissioned reproductions of work by the most important

contemporary French artists . . . and published numerous engravings, lithographs and photographs over many decades (Verhoogt 2007, 144), and it was Goupil's who prepared the photogravure and reproductions of Jules Lefebvre's *Chloe* for the 1875 Paris Salon (Lefebvre 1875/78, British Museum).

After a second brief period at Goupil's in London, Vincent returned to work at the Paris gallery in time for the 1875 Paris Salon. In a letter to his brother Theo written on one of Goupil and Cie's Paris letterheads, Vincent praised a picture by the French peasant painter and poet Jules Breton (Van Gogh [1875a] 2009, 60):

> He has a beautiful painting at the Salon, 'The feast of St John', peasant girls dancing on a summer evening round the St John's bonfire, in the background the village with its church and the moon above it.

Figure 9: Breton, Jules Adolphe Aime Louis. 1875. *The Feast of Saint John.* oil on canvas. Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art.

Vincent was a great admirer of Jules Breton, particularly Breton's paintings of Brittany, and in the same letter to Theo, he promised to send his brother a copy of *Les Champs et*

la Mer, a collection of Breton's poetry ([1875a] 2009, 60). Around the same time, Vincent wrote a personal letter to Jules Breton in Courriers, sharing the story of a man, who, after living in England for 25 years, had returned to France to end his days (Van Gogh [1875b] 2009, n.p.):

> He loved France, Brittany especially, and nature, and he saw God in it; for that reason you should mourn him as a brother, that is why I am telling you about this life of this 'stranger on the earth' who nevertheless was one of its true citizens.
>
> Farewell, Sir, think of him sometimes.

The letters Vincent wrote in Paris between 1874 and 1876 were like an imaginary museum. They allowed me to "see what he saw, experience the way—as a young art lover . . . he learned from the art of predecessors and contemporaries" (Ruger and Wals 2009, 11). Vincent described the art prints he was collecting in meticulous detail, and he transcribed poems which had moved him. In a letter dated 6 July 1875, he told Theo about his home in Montmartre with its "little garden full of ivy and Virginia creeper" (Van Gogh [1875c] 2009, 63), and among the list he included of his latest prints, was a painting by Rembrandt titled *Reading the Bible* ([1875c] 2009, 63). Vincent was deeply religious during this period, which may explain why he "never mentioned a word about Impressionism" (Naifeh and Smith 2011, 103). Monet, Degas and Renoir and "a rebellious cadre of young painters" (2011, 102) had the Parisian art world in an uproar, and at an auction of their colourful daubs "the organizers had to call the police to prevent the melee from breaking out into fistfights" (2011, 102-103).

Sensitive and socially awkward Vincent was ill-suited to gallery life, so much so "the ladies of Paris who came to shop at Goupil's . . . called him "*ce Hollandais rustre"* (that Dutch rube) and stiffened with disdain when he waited on them (2011, 112). Lonely and homesick, he became obsessed with "the strange, sombre works of Matthijs Maris" (2011, 113), a Dutch painter and former Communard who lived close to his

lodgings in Montmartre. As an antidote to his loneliness, Vincent would go for endless walks through Paris, "often lingering over cemeteries" (2011, 113)". It was this detail about Vincent's behaviour which led me to "imagine" the scene in "Capturing Chloe" where Vincent discovers Marie hiding in a mausoleum at Montmartre cemetery. Since Goupil and Cie where Vincent was employed produced the reproductions of *Chloe* (Lefebvre 1875/78, British Museum)*,* and bearing in mind the gallery's close proximity to Jules Lefebvre's studio, it was easy to imagine that the lonely Hollander and the artist's model may have crossed paths in 1875, the year of *Chloe*'s creation.

Historical Research: World War 1

Historical research for the Australian thread of "Capturing Chloe" revealed why having "a drink with *Chloe*" (Fitzwilliams-Hyde quoted in Foster's Brewing Group 2000, 7) became a ritual for Australian soldiers involved in military conflicts, a phenomenon that inspired the Byrne brothers' encounters with *Chloe* in my novel. An unconfirmed number of minors enlisted in the Australian Imperial Force (AIF) during World War 1 believing they were embarking on a grand adventure (Australian War Memorial (a), n.d.). However, many eligible Australian men enlisted for more practical reasons. Some had been unable to find secure employment, while others joined the AIF as a means of supporting a family member. Harold Croucher, a 21-year-old from Yackandandah in north-eastern Victoria "assigned 40 per cent of his pay as a member of the AIF to his mother" (McQuilton 2001, 5), a woman who ran the local pub but still struggled to make ends meet (2001, 5). Eligible men who refrained from enlisting, either for ideological or personal reasons, were often labelled shirkers, and they risked being presented with a "white feather," the humiliating symbol of their cowardice (*Port Fairy Gazette* 1916a, 2):

> To the Editor of Port Fairy "Gazette."

Sir,—Some people are making themselves busy sending round what they call "white feathers" to the lads of Port Fairy. In some cases they are making mistakes in sending them to wrong persons. Young fellows may offer to enlist and yet not pass . . . Yet these "feathery people" – they resemble geese very much by the manner in which they stand in Sackville street and "quack" to any loose-brained individual who may come along— think they are doing something in sending "white feathers" to them. I wonder if these "white-feathered" idiots made any attempt to enlist themselves, or if the Red Cross Society receives their monthly contributions of woollens from them. I'll warrant not. Let them try and practice what they preach.—

Yours, etc.,

A SOLDIER'S NIECE.

The passionate letter from "A Soldier's Niece" demonstrates her aversion to the practice of white-feathering. However, many women participated in the shaming, and at public meetings organised by politicians, women were urged to encourage their men to fight, and to shun "the 'skulking poltroon' . . . what decent women would want to marry such a creature" (McQuilton 2001, 35-36)? Still, according to historian John McQuilton, insights into women's private experiences of the war, and their honest feelings about their men's participation in the conflict, have been difficult to ascertain (McQuilton 2001, 134). Nonetheless, the propaganda campaigns were effective, as evidenced in letters written by a woman named "Vera" and addressed to a young man named "Bob." Vera's letters, which she claimed had been lost, were published in the *Upper Murray and Mitta Herald,* and she wrote "I am a lonely country girl, and want a man to fight for me" (McQuilton 2001, 129). After an impassioned plea to see Bob uniformed in khaki, she concluded her letter with "Trusting you will take the manly step" (2001, 129). In Vera's second letter to Bob, she claimed she had induced his mother to sign the permission form so he could enlist in the army. She told Bob she was sending the form

to him, and should he still refuse to do his duty, he was nothing but a coward (2001, 130).

Figure 10: Australian World War 1 Propaganda Posters.

By the end of 1915, after the terrible losses at Gallipoli, the press portrayed mothers as sacrificial-goddesses—women who gladly offered up their sons for the noble cause (2011, 133). In a newspaper article titled *The Joy of Self-Sacrifice,* Reverend Rawnsley evinced the example of a French mother in his appeal for women to make the ultimate sacrifice (Rawnsley 1916, 50):

> Think of the brave mother in France who lost seven of her sons on the battlefield, one whom had won the cross of the Legion of Honor. She bade her daughter write to the one surviving soldier son, and tell him that she handed the decoration of his dead brother to him to keep. 'Say,' she added as her last word, 'say he is to do his duty.'

The character Abby Byrne in "Capturing Chloe" evokes the challenges women faced if they discouraged their husbands and sons from enlisting. Women were deemed

"unpatriotic" and "selfish" if they failed to embrace the "noble" spirit conveyed in this widow's letter to her son (1916, 50):

> Your father was killed very far from us at home, and I send you out now for this sacred duty of defending our dear country from a vile and terrible enemy. Remember that you are the son of a hero. My heart is oppressed, and I weep when I ask you to be worthy of him; but when you are sent to perform a great deed, remember not my tears but only my blessing.

However, women who felt like my character Abby were not alone. In July 1915, the Australian feminist and suffragist, Vida Goldstein, formed the Women's Peace Army (WPA) in Melbourne. Born in Portland, south-western Victoria, Goldstein was "the first woman in the English-speaking world to stand for election to a seat of parliament" (Saunders 1996, 180-191). Goldstein was strongly opposed to conscription and when the WPA published its manifesto in the Australian newspapers, its appeal was directed at mothers (*Woman Voter* 1916, 2):

> As the Mothers of the Race, it is your privilege to conserve life, and love, and beauty,
>
> All of which are destroyed by war. Without them, the world is a desert.
>
> You, who give life, cannot, if you think deeply and without bias, vote to send any
>
> mother's son to kill, against his will, some other mother's son.

Fearful that the WPA's activism would diminish the number of men enlisting, the Australian Prime Minister, William Morris Hughes, promoted "passivity" as the ideal characteristic of Australian womanhood, in what was a "a deft but only partially successful move" (Murphy and Nile 2017, 37-59) to further boost enlistment.

In the first chapter of "Capturing Chloe," when Abby Byrne emerges from her grief-stricken state, her behaviour is far from passive. I was interested in exploring an Australian woman's experience of grief during wartime, albeit in a fictional context, a

particularly complicated grief, because Abby's husband, who she had discouraged from enlisting, was white-feathered for being a coward. When Abby discovers the *Chloe* postcard her husband Bob has hidden, her grief conflates with feelings of betrayal, and her behaviour becomes erratic. In a study conducted in the early-twentieth-century, psychiatrists concluded that women were "particularly vulnerable to psychoneuroses and to involuntary melancholia" (Hirshbein 2010), and if they neglected their "natural" role in society "it could lead to problems" (2010). Aradale Hospital for the Insane, where Abby is committed in "Capturing Chloe," was once a repository for "problem" women who were confined, sometimes indefinitely, for a diverse range of perceived insanities including "melancholia" and "religious mania" (Clarke 2014). Abby's cathartic response to the *Chloe* postcard was a way of exploring her conflicted emotions about the painting, and in a newspaper article titled "'Chloe' Helps Soldiers," the jealousy *Chloe* inspired in certain women is made evident (*Young Chronicle* 1940, 5):

> 'Chloe' was a beauty in the nineties, and Mr Herbert predicted that after the women had seen her they would start exercising to get their figures as perfect as hers.
>
> Mr Herbert said for the past 32 years 'Chloe' had caused a number of domestic upheavals. Wives and sweethearts could never see her, and were inclined to get jealous.

Patrick Nicholas, an English-born photographer based in Orieto, central Italy, imaginatively explored *Chloe*'s symbolism to Australian soldiers in his photograph *Plume Fatale* (2009), part of the "Belle" series of photographic images inspired by world-famous paintings. Emulating the pose of Jules Lefebvre's *Chloe,* a woman clasps a white feather between her fingers, evoking the shame of men who were labelled cowards.
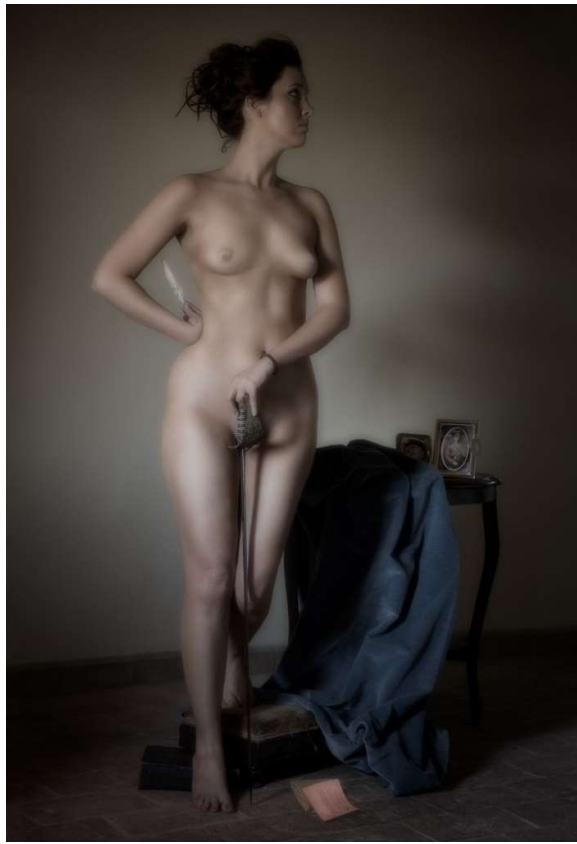
Figure 11: Nicholas, Patrick. 2009. *Plume Fatale*. photograph.

Patrick Richmond Nicholas: Art Photographer. http://photonicholas.com.

In the introduction to *Plume Fatale,* Nicholas explains the sword in the image belonged to his grandfather, a soldier who had fought in and survived two world wars. The soldier pictured in the photograph on *Chloe*'s table is 20-year-old orchardist, Lieutenant Percy Herbert Cherry VC MC from Huon, Tasmania. Percy Cherry was posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross for "most conspicuous bravery" after being killed by an enemy shell at Lagincourt, France in 1917 (Australian War Memorial (b), n.d.). Nicholas reimagined *Chloe* as "newly bereaved in the gloaming, the dreaded pink telegram at her feet" (2015), and he admits he wondered whether young Percy Cherry had "caught a glimpse of Chloe" on his way to the fighting (2015):

> She has since been admired by thousands of servicemen, Anzacs, on their way to the
> front since the First World War on, and no doubt for many a young man Chloe was the

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first and possibly last view of a naked woman. In fact, in an age when most young men had only the vaguest idea of what a naked woman looked like, Chloe must have been a revelation and one hopes appeared in their dreams as a beautiful night visitor to relieve the daily horrors.
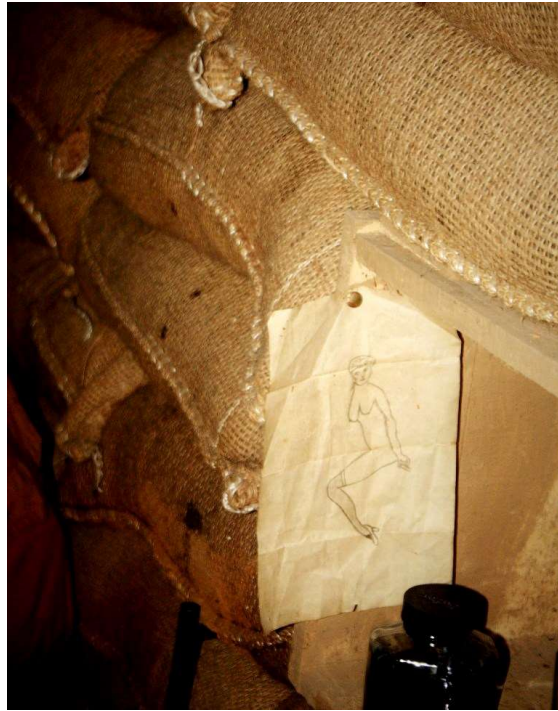
Figure 12: A sketch drawn by a soldier during World War 1. Photo: Katrina Kell. Albert: Musée Somme 1916.

During a field research trip to France, I visited the Musée Somme 1916 in Albert. It was a confronting experience, exploring the underground tunnels and life-like dioramas of World War 1 trenches and dugouts. Figure 16 shows a drawing of a naked woman found in a trench during World War 1. The drawing inspired a scene in "Capturing Chloe" where young soldiers, Paddy and Alf Byrne, share a figurine their father carved of *Chloe* with fellow diggers (Musée Somme 1916):

The men at the Front rarely caught a glimpse of a woman. In fact, women belonged to another world far from the scene of war. Many soldiers dreamed of women and drew pictures of them, in order to allow their thoughts to escape the horror around them.

As I emerged from the oppressive gloom of the Somme trench museum, the sound of simulated shell fire still reverberating in my ears, I was imagining how dreams of *Chloe* may have brought comfort to Australian soldiers.

Australian War Memorial Collections

In the World War 1 chapters of "Capturing Chloe," the Byrne family are situated in Western Victoria. This section of the novel explores the ritual of Australian soldiers enjoying a "good-luck" drink with *Chloe* before embarking on military conflicts. When I learnt of this ritual during my research, I decided to explore *Chloe*'s impact on Australian soldiers in the fictional component of my thesis. Therefore, to imbue the narrative with historical verisimilitude, I established that the AIF battalion my soldier characters Paddy and Alf Byrne would have joined was the Thirty-Ninth Battalion (*Port Fairy Gazette* 1916b, 2). When I contacted the Australian War Memorial (AWM) to make enquiries about this particular battalion, I was advised that they held a large file of letters written by Lieutenant Jonathan William Gration, a 25-year-old Victorian soldier who enlisted in the Thirty-Ninth Battalion in 1916. As the unpublished letters were not available via a digital archive, I travelled to the AWM in Canberra to access his file in the research library. The information Jonathan Gration shared from the Flanders trenches was an invaluable source of inspiration, especially his descriptions of the war in France, both during the fighting and while on furlough in Paris, details which informed the "Coda" chapters of "Capturing Chloe," and are included in the appendix to the fictional component of my thesis (Gration 1917):

Our Batt. had a stint similar to the one you know of and Lieut. Jewkes was killed, he was a young chap, very much like Har. And admired by all. I have not been too well but thank goodness I am feeling myself again. I tell you I mean to keep well, no matter what it cost. It is very cold here and our boys feel it very much, no matter how much clothes you put on you are always cold, but are we downhearted? No . . . it was a night last week I had diarrhoea very bad, and the snow was falling thick, just imagine sitting on a stool without any cover over it and about an inch of snow on it, well that's what happened me [*sic*] several times that night, of course it doesn't read bad but I tell you it was no joke.

Jonathan's 19-year-old brother Harold (Har) was reported missing in September 1916. Based on early letters Jonathan wrote to his parents from France, the family still harboured hopes that the young soldier was alive. However, after Harold's comrades submitted statements to the Australian Red Cross investigation, it became evident Harold had perished (Australian War Memorial (c), n.d.):

Lt. Gration went over in charge of a raiding party on the night of September 18th at Fromelles. He got hit by a bomb, and Wumyhn saw that he had his left arm blown off, was just going up to him and saw another bomb come which practically blew him to pieces.

Informant: Lce. Cpl. S. C. Shuter.

Likewise, the informant Private J. Watson, claimed "Private Gordon, 58th Battalion, A. Company . . . said he saw Lieut. Gration and Nash blown up by a bomb in the German lines" (Australian War Memorial (c), n.d.).

AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL   P08479.001

Figure 13: Studio Portrait of 2nd Lieut. Harold Victor Godfrey Gration.

Canberra: Australian War Memorial. AWM Accession Number PO8479.001.

Jonathan Gration was more fortunate than his younger brother. He survived the Great War and in October 1917, he received the Distinguished Conduct Medal for taking "a machine gun and thirty prisoners" (Paterson 1938, 144) in the Battle of Broodseinde. Textual analysis of Jonathan's letters, combined with an imaginative response to the experiences he shared within them, was a crucial aspect of my creative writing research for the World War 1 chapters of "Capturing Chloe." Jonathan shared first-hand accounts of the bewildering sites, horrific battles and daily deprivations endured by soldiers in the Thirty-Ninth Battalion. As I vicariously immersed myself in his impressions, Paddy and Alf, my fictional soldiers in "Capturing Chloe," conveyed "their own thoughts, feelings, and actions" (Taylor, Hodges and Kohanyi 2003, 361-380) as they reacted to the horrors of war and the scenes of carnage that confronted them.

My novel also includes the fictional Aboriginal soldier, Jack Adam, a young man from Lake Condah Mission in south-western Victoria who enlists in the Thirty-Ninth Battalion AIF. In the Appendix to this exegesis, I discuss the important contribution of Australian Aboriginal soldiers in World War 1, and the cross-cultural research which informed Jack Adam's character in "Capturing Chloe."

The research which I have explored in this chapter, and the insights I gained during close analysis and interpretation of my research findings, were fundamental to my recontextualising and reimagining of *Chloe*'s historicity in "Capturing Chloe." In Chapter Three, "Interrogating the Myths: Jules Lefebvre's *Chloe,*" I focus on the original sources and possible purposes of myths about Jules Lefebvre and the artist model who posed for *Chloe.*

3

Interrogating the Myths: Jules Lefebvre's Chloe

Since *Chloe*'s arrival in the Australian colonies in the late-nineteenth-century, Jules Lefebvre's painting of this female nude has been the subject of reductive myths which tend to diminish the cultural significance of the academic artwork. *Chloe* is an important emblem of the cross-cultural links between the Australian and French people*,* and a powerful symbol of femininity in a historically male-dominated environment. *Chloe*'s unusual positioning at Young and Jackson Hotel has also contributed to its iconic status. In this chapter, I will explore myths about Jules Lefebvre and the young woman who sat for *Chloe,* and also test their veracity against the discoveries I made during my research journey. The eminent British historian, Felipe Fernandez-Armesto, claims myths are the basis for understanding a "people," and "no one can ever make sense of a people's history without seeing it through their eyes" (Fernandez-Armesto 2004, vi). I suggest the same can be said when interpreting myths about *Chloe,* and the ways the painting has been received by generations of Australians. *Chloe* myths have responded to shifts in societal attitudes, because viewers' responses to the painting, and the pleasures or anxieties their responses betray, reflect the social contexts in which the myths are constructed and negotiated. Furthermore, as Stephen Knight asserts in his study on *The Politics of Myth* (Knight 2015, 1):

> The myths of a culture have two evaluative positions—they seem both distant and ethereal by not being bluntly realistic, but at the same time they are insistently present, and provide ways of thinking about the structures, values and human roles within the societies that live by and realise themselves through that culture.

Myths reveal the mores and traditions of a people's culture, filtering their proclivities through the lens of metaphor and story. Moreover, as a culture evolves throughout the ages, its myths respond to changing values and societal expectations. In her study on the myriad depictions of Joan of Arc, Marina Warner found "a story lives in relation to its tellers and receivers; it continues because people want to hear it again, and it changes, according to their tastes and needs" (Warner 1981, 3). Warner claims myths about Joan of Arc have evolved because "the history of individual women and women's roles has been so thin" (1981, 9), mirroring certain myths about *Chloe*'s model, a woman whose identity remains a mystery. By bringing a contemporary female gaze to Jules Lefebvre's *Chloe,* my novel-length manuscript "Capturing Chloe" and this exegetical chapter, recontextualises the painting's history, and the life of its creator and his Parisian model.

The Artist Model who posed for *Chloe*

When I first viewed the painted image of the model who sat for *Chloe*, I was struck by her youthfulness, her naked vulnerability. Perhaps it was my maternal instincts as the mother of teenage daughters, but I was deeply moved by the sad ambivalence I detected in her expression. I began to wonder about the her lived-experience and why she had embarked on a career as an artist model. *Chloe*'s model no longer had a voice of her own, no means of sharing her personal story, and I felt compelled to explore the origins of claims that had been made about her, claims that reinforced the reductive stereotype of an artist model as described by art scholar Frances Borzello (1985, 5):

> The fantasies about models divide into two: the model as the artist's sexual partner and the model as the artist's inspiration. More often than not, the sexual and inspirational roles are entwined. Fantasies focusing on the model's sexual aspect deal with her beauty, her sexual generosity towards the artist and her scorn of conventional morality.
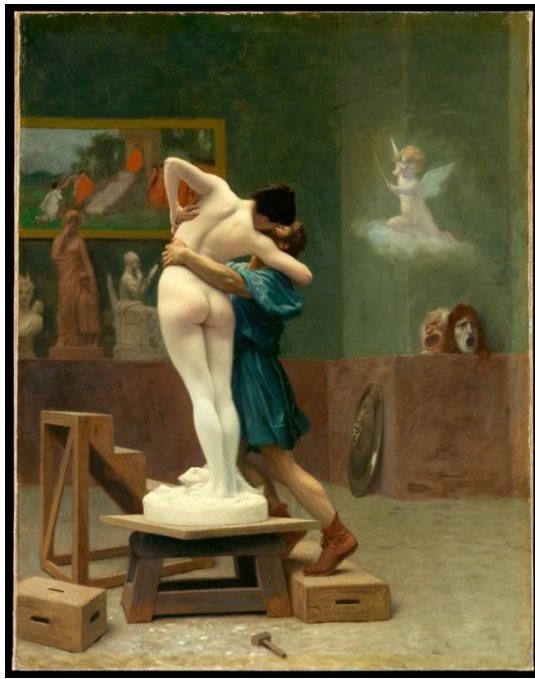
Figure 14: Gerome, Jean-Leon. 1890. *Pygmalion and Galatea.* oil on canvas.
New York: The Met Fifth Avenue.

When the 1883 NGV Sunday opening scandal "established *Chloe* as Melbourne's *femme fatale*" (NGV 1995), rumours about an affair between Lefebvre and the model who sat for *Chloe* spread throughout the Australian colonies. A newspaper article claimed *Chloe*'s model was a French prostitute (*Christian Colonist* 1886, 2), and the Reverend B. Butchers, a "well known and outspoken Wesleyan minister" (*Herald* 1887, 2), proclaimed an immoral woman was being "forced upon public attention" and "surely it is a greater affront against public decency to have the photograph of it thrust upon the public gaze in shop windows" (1887, 2). Throughout the painting's three-year period at the Adelaide Picture Gallery, *Chloe,* the art work, created very little controversy (Fischer 1985). However, the moral character of *Chloe*'s model attracted the scrutiny of religious viewers, and yet again, in his letter to an Adelaide newspaper, the Reverend Butchers cast aspersions on the model who posed for *Chloe* (Butchers 1887, 3):

I refer to the exhibition of "Chloe" in your Picture Gallery, which is calculated to blunt

the modesty of one sex and excite the evil passions of the other. With your permission, Sir, I would ask whether the trustees of your Gallery are aware of the fact that the "model" of this painting was a notorious French prostitute, who has since committed suicide? "Chloe" was practically expelled from the Melbourne Gallery on its intrinsic demerits before that fact was known. Will the people of Adelaide tolerate its display in view of the loathsomeness of its origin?

Reverend Butchers was deeply concerned about the corrupting influence of *Chloe* photographs, and the likelihood that the male youth of the colonies would frame pictures of the naked prostitute and display them on their mantelpieces (1887, 3):

> The sale of indecent pictures is prohibited in Melbourne, but as Chloe has had a recognised place on the walls of the National Gallery nobody could found a case for prosecution against anyone who might photograph her or reproduce her . . . This has actually been done. The lovers of the unlawfully indecent have at last got a picture to their mind . . . Pictures of Chloe have been bought and sold in quantities . . . Any fashionable larrikin with Chloe in his pocket is only "fostering a love of art" as he takes her out to look at her! No policeman can interfere with him.

Another complaint about *Chloe*'s model appeared under the title "Lay Sermons-No. XIII. CHLOE. By the Brothers Nemo" (*South Australian Weekly Chronicle* 1884, 5):

> Now, in all sobriety, the French picture of Chloe is utterly deficient in true artistic feeling . . . It is a pretty girl naked, neither more nor less. She hangs in the gallery there in North-terrace not to attract people to love art, or to worship the ideal, but for them to admire herself. She is showing her charms to the world, and for a pretty girl to show herself in that indecent fashion is by no means proper.

Figure 15: "Moralising Influence." Illustration. *Australasian Post,* August 8, 1957, 17.

The letter authors, in their condemnations, had personified a painted image. Lefebvre's

model was deemed a temptress, a "pretty girl" who exposed "her charms to the world"

(1884, 5), the very epitome of a "notorious French prostitute" (Butchers 1887, 3).

Furthermore, the Brothers Nemo believed the epigraph to Lefebvre's *Chloe*[16] (three lines of "Mnasyle et Chloe," a poem by Andre Chenier)[17], revealed "the true motif of the picture. Chloe is confessedly waiting for someone" (*South Australian Weekly Chronicle* 1884, 5). The brothers' choice of language is also interesting, particularly their use of the adverb "confessedly," implying that *Chloe* is self-aware. In her essay *Chloe: A Curious History,* Stephanie Holt (1994, 130) discussed why *Chloe,* the nude artwork, tends to be conflated with the model who sat for the painting:

> This discourse reveals male anxieties aroused by a confusion between truth and representation, between the image and the reality of woman's nature and woman's body. This confusion echoes that posed by art in general and by the nude in particular . . . Is Chloe the painting; the nude painted; the name assumed by the painting's subject; or the woman whose body is reproduced by the painter?

The conflation of *Chloe*'s model with the painting in the late-nineteenth-century*,* exposed anxieties about the public display of European art, particularly in religious sectors of Australian colonial society, where the role of art, traditionally, was "to exhibit moral purpose to the general viewer" (Holt 1994, 130), and "Capturing Chloe" explores these anxieties and the myths which have informed them.

The Artist Model in Literature

Marie Peregrine, an artist model, is the central protagonist in the Parisian thread of "Capturing Chloe." After surviving the Franco-Prussian War and the repression of the Paris Commune, Marie finds work as an artist model at the Académie Julian in Paris

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[16] "Il visite souvent vos paisibles rivages . . . / souvent j'écoute, et l'air, qui gémit dans vos bois, / A mon oreille au loin vient apporter sa voix. (A. Chenier, *Idylles.*)" (He often visits your peaceful shores . . . / I often listen, and the air, which whispers in your woods / Brings his voice to my ear from afar.) See *Salon de 1875.* 1875. "1298 – Chloe." Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 189. Gallica.

[17] Chenier, Andre. 1872. "Mnasyle et Chloe." In *Poesies de Andre Chenier,* 86-82. Paris: Charpentier.

after. Until the latter decades of the twentieth-century, artist models were rarely featured in literary narratives, except as minor characters. During the nineteenth and early-twentieth-centuries, female models were perceived as outcasts, particularly among conservative sections of British society, where working-class women were presumed uneducated and sexually promiscuous (Borzello 1985, 137). Fictional characterisations of male artist models, however, were not as sexualised as iterations of female models, and as art historian Frances Borzello found (1885, 138):

> In contrast to the treatment of male models, the spectacles of stereotype through which female models have been seen have blinded authors to the facts about them and blunted their imaginations as to their use in fiction.

In the initial stages of my doctoral research, the only "fact" I could ascertain about *Chloe*'s model, was George Moore's anecdote about Marie, the woman he claimed was "Lefebvre's *Chloe*" ([1888] 1972, 129). Moore arrived in Paris in 1873, two years after the Franco-Prussian War and the repression of the Paris Commune. The ramifications of the war and revolution are not evident in Moore's *Confessions*, but in a later memoir, *Hail and Farewell! Vale,* he recounts the time when his friend Louis Welden Hawkins was living with an ex-Communard named Vanderkirko. Vanderkirko owned a "small china factory" and he "had only just escaped with his life" (Moore [1914] 1933, 69-70) during the Commune's repression. When Hawkins fell on hard times, Vanderkirko offered the young artist an apprenticeship as a china painter ([1914] 1933, 69-70). As already discussed in Chapter Two, Hawkins, according to Moore, was involved with *Chloe*'s model, and he may have been employed by the ex-Communard during the period of *Chloe*'s creation. Hawkins was known to consort with dangerous criminals, and he liked to live "amongst thieves and ponces" ([1914] 1933, 69-70). Lefebvre claimed his model was entangled with undesirables, which raises an intriguing possibility. Perhaps the artist, Louis Welden Hawkins, was one of the "gang of low

confederates" (Hooper 1876, 220-221) Lefebvre referred to in his conversation with

Lucy Hooper. I began to imagine how the civil war may have traumatised *Chloe*'s

model—did she witness those brutal massacres, hear the death-cries of her loved ones,

what was her experience during Semaine Sanglante when so many in Paris perished? In

Women in the Paris Commune: Surmounting the Barricades, historian Carolyn Eichner

describes the pivotal role women played during the May 1871 revolution (Eichner 2004,

69):

> On April 11 and 12, 1871, an "Appeal to the Women Citizens of Paris," was posted on
>
> walls and published in most of the Commune's newspapers. The announcement
>
> proclaimed: "Paris is blockaded! Paris is bombarded! . . . Can you hear the canons roar
>
> and the tocsin sound its sacred call? To arms! La patrie is in danger!"

Women were urged to defend Paris and fight "for the long-term priority of developing

women's economic and social equality and independence" (2004, 70). Why had this

chapter in French history been so absent from *Chloe* mythologies? This was a story of

war and revolution, and of women's inspiring activism, as they challenged the class and

gender barriers that had limited their opportunities.

 In her best-selling historical novel *Girl with a Pearl Earring* (1999), Tracy

Chevalier attempts to challenge the stereotype of a female artist model. Dutch

housemaid, Griet, the central character of the narrative, achieves a degree of agency as

she assists the painter Vermeer in his studio, and in time, albeit reluctantly, she agrees

to pose as his artist model (Cibelli 2004, 583-592). In her paper, *"Girl with a Pearl*

Earring": Painting, Reality, Fiction, professor of art history, Deborah Cibelli (2004,

583-592) praised Chevalier's novel:

> The success of Chevalier's story is determined in terms of the extent to which she

constructs a compelling narrative that describes the personality of Griet and . . . the

novel also warrants discussion in terms of Chevalier's methodological assumptions and

her use of art historical and historical accounts of Vermeer's art and Dutch culture.

Chevalier's depiction of town culture in mid-seventeenth-century Holland and the

intimate workings of Vermeer's studio are effectively rendered. Her historical research,

although clearly evident, is woven subtly into the narrative. Griet's character also

evinces the discomfort of a working-class maid when she is requested to "play" a lady

in Vermeer's painting (Chevalier [1999] 2014, 199):

> It was not just that it would be impossible to hide from Catharina that I was wearing her
>
> clothes. I did not feel right holding books and letters, pouring myself wine, doing things
>
> I never did. As much as I wanted to feel the soft fur of the mantle around my neck, it
>
> was not what I normally wore.
>
> 'Sir,' I spoke finally, 'perhaps you should have me do other things. Things a
>
> maid does.'

Although Cibelli admired *Girl with a Pearl Earring,* particularly the depth of research

Chevalier undertook for the novel, she claims the character of Griet did not go far

enough when challenging a reductive female stereotype (2004, 583-592):

> Despite the insight we gain of the resourcefulness of the female protagonist, however,
>
> Chevalier does not have the character overturn female stereotypes or transcend her
>
> social class. Chevalier discusses Griet's nascent interest in art without making her the
>
> equal of Vermeer or of Dutch women artists such as Judith Leyster or Rachel Ruysch.

However, in defence of Chevalier's approach, if Griet, a working-class maid in mid-

seventeenth-century Holland, had been portrayed in the novel as the artistic equal of

Vermeer, or the female artists Cibelli references (both women were raised in privileged

families), Chevalier risked diminishing "the texture of truth" (Webb 2015, 17) that

enriches her historical novel. I was mindful of this dilemma during the writing of

"Capturing Chloe," as I balanced the realities of Marie's social class with her ambition of becoming a professional artist. In the Parisian thread of the novel, Marie uses the money she earns as an artist model to pay for "occasional" evening classes at the Académie Julian. In the mid-1870s, only women with wealthy parents or a benefactor willing to pay for their full-time tuition, could benefit from rigorous art training at the Académie Julian, and male students were charged far less than their female counterparts (Wiesberg 1999, 14). However, as Gabriel Wiesberg explains, women "did not want to remain mired in lowly roles where they would be relegated to decorating fans or ceramics" (1999, 15), a situation that I reflect in "Capturing Chloe" through the character of Marie's talented mother, Noemi, a resourceful working-class artist who decorates porcelain in a workshop by day, and supplements her income by selling the postcards she paints of exotic zoo animals. Victorine Meurent, who posed for Manet's nude painting *Olympia* (1863), began her career as an artist model and later exhibited her paintings at the Paris Salon (Lathers 2001, 371-373). Like the artist model Marie in "Capturing Chloe," Meurent attended "evening classes at the Academie Julian" (2001, 371-373). However, until the feminist art historian Eunice Lipton recuperated Meurent's work as a talented artist, this aspect of her professional life was often neglected (2001, 371-373). A possible link between Victorine Meurent and the model who sat for Jules Lefebvre's *Chloe,* will be discussed in Chapter Four of this exegesis.

Jules Joseph Lefebvre (1834-1911)

Central to my project, as anticipated in the last chapter, is the creator of *Chloe*, Jules Joseph Lefebvre. At the pinnacle of his artistic powers in the late-nineteenth-century, Lefebvre was a celebrated academic artist, a member of the French Institut and Commander of the Legion of Honour. Lefebvre's paintings of the female nude were world-renowned, and when he painted *Chloe* in 1875, he was already a recipient of the

coveted Prix de Rome for his mythological painting *La Mort de Priam* (1861) and the

Chevalier of the Legion of Honour for *La Vérité* (1870) "avec sa nudité éclatante et son

charme souverain" (with its sparkling nudity and sovereign charm) (Vento 1888, 301-

333). However, for a man who was a close friend of Sully Prudhomme, winner of the

1901 Nobel Prize for Literature,[18] and who, on two occasions, had painted the portrait

of the Prince Imperial (Claretie 1884, 344-367), Jules Lefebvre had risen from humble

beginnings. Born in Tournan, Seine-et-Marne, he was two years old when his family

moved to Amiens in northern France. As the younger of two sons, Lefebvre was

destined to take over the family bakery, but when his prodigious talent emerged, his

father encouraged him to train as an artist (Claretie 1884, 344-367). Based on my

research, it seems Lefebvre was a man of contradictions, the son of a provincial family

baker, who, once his talent elevated his social status, began to scorn the "low"

proletariat from his position of bourgeoisie privilege (Hooper 1876, 220-221).

Therefore, I was inspired to explore these complexities in his fictional characterisation

in "Capturing Chloe," complexities which inform the dynamics of his relationship with

Marie, the working-class model for his painting *Chloe.*

In the development phase of my doctoral project, I spent long hours in the

archives of Australian and French institutions, both on-site and via digital repositories,

searching for reliable information about the life and work of *Chloe*'s creator. There

were assertions about Jules Lefebvre's character I was eager to interrogate, including a

rumour about his alleged love affair with *Chloe*'s model, a story that was inextricably

woven into the mythology of the iconic nude painting.

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[18] Rene Francois Armand Prudhomme (1839-1907). Sully Prudhomme was a poet and essayist. His poetic works include *Impressions de la Guerre* (1870) and *La France* (1874). See "Sully Prudhomme – Biographical." https://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/literature/laureates/1901/prudhomme-bio.html.

Fact or Fantasy: Lefebvre's Seduction of *Chloe*'s Model

On the eve of her 100th birthday, Ethel Houghton Young, daughter-in-law of Henry Figsby Young, the entrepreneurial publican who purchased *Chloe* in 1908, shared a story about *Chloe*'s model with Australian journalist David Ross. Young was a nineteen-year-old bride when *Chloe* was installed at Young and Jackson Hotel, and she reminisced about evenings spent with her husband after closing time and "the painting that became a friend" (Ross 1983 n.p.):

> 'I used to think it was so unfair. I was so happy while Chloe was such a sad story,' she said. 'She fell in love with the artist, let him paint her, and then was jilted. He paid her for modelling and she used the money for a farewell party — and then committed suicide. So sad'.

Some years later, on her 106th birthday, the remarkably lucid centenarian shared a similar story with journalist, John Lahey, about evenings spent with *Chloe* (Lahey 1989, 5):

> 'My husband and his brother would take turns to count the money at night, and I would sit there with all the lights out except one. In the dim light, you could not see Chloe's background, and it looked as if she was stepping down the stairs. I loved to look at her like that. She seemed alive. She was such a beautiful young woman.'

Ethel Young's memories of *Chloe* were poignant and imbued with affection, and they resonated with the story on the Young and Jackson Hotel website. Ethel Young believed the young woman ended her life because Lefebvre rejected her, however, according to George Moore, "no one knew why" ([1888] 1972, 129) she committed suicide. In Moore's *Confessions* he claimed "some" had "said it was love" ([1888] 1972, 129), but he made no reference to an intimate relationship between Lefebvre and his artist model. Another account of the model's suicide appeared in the *Australasian Post,* in what

appears to be a derivative version of the Young and Jackson Hotel "poisoning by matches" story (*Australasian Post* 1957, 17):

> Slowly, she boiled the water in which she'd placed scores of match-heads — a poisonous variety then on sale in Paris, but since banned — purchased with the few pence that remained from her dinner party, and drank.
>
> In a little while death came.

Remaining true to the hotel's version of the tragedy, there is no suggestion of an affair between Lefebvre and *Chloe*'s model. Consequently, I began to explore my theory that Ethel Young's story may have originated in bar-room gossip, based on another memory the lucid centenarian shared with John Lahey (1989, 5):

> One other memory she carried away from Young and Jackson's was about the gossip.
>
> 'They say that women talk scandal,' she said, 'but most of the men take the scandal home to the women and they distribute it. I would be in the sitting room at the top of the stairs, and the men would drink below. I can tell you I listened to many very interesting conversations.

Young's claim about the male drinkers, and their propensity for initiating scandal, suggested the "interesting conversations" she had overheard decades earlier, may have been the source of the rumour about Lefebvre's affair with *Chloe*'s model. Young's story brought to mind an age-old cliché— the libidinous artist seducing his naïve young model—a stereotype the exclusively male drinkers may have projected onto the artist/model relationship. However, drawing on my intuitive response to *Chloe* and the sombreness of the girl's expression, it was a stereotype I was eager to challenge in my fictional rendering of Lefebvre's relationship with his model. As my research journey continued, I discovered other versions of the alleged scandal, including this excerpt from an article about *Chloe* published on the H2G2 website (Cafram [2003] 2011):

> The truth about the model, a young French girl called Marie, is the source of much debate. She was only 19 years of age when she posed for the painting, and some say she and Lefebvre had a love affair, while others say he refused to love her. Another story is that he seduced both her and her sister.

Further expanding on the above story, I found another version which claims Lefebvre married his model's sister (Nicholson 2015, 191):

> A young Parisian model named Marie posed for the painting when she was 19.
>
> She subsequently fell in love with Jules Lefebvre and when the artist married her sister, she was devastated. She boiled up phosphorus match-heads, drank the poisonous concoction and tragically, she died in terrible agony at 21. Or so they say!

In the above account, the "Or so they say!" disclaimer is noteworthy, because it implies, at least in part, that the story was inspired by "hearsay." This supports my theory that the original commentary provided by Young and Jackson Hotel, a story which appears to be a conflation of colonial newspaper articles and George Moore's "Lefebvre's Chloe" anecdote, may have been expanded and sensationalised over many decades as a consequence of barroom gossip.

Jules Lefebvre: The Man and his Politics

From the day *Chloe* made its debut as Exhibit 1298 at the 1875 Paris Salon, an annual French government exhibition held at the Grand Palais des Champs-Elysees in Paris (Salon de 1875), French critics have published their opinions about the painting and its creator. By translating these texts into English, some written well over a century ago, I hoped to open the pages of the "great dark book" of history (Gadamer 1975, 156), and gain insights into Lefebvre's personal character and the relationship he had with *Chloe*'s model. Mario Proth, a French journalist, writer and literary critic, wrote an

interesting analysis of Lefebvre's politics in his review of the 1875 Paris Salon. Quoting from a conversation he had overheard at the Paris Salon concerning the "Ossianic" theme of Lefebvre's exhibit *Rêve* (The Dream), Proth claimed viewers suspected the painting was an homage to the Second French Empire:

> Ossian n'est-il pas un des bardes qu'affété l'impériale rengaine? Je soupçonne donc M. Lefebvre . . . qui fit l'an dernier un si méchant bruit, je le soupçonne d'avoir comme involontairement symbolise en une facile et saisissante allégorie l'évanouissement lent, mais authentique, de rêve bonapartiste . . . (Proth 1875, 20-21).

> (Ossian, is he not one of the bards that the imperial regime honours? I suspect Mr Lefebvre . . . who made such a nasty noise last year, I suspect he involuntarily symbolises in this tranquil and striking allegory, the slow but genuine fading of a Bonapartist dream. . .).

Gaelic poems of the mythic warrior Ossian were collected and translated (and possibly forged) in the late-eighteenth-century by Scottish writer James Macpherson (Henshaw 2016, 197-209). In an analysis of the Romantic French writer Chateaubriand, and his response to the Ossian poems, professor of French literature, Colin Smethurst, discovered Napoleon Bonaparte's deep affection for the Gaelic warrior (2004, 126-142):

> 'Around 1800 . . . Ossian was not just a fashionable literary mode . . . Napoleon himself was an Ossian fan' because he was mainly drawn to Ossian's 'heroic, epic aspect'.

Moreover, supporting the insinuations Proth had overheard at the Paris Salon, and the notion that Lefebvre's "Ossianic" painting betrayed the artist's hopes for a Bonapartist restoration, Scots scholar David Hesse discovered (2014, 50):

> In 1811 Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres was commissioned to paint the 'Homer of the North' for Napoleon's bedroom at the Quirinal Palace in Rome, a painting now known

as *Dream of Ossian*. Napoleon Bonaparte (1769-1821) was said to be deeply fond of the Highlander and apparently compared Ossian to 'the whisper of the wind and the waves of the sea'.

As I translated and analysed the French art critics' texts, it became clearly apparent that Lefebvre's politics had attracted criticism at the 1874 Paris Salon. Translating the texts was more than a "fact-checking" (Webb 2015, 14) mission; it was an intuitive journey into the psyche of Jules Lefebvre and *Chloe* mythologies. Proth's review had revealed an embarrassing episode at the 1874 Paris Salon, when Lefebvre exhibited his portrait of the Prince Imperial, the exiled son of Napoleon III and his unpopular wife Empress Eugenie. Exhibiting his portrait of the young man the Bonapartists were hailing as the next Napoleon, had angered the critics who suspected Lefebvre was anti-republican. At the 1875 Salon, although Proth gave *Chloe* a glowing review and acknowledged Lefebvre's exceptional talent, he had to concede there was a measure of truth in the criticisms levelled at the artist (1875, 20-21):

> M. Jules Lefebvre, ex-professeur et portraitiste de celui qui ne sera jamais Napoléon IV, est un des jeunes talents que l'empire n'a, je l'espère, que momentanément gâtés!
>
> (Mr Jules Lefebvre, ex-teacher and portraitist of the one who will never be Napoleon IV, is one of the young talents whom the empire has, I hope, only momentarily spoiled!)

Jules Claretie, a contemporary of Mario Proth, also commented on Lefebvre's portrait of the "Prince Imperial" in an 1888 biography he wrote about the artist. Claretie was an eminent novelist, playwright and critic, and a Grand Officer of the Legion of Honour (Académie Français n.d.), and he suspected Lefebvre's political statement may have influenced art critics' assessments of the controversial portrait (Claretie 1884, 355):

> Au Salon de 1874, Jules Lefebvre exposait le portrait du prince impérial. Oh ! les sottises de la politique ! Ce que nous vîmes surtout alors, dans cette peinture, ce n'était

point la peinture même, c`était une manifestation de parti, et nous jugions mal, puisque nous ne jugions pas l'œuvre intrinsèquement.

Je voudrais revoir aujourd'hui le portrait de l'adolescent qui devait mourir en héros au Zululand. Lefebvre en a conservé, chez lui, une étude, - la tête seule - et c'est un chef-d'œuvre. L'année suivante, Jules Lefebvre exposait une Chloé d'un modèle exquis et une fantaisie dont retrouvais, l'autre jour, l'esquisse chez François Coppée : c'est le Rêve.

(At the Salon of 1874, Jules Lefebvre exhibited a portrait of the Prince Imperial. Oh! the foolishness of politics! What we saw then, in this painting, was not the painting itself, rather, it was a manifestation of the party[19], and we judged it badly, since we did not judge the work intrinsically.

Today, I would like to see the portrait of the teenager who died as a hero in Zululand. Lefebvre has kept a study in his home - the head alone - and it is a masterpiece. The following year, Jules Lefebvre exhibited a *Chloe* of an exquisite model and a fantasy of which François Coppée's sketch was found the other day: it was *The Dream*.)

Lefebvre's portrait of the Prince Imperial was considered provocative because of the simmering tensions between republicans, monarchists and Bonapartists in the early years of the Third French Republic. Based on Proth and Claretie's assessments, Lefebvre had remained loyal to the Bonaparte family, and he may have harboured hopes for a restoration under the leadership of the Prince Imperial. Before the collapse of the Second French Empire, Lefebvre enjoyed the patronage of the French imperial family, including Princess Mathilde Bonaparte, Napoleon Bonaparte's niece. Princess Mathilde

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[19] Bonapartism: "As a regime type, at least in its first two incarnations, Bonapartism is synonymous with the seizure of power in a coup d'état . . . and with the formation of a hereditary empire, monarchy in a new key." Isser Woloch. See "From Consulate to Empire: Impetus and Resistance." *Dictatorship in History and Theory: Bonapartism, Caesarism and Totalitarianism,* ed. Peter Baehr and Melvin Richter (Washington, D. C.: German Historical Institute & Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, Betsellere) 28-52.

was one of the favourites of Parisian salon society, and she purchased Lefebvre's painting *Les Pèlerins au couvent de San Benedetto* (1865) for her private art collection (Claretie 1884, 350). Moreover, Lefebvre's 1874 portrait of the Prince Imperial was his second painting of the teenager. Art scholar Alain Galoin tried to imagine the sombre mood Lefebvre experienced on 17 July 1870 as he painted the 14-year-old prince at the emperor's country palace, only two days before Napoleon III declared war on Prussia (Galoin 2005, L'Histoire par L'Image):

> Au moment où le prince pose pour Jules Lefebvre, il vit les derniers jours d'une enfance heureuse et insouciante dans ce palais de Saint-Cloud qui sera son dernier séjour français et qu'il ne reverra jamais ensuite. L'artiste a fait de l'adolescent un portrait intimiste, d'une grande profondeur psychologique. Le visage est sérieux, le sourire a déserté ses lèvres, le regard est triste et nostalgique, comme si le fils de Napoléon III était conscient de la situation. Il tourne la tête vers la gauche du tableau, derrière lui, vers le souvenir déjà lointain des fastes de l'empire.

> (At the time when the prince posed for Jules Lefebvre, it was during the last days of a happy and carefree childhood in the palace at Saint-Cloud, which was his last home in France, and a place he would never see again. The artist made an intimate portrait of the adolescent, with great psychological depth. The face is serious, the smile has deserted his lips, and the expression is sad and nostalgic, as if the son of Napoleon III was aware of the situation. He turns his head to the left of the picture, behind him, towards the already distant memory of the splendours of the empire).

Figure 16: Lefebvre, Jules Joseph. 1870. *The Prince Imperial.* oil on canvas.

Lefebvre's nostalgia for the privileged life he enjoyed during the Second French Empire, and his affection for the young prince whose portraits he had painted, may have intensified following the 1874 French by-elections which gave the republicans a convincing majority, leaving only six Bonapartists and one monarchist in the National Assembly. Sudhir Hazareesingh, a scholar of modern French history and politics, claims "Post-Second Empire Bonapartism was politically authoritarian, and many of its members were directly involved in attempts to overthrow the Republic in the 1870s, 1880s and 1890s" (Hazareesingh 2004, 120-152). The President of France, Patrice MacMahon, and his Prime Minister, the Duc de Broglie, were enacting a regime of moral order, particularly against women who were deemed too "emancipated" and suspected former-Communards (Sowerwine 2001, 29, quoting Derfler 1983, 21):

> Broglie's aim was to 're-establish moral order'. If he could not restore the monarchy, he hoped 'to make Marshal MacMahon a veritable regent under the name of president, and France under the Republic a monarchy minus a king'. To this end, he replaced Thiers's prefects with Bonapartists.

The government oppressions also had religious overtones, and, according to the French historian Jacques Benoist, on 24 July 1874 (Sowerwine 2001, 30):

> The Assembly approved building the Sacré-Cœur (Sacred Heart) Basilica on the Montmartre hilltop where Generals Lecomte and Thomas had been shot: 'there the communards had spilled the first blood, there would be built an expiatory church.'

Understanding the implications of Lefebvre's loyalty to the Prince Imperial, and the deposed Second French Empire, was a crucial element during the rendering of his character in "Capturing Chloe." The insights I garnered from my translations of French sources provided a context for interpreting Lefebvre's claim that his model "was in the hands of a gang of low confederates" (Hooper 1876, 220-221). They also revealed the political tensions playing out in Paris at the time of *Chloe*'s creation, tensions which may have complicated Lefebvre's relationship with his proletarian model. France was still reverberating from its humiliating capitulation in the war with Prussia, and the ensuing rise and repression of the Paris Commune by Versailles government troops resulting in the deaths of up to 25,000 Parisians (Eichner 2004, 35). Tensions between the bourgeoisie population, those who had supported provisional leader Adolphe Thiers's oppression of the Commune, and the proletariat who had pinned their hopes on the egalitarian principles of the Paris Commune, still festered in the City of Light during a period of post-war rebuilding and renewal (Bennett 2013, 22-30).

When I first read Lefebvre's assertion that his model "was in the hands of a gang of low confederates" (Hooper 1876, 220-221), I was curious about the etymology of the word "confederate," especially in the context of modern French history. It was a word that evoked scenes of the American Civil War, and those sepia photographs of confederate soldiers defending the rebel states, images imbued with insurrectionary overtones. A confederate can be defined as "a person confederated with another or

others; an ally; a conspirator, an accomplice" and according to the cultural historian Bertrand Taithe (2001):

> In the Versailles usage, the Communards were compared with confederates, the term *federates* being actually used by the Communards themselves to refer to their decentralist political project . . . (21).

Taithe's claim that the Versailles government equated "Communards . . . with confederates" (2001, 21), raises an intriguing possibility: if there was any "truth" to the information Lefebvre shared with Lucy Hooper, it is conceivable *Chloe*'s model was associating with former Communards, the gang of "low" *vouyous* or thugs, from Lefebvre's Bonapartist perspective, who had "attempted to force her into a way of life from which her soul revolted" (Hooper 1876, 220-221). Was the girl who sat for *Chloe* once a teenage Communard, a *petroleuse* who lived in fear of exposure during President MacMahon's regime of moral order? By challenging myths which have neglected the political tensions in Paris leading up to *Chloe*'s creation, my doctoral research provided an original context in which to consider the lived-experiences of Jules Lefebvre and his Parisian model. Moreover, the textual sources I read and translated, and analysed meticulously, revealed no evidence of a love affair ever having occurred between Lefebvre and his model, or anything to suggest he had married her sister. In 1869, five years before Lefebvre painted *Chloe,* he married the accomplished pianist, Louise Deslignieres, eldest daughter of Madame Marie Deslignieres, imperious headmistress of the Pension Beaujon, an elite private girls' school situated close to the Arc de Triomphe in Paris. Lefebvre, reputedly, was a devoted and faithful husband, and the deeply religious couple were blessed with seven children (Vento 1888, Blakeman 2005, 50).

Figure 17: Lefebvre, Jules Joseph. 1868. *Portrait de la Femme de l'Artiste a l'Eventail.* oil on canvas. (nee Mlle Louise Deslignieres).

My research findings about Lefebvre's private life and the artist's Bonapartist politics, informed the fictional remaking of his relationship with his model in "Capturing Chloe," and in Chapter Four, "Mythologising Identity: George Moore's *The End of Marie Pellegrin,"* I explore the possible identity of *Chloe*'s model, and the way George Moore's memoirs opened a window into the bohemian art world of late-nineteenth-century Paris.

4

Mythologising Identity:

George Moore's "The End of Marie Pellegrin"

The model for *Chloe* is deceased, her story lost to history. She has no voice to challenge the myths projected onto the depiction of her naked body. Lefebvre's painting may be a collection of brushstrokes on canvas, representing *Chloe,* a Grecian water nymph. However, the young woman's image is never inanimate; it is alive with unanswered questions. During the course of my doctoral research, I discovered compelling clues regarding the identity of the model who sat for *Chloe*, clues which inspired me to explore George Moore's claim that he knew "Lefebvre's Chloe" in Paris during the 1870s (Moore [1888] 1972, 129). Adrian Frazier claims Moore "was one of the writers of Irish birth who remade English literature at the end of the nineteenth-century" (Frazier 2000, xiii). From 1874 until his death in 1933 he published a substantial body of work comprising plays, poetry, short stories, autobiography, criticism, translations and sixteen novels including *Esther Waters* (1894) and *A Drama in Muslin* (1896), books he revised in later editions (Hone 1936, 498-502). However, in the years following his death, Moore's work faded into obscurity (Frazier 2000, xiii), possibly due to the eclecticism of his style and a reluctance to adhere to a "single national tradition" (2000, xiii). Moore's textual diversity included "naturalist fiction . . . the artist novel, Greek classical literature, feminist agendas, *fin-de-siecle* France, genre and genre limits" (Pierse 2006, xi). Since renewed interest in his oeuvre bloomed in the late 1990s, conferences have been held around the globe, focussing not only on Moore's literary works, but his contribution to art criticism, gender studies and a range of other

disciplines. The release of the Hollywood feature film *Albert Nobbs* (2011), based on one of Moore's novellas, has ensured interest in his writing continues (Pierse 2014).

Who was George Moore, the young man, during the period of *Chloe*'s creation, the Irish landlord who reinvented himself in the Bohemian heart of Paris, and later drew on his experiences (and those of his friends) to write his ground-breaking memoir *Confessions of a Young Man?* And would it be wise, creatively, to trust Moore's claims about "Lefebvre's Chloe" as inspiration for her fictional character? This impudent Francophile who asked Manet to modify his unflattering portrait, prompting the painter to complain to a fellow artist "is it my fault if Moore looks like a squashed egg yolk and if his face is all lopsided" (Manet quoted in Frazier 2000, 64)?

Figure 18: Manet, Edouard. 1879. *George Moore*.

Adrian Frazier, Moore's most recent biographer, claims the Irish writer's autobiographies were substantially fictionalised (Frazier 2000, 35):

> We must in large part find him where he is offered to us, in his many volumes of autobiography. That youthful being emerges as a figment of the ironic relationship between the unactualised self of the boy in the process of becoming, and the ever more assured incarnations of the endlessly reminiscent fictionaliser "George Moore".

Frazier's description of Moore as the "endlessly reminiscent fictionaliser" (2000, 35), led to an analysis of his later-life memoirs *Hale and Farewell! Vale* (1914) and *Memoirs of my Dead Life* (1906), as I continued to search for "George Moore" the young man, and for the young woman who modelled for *Chloe*. In his essay *Epitaph on George Moore,* the English novelist Charles Morgan shared some revealing quotes from his subject, including one where Moore evinces the flexibility of his own identity (Moore quoted in Morgan 1935, 3):

> Your story is of a man who made himself because he imagined himself, and you must discover when his imagination went with his nature and when against it; for it is that which, in the end, determines a narrative's shape.

Moore viewed his own identity as a work-in-progress, a malleable essence to mould and reshape simply by imagining himself as someone "other." This process of "recreation" is apparent in his different memoirs, as he reimagines "George Moore" and his youthful contemporaries by distorting them in carnival mirrors. In this chapter, I discuss anecdotes I discovered in Moore's autobiographies, anecdotes that support my theory that the model for "Lefebvre's *Chloe*" *may* have been the artist model Marie Pellegrin, a young Parisian woman who not only loved the *voyous* or thugs of Montmartre (Moore 1906, 28), but was the intimate friend of Victorine Meurent, the woman who modelled for Manet's painting *Olympia* (1863). An imaginative reinterpretation of Moore's

anecdotes informed the narrative shape of "Capturing Chloe" and the characterisation of the rebellious girl who sat for Lefebvre's painting.

George Moore: An Irish Landlord in Paris

Born on 24 February, 1852, George Augustus Moore was the eldest son of George Henry Moore, a Roman Catholic landlord and Member of Parliament for County Mayo. George senior was a revered member of the Irish gentry, a privileged man who, paradoxically, was also a committed Fenian (Frazier 2000, 1-4). By his own admission, George Moore junior was not the son his father had hoped for, and he only acquiesced to military studies "because the moral courage to say No was lacking" (Moore [1888] 1972, 52). But two months after his son's eighteenth birthday, Moore's father died unexpectedly ([1888] 1972, 53; Frazier 2000, 5), and as heir to the family's extensive estate, George found himself "free to enjoy life" ([1888] 1972, 53) unburdened by paternal expectations. In his memoir *Hale and Farewell! Vale,* Moore revealed the pain of confusion and guilt that haunted him during this period, a guilt fuelled by his relief that he was no longer condemned to a career in the military, a relief, he admitted sadly, that made it impossible to grieve for his deceased father (Moore [1914] 1933, 29). Shortly after George senior's funeral, Moore persuaded his reluctant mother to return to their London residence, and so began the genesis of a man "who imagined himself as an artist" (Morgan 1935, 3), a liberating period when the absentee teenage landlord studied life drawing under Whistler's tuition and whiled away the hours in his uncle Jim Browne's studio, his youthful imagination fired by the nude models who came to sit for his older, more talented relative (Frazier 2000, 23-25). For Moore, the creative flame had been ignited, and if he was truly intent on a career as a painter, France was the only destination. As soon as he reached his majority, he made preparations to leave for Paris (Moore 1972, 52-55), and in 1873, when he stepped off the train at the Gare du Nord,

Moore already imagined himself as an artist (Moore quoted in Morgan 1935, 3). He entered the studio of Alexdandre Cabanel, painter of *The Birth of Venus* (1863), an artist whose work he greatly admired (Moore [1888] 1972, 55). However, following a dispiriting period with Cabanel at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, Moore visited Jules Lefebvre in his atelier to enquire about private lessons. Unwilling to take the young Irishman on as a private student, Lefebvre directed him to the Académie Julian in the Passages des Panoramas, a private art academy where Lefebvre taught life drawing on a weekly basis. Moore took his lessons seriously, but working side-by-side with the female students, he confessed at times his "mind would wander" (Frazier 2000, 25-30):

> "The sense of sex" communicated by the young female students, with their hair lifted, their sleeves open to the elbow, was an intoxication. But GM did not, he swears, fall in love with one of them; it was for Lewis Welldon [*sic*] Hawkins that he fell.

As discussed in Chapter Two, Moore was instantly drawn to gifted and handsome Hawkins, and he extolled his friend's attributes in *Confessions* ([1888] 1972, 58). However, Moore also enjoyed many love affairs with women, and in the French edition of *Confessions*, he described the gender dysphoria he had experienced in his younger days (Moore 1889, 247-248):

> J'étais, comme vous le savez, cruellement afflige des luxures, dans ma jeunesse le mystère de formes qui n'étaient pas les miennes, d'un habillement qui n'était pas le mien, me portait étrangement à l'imagination. Je me couchais et je rêvais. Je désirais pénétrer le mystère de la vie de la femme. Il me semblait cruel que cette odieuse différence entre les sexes ne dut jamais décroître, mais strictement se maintenir à travers tous les us et coutumes de la vie. Il y avait de belles créatures marchantes à côté de nous, dont nous ne savions rien, irréparablement séparées de nous, et par les marques le moins vénielles et de haïssables distinctions. Je souhaitais d'être avec ce sexe, comme une ombre avec son objet. Jamais auparavant l'âme d'un homme; et pour expliquer l'anormal de cette sympathie sexuelle, je ne puis qu'imaginer qu'avant ma naissance il y

avait eu quelque hésitation de sexe. Pourtant j'étais un joyeux garçon, amoureux de l'aventure, et excellent sportsman ; un fois un cheval entre les jambes ou un fusil dans les mains, je quittais toutes morbides imaginations, tous étranges désirs de jouer les femmes en travesti, de porter leurs bottines et leurs peignoirs.

(I was, as you know, cruelly afflicted with lust in my youth, the mystery of forms that were not mine, of clothing that was not mine, which carried me to strange places in my imagination. I went to bed and dreamed. I wanted to penetrate the mystery of a woman's life. It seemed cruel to me that this odious difference between the sexes should never have diminished, but was strictly maintained through all the habits and customs of life. There were beautiful creatures walking beside us, of whom we knew nothing, irreparably separated from us, and by the least venal marks and hateful distinctions. I wanted to be with this sex, like a shadow with its object. Never before has the soul of a man; and to explain the abnormality of this sexual sympathy, I can only imagine that before my birth there had been some hesitation about my sex. Yet, I was a happy boy, in love with adventure, and an excellent sportsman. Once I had a horse between my legs or a rifle in my hands, I lost all my morbid imaginations, all strange desires to play women in disguise, to wear their boots and bathrobes.)

In Elizabeth Grubgeld's essay "Framing the Body: George Moore's "Albert Nobbs" and the Disappearing Realist Subject," she suggests Moore's perspectives on gender fluidity "anticipates contemporary understandings of genders and sexual identities as socially constructed" (Grubgeld 2013, 193-208). However, in a later revised edition of Moore's *Confessions,* he intimated that his youthful fascination with the artist Hawkins was "a sort of dependency that is not healthful or valid" (Moore [1886] 1928, 19-20) and he makes it evident, albeit indirectly, that their relationship was never consummated, at least in any physical sense ([1886] 1928, 20). Nevertheless, there is no doubt that Moore and Hawkins formed a deep and complex friendship, a friendship that would ultimately lead to the Irishman's encounter with the woman he claimed was "Lefebvre's Chloe."

The Mythologising of *Chloe*'s Model

A central goal of my doctoral project was to create a strong female character to represent Lefebvre's model in "Capturing Chloe," a young woman immersed in the political, social and artistic minefield that was Paris during the mid-1870s. Consequently, I was interested in establishing the veracity, or otherwise, of George Moore's claim concerning the suicide death of the model who sat for *Chloe*. In early 1874, Moore travelled to London hoping to produce a play he had recently written, and he was homesick for "the English language, English food, for my mother's house in Alfred Place" (Moore 1933, 61). However, his search for a theatre producer proved unsuccessful, and once again, he yearned for Paris and the company of Louis Welden Hawkins ([1888] 1972, 66-67). In a letter to his mother dated March 1875, Moore gave his address as the Hotel de Russie on the Boulevard des Italiens (Hone 1936, 49-50), a detail which confirms he was living in Paris during the period *Chloe* was painted. Resuming his friendship with Hawkins, Moore immersed himself in the decadence of a Parisian summer, dancing the can-can at masked costume balls and "jeering" at the artworks in the new Impressionists exhibition, because he "believed then in the grammar of art, perspective, anatomy" [Moore [1888] 1972, 68-71), and was perplexed by the radical paintings he learned to appreciate later. However, "there came about this time a very decisive event" (71) in Hawkins's life when he fell on hard times after his "last and really *grande passion* had come to a violent termination" (71). Moore's revelation about Hawkins's love affair ending violently seemed to echo with the suicide death of "Lefebvre's Chloe," the artist model Moore's biographer Adrian Frazier claimed was "Hawkins's new mistress" (Frazier 2000, 489).

In Moore's autobiographical story "The End of Marie Pellegrin", a beautiful artist model named Marie is found dead on her balcony after a card party in Montmartre ended in a cat fight. According to Moore, Marie Pellegrin once modelled for the artist

Octave Barre, and I suspect Marie Pellegrin may have been the "Marie" Moore described as "Lefebvre's Chloe" in *Confessions.* However, after my initial readings of "The End of Marie Pellegrin" I dismissed the possibility—there was no mention of Jules Lefebvre or the *Chloe* painting in Moore's reminiscence. Nevertheless, based on an "intuitive hunch" I revisited the story, and after a number of closer readings, I identified some striking parallels between Moore's depiction of Louis Welden Hawkins in *Hale and Farewell! Vale* (Moore [1914] 1933, 51-87), and the artist Octave Barres in "The End of Marie Pellegrin" (1906, 24). At this point, I formed the theory that Octave Barres was another pseudonym Moore had created to disguise Hawkins's identity. Not only Octave's physical features, but his personality and sartorial style had caught my attention, and a curious scene where Octave takes Moore, for the *first* time, to Alphonsine's *table d'hôte*[20] in the Quartier Breda and introduces him to the artist model Marie Pellegrin (1906, 30):

> 'She'll be here presently,' Octave answered, and he went on talking to Clementine, a fair, pretty woman whom one saw every night at the *Rat Mort.* It was when the soup-plates were being taken away that I saw a young woman dressed in black coming across the garden. It was she, Marie Pellegrin.

Intriguingly, Moore describes what appears to be the same evening in his memoir *Hale and Farewell! Vale* ([1914] 1933, 54):

> Lewis [*sic*] . . . assured me they would be glad of my company if I didn't mind dining at Alphonsine's. Not the least. But who was Alphonsine? An old light-o'-love, he said, who gathered all her friends around her *table d'hôte*, at three francs and a half.

Based on George Moore's letters, and his return to Paris after the failed mission to have his play produced in London (Hone 1936, 47-50), his first visit to Alphonsine's *table d'hôte* must have occurred early in 1875, during the period *Chloe* was created.

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[20] Alphonsine's *table d'hôte* inspired the fictional brasserie "Afrodille's" in "Capturing Chloe."

Furthermore, in the *Hale and Farewell! Vale* version of the anecdote, it is Louis Welden Hawkins, not Octave Barres, who invites Moore, for the *first* time, to dine with him at Alphonsine's. In this story, Moore begs Hawkins's current girlfriend Alice to "tell me about Marie Pellegrin" ([1914] 1933, 54), but Alice is jealous of the attention "Lewis [*sic*]" is paying Marie, and she informs Moore he could have Marie for nothing if only he "were a *voyou*" (54).

In "The End of Marie Pellegrin," Moore described Marie as "this refined girl . . . who might have sat to Raphael for a Virgin" (1906, 26), and he was surprised to discover she was a working-class girl from Montmartre:

> This delicate woman that I had felt could not be of the Montmartre kin was the daughter
> of a concierge on the Boulevard Exterieur. She had run away from home at fifteen, had
> danced at the Elysee Montmartre.

Moore's portrayal of Marie Pellegrin echoes Jules Lefebvre's depiction of his model's "refinement and elevation of sentiment" (Hooper 1876, 220-221), desirable traits, the artist seemed to imply, that contradicted her working-class origins. Not only this, Moore observed Marie Pellegrin's friendship with Victorine Meurent, the model for Manet's *Olympia* (1906, 30-31), and in 1875, both Moore and Meurent were students at the Académie Julian where Jules Lefebvre was teaching. While researching the life of Victorine Meurent, American art historian Eunice Lipton discovered a rare unpublished manuscript by Manet's biographer Adolphe Tabarant. In the manuscript, Tabarant describes an intimate scene he once observed between Victorine Meurent and Marie Pellegrin (Tabarant quoted in Lipton 1991, 151):

> She swore, she made Victorine swear, that they would never separate again . . . She
> moved in with Victorine . . . there was never any peace among the women, who
> embraced and pulled out each other's hair at the same time.

According to Moore, a prince once paid Marie a small fortune to travel with him to Russia. But missing her friends and old life terribly, she soon deserted her royal lover and returned to the Quartier Breda. The young Irishman was clearly infatuated with Marie Pellegrin, and he was concerned about the potential consequences of her chaotic lifestyle: her gambling habits, her love of absinthe and the gentle-eyed *voyous* of Montmartre, not to mention the rough women she chose to associate with: "If she lived, Marie would one day be selling fried potatoes on the streets. And this decadence—was it her fault?" (Moore 1906, 40).

It seems implausible that rebellious Marie would permit anyone, as Lefebvre suggested, to "force her into a life from which her soul revolted" (Lefebvre quoted in Hooper 1876, 220-221). She appears, by Moore's accounts, to have been an active participant in her own life, a girl willing to take daring risks but when circumstances changed, or were not to her liking, she was prepared to reconsider her options and return to her beloved Montmartre. Lefebvre, according to Hooper, held his model for *Chloe* in high regard; therefore, it may have been difficult for him to accept she was a willing collaborator in her dangerous lifestyle. No, far easier to blame her death on the "low gang of confederates" (1876: 220-221) she was known to spend her nights with; card-playing viragos of dubious morals who frequented the Rat Mort café (Choquette 2001, 152), the "unnatural" women who, in the conservative artist's imagination, may have represented the petroleuses, or female incendiaries, who gave birth to the Paris Commune on the Butte of Montmartre (Watson-Kell 2016).

Figure 19: Weyler. n.d. *Marie Pellegrin.* photograph. Paris: Weyler Studios.

As I discussed earlier in this chapter, Moore's friendship with Marie Pellegrin began in 1875, while he was Lefebvre's student at the Académie Julian (Campbell 1995, 163). This detail made me consider an intriguing possibility. Perhaps it was Moore who broke the news of Marie's death to Lefebvre when he returned from Holland and Belgium? In theory, if this was the case, Moore may have concealed Marie's hard-living ways to protect her "refined" reputation, while deriding the "low gang" (Hooper 1876, 220-221) of friends he witnessed stealing from her at the card party (Moore 1906, 38-39):

> The women threw their cards aside . . . I heard further accusations, and among them the plaintive voice of Marie begging me not to believe what they said. The women caught each other by the hair, and tore at each other's faces, and Marie raised herself up in bed and implored them to cease; and then she fell back crying. For a moment it seemed as if they were going to sit down to cards again, but suddenly everybody snatched her own money and then everybody snatched at the money within her reach; and, calling each

> other thieves, they struggled through the door, and I heard them quarrelling all the way down the staircase.
>
> 'Help me look,' Marie said . . . Some jewellery was missing, a bracelet and some pearls as well as all her money . . . A few francs were found among the bed-clothes.

The similarities between Marie's demise in "The End of Marie Pellegrin" and the death of Marie, "Lefebvre's Chloe" in Moore's *Confessions* are compelling—the evening she spent with her friends, the few coins she had remaining, and word of her death a few hours later: "The women were Marie's friends bringing news of her. And it was so. She had been found dead on her balcony dressed in the gown that had just come home from the dressmaker" (Moore 1906, 41). According to an official French death record, a woman named Marie Eugenie Pellegrin died on the 23rd July, 1875 at Pré-Saint-Gervais in Paris (GeneaService 2014). This significant discovery may prove crucial in solving the mystery of the model for *Chloe*'s identity. Furthermore, if other details Lefebvre shared with Lucy Hooper were authentic, there is a more disturbing end to her story (Lefebvre quoted in Hooper 1876, 220-221):

> She was taken to the hospital, where she died in a few hours; and as her unnatural relatives refused to claim the body, it was handed over to the doctors of the establishment for dissection.

Lefebvre's model ended her life when he was travelling in Belgium and Holland, and he expressed profound regret at his ill-timed absence: "Had I but been in Paris . . . I could have saved her from that last indignity, at least" (Hooper 1876, 220-221). His account of the girl's final "indignity" affected me profoundly. I kept imagining her corpse prostrate on the dissection table, a volt of vulture-like students butchering her with

bloodied scalpels (McCullough 2011, 116-117)[21]. Surely this was a story too distressing to reveal; Lefebvre's beautiful model for *Chloe* dismembered, because no one cared enough to claim her body. But I took some comfort in the knowledge that the artist's story was anecdotal. Perhaps Lefebvre was misinformed, the victim of idle gossip? Bearing in mind, after all, he was not in Paris when the tragedy happened (Watson-Kell 2016).

On that day of disquieting discoveries, I remember pausing by a window to watch a squadron of spiralling pelicans—their languid circling was hypnotic, I felt envious of their wildness. The word "pelican" took shape in my mind: pelican and Pellegrin—lovely limpid words, one avian, the other humankind, and somehow evoking a similar essence. But then, in the midst of my reverie, an illusory bird shot through the clouds, dispersing the dream-like pelicans; a peregrine falcon, the world's fastest creature, descending in full stoop towards its target. I closed my eyes, what was this chimera trying to show me? Pelican and peregrine—words that morphed so naturally into Pellegrin—was Lefebvre's *Chloe* stretching her wings? Telling me her story was far from over? That rebellious girl with the "blue-black hair lying close about her head like feathers" (Moore 1906, 24) was prodding my imagination, reminding me of a curious question that still remained unanswered (Watson-Kell 2016). How had the Reverend Butcher, the Brothers Nemo, and the author of the letter to the *Christian Colonist*, learnt about the suicide death of *Chloe*'s model in the late-nineteenth-century?

George Moore had an established Australian readership by the early twentieth-century, and four years before *Chloe* was hung at Young and Jackson Hotel*,* a review of *Confessions* appeared in a Melbourne newspaper (*Australasian* 1905):

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[21] McCulloch, David. 2011. *The Great Journey: Americans in Paris.* New York: Simon and Schuster. 'In Paris there was not the least prejudice against dissections. Even mortally ill patients in the hospitals, "aware of their fate," and knowing that two-thirds of the dead were carried off to the dissecting rooms, did not seem to mind.'

When 21 years old young Moore went to Paris to study painting, and he gives us some vivid sketches of the Bohemian life he led and the people he met. Among these were Manet, Degas, and other famous artists, and writers, such as Catulle Mendes, and Villiers de l'Isle Adam. There was also an English artist named Marshall, whose model, Marie, stood for Lefebvre's "Chloe," exhibited here some years ago. Of her, Mr. Moore writes:-

'Her end was a tragic one . . .

Moore's account of the model's suicide may have been of interest to Melbourne book readers, but the irate letters by Reverend Butcher and other moralists had appeared in the colonial press nearly two decades earlier, years before the first edition of *Confessions* was published in England. However, in a newspaper article "Australian Artists Association Summer Exhibition" (*Argus* 1887, 14), a painting entitled *Chloe* is mentioned. The article does not refer to Lefebvre's *Chloe*, as I initially assumed it would, but to a portrait by James Clarke Waite[22], one of Australia's revered portrait artists (McQueen 1996, 464) during the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth-centuries (*Argus* 1887, 14):

Mr J. C. Waite sends in . . . a half-length figure entitled 'Chloe,' which is stated to be a portrait of the young lady who sat to M. Lefebvre as a model for the picture of the same name. It is a charming head and face, with the roundness, freshness, and bloom of youth in the countenance, and a look of innocence and simplicity, which is not always associated with the female models of Parisian artists.

In his opening address for the exhibition, the association's secretary, Mr Ashton, stated the works "on these walls have mostly been done during the last six months" (*Argus* 1887, 14). Was Waite's *Chloe* portrait one of these recent works? And if the artist's

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[22] McQueen, H. 1996. *Tom Roberts*. Sydney: Pan Macmillan, 463-464. Waite was offered the commission to paint the opening of the first Australian Parliament in 1901 but later declined. Tom Roberts was awarded the commission and his painting hangs in Parliament House, Canberra. Roberts always called it *The Big Picture*.

claim was true, and his model was Lefebvre's *Chloe*, could Marie have been living in Australia during the 1880s? However, further research revealed that Waite settled in Melbourne in 1886, and he claimed he had painted the model for *Chloe* in Paris. The Englishman's portraits of the young Parisian were hung regularly in Melbourne galleries in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth-centuries (*Punch* 1904, 31):

> Old time memories will be revived by the half-length portrait of an artist's model. The face at once strikes the middle-aged Melbournian, and reminds him of the celebrated nude picture of "Chloe," which caused such a flutter when it was imported by Dr. Fitzgerald many years ago. Mr. Waite painted the portrait from the same model when he was in Paris. But this painting is Chloe clothed and unashamed. It might be hung without offence in the residences of a Puritan.

Figure 20: Waite, James Clarke. n.d. *Chloe.* oil on canvas.
Image reproduced in *The Australasian,* July 23, 1914.

Waite's genre paintings of animals caught the eye of Henry Figsby Young, and one of the artist's pictures *White Horse in Harness (A Tit Bit for Dobbin)* "was formerly

in the collection of the famous Young and Jackson Hotel, home of *Chloe*" (Arcadja Auctions Results). Waite's arrival in Melbourne in 1886 coincides with the first letter to the newspapers claiming *Chloe*'s model was a French prostitute who committed suicide (*Christian Colonist* 1886, 2). Furthermore, because of Waite's later association with Young and Jackson Hotel, I propose it is possible he may have contributed to stories about *Chloe*'s model in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries.

There can be many factors that complicate artistic representations of women, and as Jen Webb has argued "something utterly central to representation is social identity, and that beyond its logics, its techniques and its history is the story of how it is used to make social reality" (Webb 2009, 131). The clues I discerned about the "social identity" of *Chloe*'s model have been crucial in my reinterpretation and reimagining of her character. In Lucy Hooper's article where she shared details about *Chloe*'s model, she claimed the reductive stereotype of female artist models, in her opinion, was largely unfounded and that "many of the women engaged in it [*modelling*] are perfectly virtuous, being always accompanied by a mother or sister . . . and being treated with the utmost respect by the artists" (1876, 220-221). Nonetheless, later in the same article, Hooper shared a story about a fourteen-year-old girl who was "a thoroughly *naïve* and child-like creature" (220-221), who, while entrusted by her English parents into the care of a foreign woman, had been exploited and hired out to English speaking artists for nude modelling (220-221). It is impossible to know if the girl who sat for *Chloe* challenged negative stereotypes of artist models. Was she a "child-like creature" being manipulated by those "low confederates" (220-221) Lefebvre derided in Hooper's article, or a "girl of more refinement and elevation of sentiment" (220-221) than usually found among the poorer classes? Nevertheless, in terms of my creative writing research and the creative development of Marie Peregrine's character in "Capturing Chloe," questions such as these allowed her wings to grow stronger, strong enough to lift her

from the horror of that cold dissection table, and over the waves to another life at Young

and Jackson Hotel in Melbourne.

Conclusion

Throughout this doctoral thesis, comprising a novel-length fictional manuscript and an accompanying exegesis, I have explored, recontextualised and reimagined various myths about Jules Lefebvre's painting *Chloe*. Historical research and the analysis of a diverse range of textual artefacts allowed me to interrogate anecdotes and myths which have contributed to perceptions of *Chloe*'s model and her alleged relationship with Lefebvre, the artist. As already mentioned in my Introduction, Hans-Georg Gadamer was acutely cognisant of the paradoxical challenges researchers face when attempting to interpret and gain meaning from historical sources (Gadamer 1975, 156):

> For what is true of the written sources, that every sentence in them can be understood only from its context, is also true of their content . . . History is, as it were, the great dark book, the collected work of the human spirit, written in the languages of the past, the text of which we have to try to understand.

Researching "the great dark book" (1975, 156) of *Chloe*'s history presented me with a number of challenges. A careful analysis of the "gifts" my research project uncovered, required not only a sound knowledge of the historical epoch the texts were created in, but also an awareness of the authors' political and social biases, and the ways such biases may have influenced their assessments of Lefebvre and his artist model. Consequently, throughout the process of interrogating and recontextualising *Chloe* mythologies, I studied an eclectic range of archival sources in order to imbue my fictional manuscript "Capturing Chloe" with historical verisimilitude.

In her essay "The History Question: Who Owns the Past?" Inga Clendinnen examined the role myths play in the development of national identity. Using "Banjo" Paterson's poem "Waltzing Matilda" to elucidate her argument, Clendinnen discussed

why the out-dated "swaggie" trope at the heart of "Waltzing Matilda," with its limiting stereotype of Australian male identity, still "sits, comfortable, unexamined, in the contemporary collective consciousness" (2006, 5-6). Clendinnen claimed "a successful myth only grows more potent with exploitation" (2006, 7) and a historian's task is "to unscramble what actually happened from whatever the current myth might be, and to inquire into what the myth-makers are up to—not to play at myth-making too" (2006, 46). Clendinnen's assertion that it is the historian's job to expose the truth of "what actually happened" (2006, 7), made me reflect on the historical research I conducted for "Capturing Chloe." What had I hoped to achieve by recontextualising and reinterpreting myths about Jules Lefebvre's *Chloe?* I was not a trained historian, I was a creative writer researching the history of *Chloe*, and my reimagining and rewriting of the painting's mythologies in a work of historical fiction would, unavoidably, be a new form of "myth making." However, I also recognised that my approach to writing historical fiction—drawing on a solid foundation of historical research, while making intuitive but informed assumptions about the missing pieces in *Chloe*'s history—bore similarities to the methods employed by the historians Clendinnen praised in her essay (2006, 55-56):

> It is a preposterously ambitious enterprise, trying to make whole people, whole situations, whole other ways of being out of the dusty fragments left after real lives end, but that is what the best historians set out to do. Their core narrative is always their struggle with recalcitrant, evasive sources. As they interrogate those sources before our eyes, we have a fleeting sense of what it would have been like to have lived a different life, in a different place, at a different time. If all this makes the writing of history sound like an advanced literary art, so, of course, it is.

Based on Clendinnen's statement, when historians attempt to "make whole people, whole situations" (2006, 55-56), they would need to imagine the missing details in the historical record, therefore, an element of subjectivity is unavoidable. What Clendinnen

describes as "a preposterously ambitious exercise" (2006, 55-56) could also be interpreted as a form of storytelling with many parallels to the methods employed by writers of historical fiction. Kate Grenville's *The Secret River* (2005), *Caleb's Crossing* (2011) by Geraldine Brooks, Peter Carey's *True History of the Kelly Gang* (2000) and *Wanting* (2008) by Richard Flanagan, provide some salient examples by Australian novelists. The distinction between historians and fiction writers may be the "focus" of their "imaginings" and the perceived "importance" of the missing details that interest them. However, Indigenous author, Kim Scott, who, when questioning Clendinnen's assertion that "a novel can only be entertainment" (Scott 2009, 39), argues that "novelists have been imprisoned and endangered because of their work and its potential consequences" (2009, 39). In the case of Jules Lefebvre's *Chloe,* it is not only writers who fill in the gaps, but the diverse cohort of individuals who have stood before the painting, creating stories about the Parisian model as she takes them on an imaginative journey.

For well over a century, *Chloe* has touched the lives of countless Australians, including the tattooed bohemian artist Vali Myers (1930-2003), who "could often be found dancing in Chloe's Bar at Young and Jackson's" (White Hat 2014) on a Friday evening, and cricket journalist Peter Lalor who, "at the first flush of 18" (Lalor 2011), recalled gathering with his mates "at Young and Jacksons . . . elatedly intoxicated beneath the alluring naked Chloe, the first woman in the colony with a Brazilian" (2011). One year before Malcolm Turnbull was sworn in as the twenty-ninth Prime Minister of Australia, he gave a speech at the Lowy Institute in Sydney, a nonpartisan international policy think tank, to commend the important work of Australia's foreign correspondents. During his speech, as he recounted what had attracted him to journalism, Turnbull shared his own memory of *Chloe* (Turnbull 2014):

> The romance of news, the adventure, the power and influence were all intoxicating. I remember returning home from a hiking adventure in Tasmania in 1972 and spending a

night in Melbourne - my first. I remember going with my friends to Young & Jackson's to admire Chloe and drink beer in pints and then late in the evening we went down to The Age building, . . . and we lay on the footpath to feel the thunder of the presses as they shook the street and in a few hours the whole city as the news of the day roared out on a fleet of trucks.

Keith Dunstan (1925-2013), the popular Australian journalist and historian, was so devoted to *Chloe* "at the Young and Jackson's journalist watering hole" (Bate 2013, 7-13) he had *Chloe*'s image printed on his Poplar Bend winery's *Pineau Noir* label, and, in a personification of the painting, wrote "about shivering Chloe needing Marie's (his wife's) electric blanket on very cold nights" (2013, 7-13).

Many anecdotes about *Chloe* are of a light-hearted nature. However, on a more sombre note, *Chloe* played a crucial role in the evacuation of Australian soldiers from a Japanese prison camp on the Indonesian island of Ambon[23] after the Second World War (Maynard 2014, xi). These were soldiers from the 2/21st Battalion, the men who had included *Chloe* in their official march song "It's a Long Way to Bonegilla" (*Argus* 1940, 5). For over three years, the men "endured a living hell at the hands of their captors in conditions so appalling that many died from starvation or disease" (Maynard 2014, xvi). Cruel treatment from their own Australian officers only added to their suffering. Intent on curtailing "bandicooting" (the stealing of other men's vegetables), senior officers constructed a barbed-wire cage with "metal tentacles . . . capable of drawing blood at every turn" (2014, xii) where pilferers were detained overnight with "little protection from the elements" (2014, xiii). Only 23 per cent of the Australian soldiers imprisoned on Ambon survived the war, and those who did were close to starving by the time they were evacuated (2014, xv-xvi).

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[23] Ambon, Indonesia. Prior to 17 August 1945, the date Indonesian independence was proclaimed, Ambon was an island "in what was then the Dutch East Indies." Roger Maynard. 2014. *Ambon.* (Sydney: Hachette, xiv).

Figure 21: Stewart, Ronald Leslie. 1945. *Morotai, 1945-09-12.* photograph.

AWM115775. Canberra: Australian War Memorial.

Ambon survivors on stretchers waiting to be transported to the hospital on Morotai.

When news arrived of Japan's surrender, the prisoners' hopes for liberation quickly turned to frustration; Japanese officers in control of the camp refused to give them radio access. Three weeks later, when they were "finally granted access to their own radio transmitter" (Maynard 2014, 218-219), their SOS message was received on the neighbouring island of Morotai. However, requiring confirmation that the message was from an Australian prison camp, the operator "posed a series of questions only a dinky-di Aussie could answer" (2014, 220). One of the first questions he asked John Van Nooten, a Melbourne soldier, was "How would you like to see Chloe again?" (220). When Van Nooten replied "Lead me to her," the operator asked "Where is she?" Van Nooten responded with Young and Jackson's, finally convincing the operator he was "a bloody Australian" (220).

Research into the history of Jules Lefebvre's painting *Chloe* revealed the diversity of imaginative journeys the iconic artwork has given its viewers. When I immersed myself in texts about the painting's history, and the milieu inhabited by its

creator and model, I embarked on my own imaginative journey of rewriting *Chloe*

mythologies in a work of historical fiction. In a recent interview about his first novel

The Making of Martin Sparrow (2018), a story inspired by a flood on the Hawkesbury

River in 1806, the eminent historian-turned-novelist Peter Cochrane discussed why he

chose fiction rather than non-fiction to write about the period. Cochrane explained his

novel was "richly researched . . . otherwise you don't have the authenticity" but "the

history has to permeate the fiction in a very quiet way" (Cochrane 2018). He said he

chose fiction because it was a challenge and the creative process had surprised him:

> I once thought it was nonsense when novelists claimed their characters were taking
>
> over . . . but it's true . . . they do have their own narrative logic, their own dreams and
>
> hopes and fears . . . they have an impetus of their own and that doesn't happen in
>
> history . . . fiction is different, fiction is a story.

I listened to Peter Cochrane and considered my own creative practice: the challenge of

imbuing "Capturing Chloe" with "the texture of truth" (Webb 2015, 17) while trusting

my intuition as I followed the "dreams and hopes and fears" (Cochrane 2018) of the

characters I had imbued with "agency" and the "illusory" journey they had taken me on

(Taylor, Hodges and Kohanyi 2003, 361-380). When Cochrane responded to a question

about the difference between writing history and historical fiction, he shared novelist

Roger McDonald's assertion that "history can be the catalyst but the novel in the

writing is a dream" (McDonald quoted by Cochrane 2018). There were times when I

was creating "Capturing Chloe" when it felt like I was writing a dream, not only the

dream that inspired the novel, but a dream that had emerged from the "dark book of

history" (Gadamer 1975, 176) as I filtered and reimagined what I had learnt about Jules

Lefebvre's *Chloe*, and recuperated a life for the "voiceless" young woman he

immortalised in his painting.

Appendix: Exegesis

Australian Aboriginal Soldiers in the Thirty-Ninth Battalion

By April 1916, at least two Aboriginal soldiers from Lake Condah Mission Station in Western Victoria had been accepted into the Thirty-Ninth Battalion, the same battalion as Paddy and Alf Byrne, the fictional soldiers in the World War 1 chapters of "Capturing Chloe" (*Hamilton Spectator* 1916b, 4; Paterson 1934, 277-352):

> Among the soldiers at present in the Ballarat training camp are two-blooded natives from the Lake Condah aboriginal station, named James Harding and Richard King[24]. The first named is a well-known rough rider, while his comrade has claimed distinction as a footballer and an all-round athlete. Both are men of splendid physique. They state that they are anxious to get to the front as soon as possible in order to fight for the Empire.

The abovementioned soldiers were unusual, because at this time in Australian history, Aboriginal men were often rejected on the basis of their race. Under the *Defence Act 1903* (amended 1909), only individuals of predominantly European origin were deemed eligible for military service (Scarlett 2015, 163-181). It was a frustrating time, not only for the Aboriginal men from Condah mission, who viewed enlistment in the military as a way "to wrestle free from the paternalism of the Victorian authorities" (Horton 2015, 203-222), but also for supportive members of the wider Victorian community, who admired the men's readiness to fight in defence of the British Empire (*Hamilton Spectator* 1916a, 4):

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[24] Aboriginal serviceman Private Leonard Charles Lovett also served in the Thirty-Ninth Battalion. "He embarked on 27 May 1916 on HMAT Ascanius and returned to Australia on 8 July 1919." See: Australian War Memorial: http://www.awm.gov.au/people/P10619162/#biography.

Rejection of Mission Station Recruits.

> Great indignation is expressed at Heywood (writes a correspondent) at the action of the
> Military authorities in refusing the acceptance of the batch of men from the Condah
> mission station after they had passed the necessary medical examination and made final
> arrangements to go into camp. The men are all well known here, and are some of the
> finest athletes of the Western district. They are prepared to take their share in the
> defence of the Empire as eagerly as in the sport of the community. Three of Mr William
> Lovett's brothers enlisted and sailed for the front last year – two in the A.I.F., and one
> in the naval department. Mr James Lovett, their father, also offered his services, but the
> age limit was against his acceptance.

The above article concerning the enlistment of Aboriginal soldiers in the Thirty-Ninth
Battalion in World War 1 inspired the Aboriginal character "Jack Adam" in "Capturing
Chloe." The fictional scene at Young and Jackson Hotel when Jack is refused a beer
simply because he is Aboriginal, while his Caucasian comrades, Paddy and Alf, are
being feted as heroes, reflects the discriminatory government policies in force during
this period. When the five Lovett brothers from Condah returned home after the war,
still proudly dressed in their AIF uniforms, they were refused service at the Greenvale
Hotel simply because they were Aboriginal (Wright 2015):

> It was an indignity too far. They locked the barman out, shot every bottle on the
> shelves and walked home singing. If they could not have a drink that day, nor could any
> others, and their white mates from the war made sure the police did not become
> involved.

The Victorian Liquor Licensing Act which prohibited the Greenvale Hotel from serving
liquor to the Lovett brothers would likely have excluded them from enjoying a beer
with *Chloe,* because the section of the Act which "prohibited supplying alcohol to
Aborigines was not repealed until 1957" (Critchett 1998, 70). Past failures to
acknowledge the contribution of Aboriginal soldiers during World War 1, and their

involvement in subsequent military conflicts, was a great disservice to the men who once fought, or gave their lives, in defence of the British Empire and the Australian nation.[25] Therefore, to reflect the involvement of Aboriginal soldiers in the Thirty-Ninth Battalion, I wove this neglected aspect of Australian military history into the World War 1 narrative of "Capturing Chloe." To do otherwise would be to enact an erasure of my own, in an attempt to recuperate the agency of the "real" *Chloe.*

Before conducting this culturally sensitive aspect of my doctoral research, I sought approval from Murdoch University Human Research Ethics Committee to explore the involvement of Aboriginal soldiers from Western Victoria in World War 1. My application also included a request to meet with Victorian multi-media artist Vicki Couzens to gain her perspectives of Jules Lefebvre's painting *Chloe* and its place within the contemporary Victorian arts landscape.

Figure 22: *Vicki Couzens and "Chloe".* 2015. Melbourne: Young and Jackson Hotel.

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[25] Repatriated Aboriginal soldiers rarely benefited from the soldier settlement scheme, a government program which allocated land to returned Australian soldiers. At the end of World War 2, white soldiers were given blocks that once formed part of Lake Condah Mission, after "Aboriginal people lost their homes on the last remnants of their country." See Jessica Horton, "Willing to fight to a man . . ." in *Aboriginal History Volume 39,* 2015, 203-222.

By happenstance, Vicki Couzens is a descendant of the Gunditjmara and Keerray Woorroong clans from Western Victoria, and during our face-to-face meeting in Melbourne, and in subsequent email exchanges, Vicki offered insights into the history and culture of Aboriginal people in Western Victoria. Perspectives gained during these cultural consultations richly informed the Aboriginal issues explored in "Capturing Chloe," particularly the restrictions imposed by the Board for the Protection of Aborigines (1869-1957) and its control of Aboriginal people's "movements, their place of residence, their outside labour and wages, and in certain circumstances guardianship of their children" (Nelson, Smith and Grimshaw 2002, 14). Vicki and I discussed a 1916 newspaper article I discovered entitled "Wanderings on a Wheel" which revealed the frustrations of an Aboriginal family from Western Victoria, who, after leaving the confines of a mission station, shared their story with two travelling motorcyclists (*Koroit Sentinel and Tower Hill Advocate* 1916, 3):

> Between Killarney and Port Fairy we suddenly came across an interesting roadside tableau in the person of an aboriginal, his lubra, two grown up daughters and three younger ones, all resting on a heap of road metal. We stop. The blackfellow and his family belong to a mission station, but, as he explains, blackfellow likes roaming about the country, and does not appreciate being under control at a station. The food they beg, he says, is also better than is provided at the station.

In the same article, the author of the encounter adopted dehumanising language when he recounted the Aboriginal mother's pride in her family (1916, 3):

> 'We are pure, no half caste about us,' says the lubra, waving her arm around the group with as much pride as a farmer points to his flock of pure merinos or herd of Jerseys. The old girl has no boots on her feet, these being as hard as a piece of ironstone.

As the conversation between the motorcyclists and the Aboriginal family progressed, it became evident the father resented the fact that "Aboriginals had become paupers in

their own land, forced off their clan territory or allowed onto it only with permission from Europeans" (Critchett 1998, 21-22). When he enquired where the motorcyclists hailed from, and they informed him "St Arnaud," he asked if they knew an Aboriginal man named Jimmy Logan (*Koroit Sentinel and Tower Hill Advocate* 1916, 3):

> 'No, we know a place called Logan.'

> 'Ah! That him, Jimmy Logan. All St. Arnaud his country. What have you landholders up at St. Arnaud got to say to this. You produce your title saying 'to you, your heirs and assigns for ever,' still can you show a purchaser's receipt from Jimmy Logan, the actual original aboriginal owner?'

The encounter between the Aboriginal family and the motorcyclists on the road between Killarney and Port Fairy occurred in 1916, the year the World War 1 chapters of "Capturing Chloe" are set in. Vicki explained there were two Aboriginal Mission Stations this particular family may have come from, either Lake Condah Mission Station near Portland or the Framlingham Aboriginal Station in the Warrnambool region, where her great-grandmother once wove traditional baskets, or *Poonkarrts,* in the early-twentieth century (Couzens 2009, 31). Vicki was interested in learning about the identities of the Aboriginal family described in the newspaper article, however, this may prove difficult to ascertain, as no names were provided by the anonymous author of the article.

Throughout the process of cultural consultation with Vicki Couzens, and during all research undertaken into the involvement of Australian Aboriginal soldiers during World War 1, I consulted and followed the cultural protocols outlined in the *Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) Guidelines for Ethical Research in Australian Indigenous Studies 2012,* the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research* (2007), and the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research* (2007).

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