



## The Australians: Insiders and Outsiders on the National Character since 1770

By John Hirst

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US General Douglas MacArthur, on the Australians fighting on the Kokoda Track, 1942: 'Operations reports show that progress on the trail is NOT repeat NOT satisfactory.' To which Major-General A.S. Allen drafted this reply: 'If you think you can do any better come up and bloody try.' Is there an Australian national character? What are its distinguishing features? Over the years, how have insiders and outsiders summed up this country and its people, and how have Australians responded to outside criticism? In *The Australians*, John Hirst gathers together the key assessments of the national character, on topics as diverse as sport, war, mateship, humour, put-downs, suburbia and going native. There is celebration and criticism. There is humour and insight. There is the difference between what Australians think of themselves and what they are really like. Contributors include Winston Churchill, Ned Kelly, Tim Flannery, Henry Lawson, Peter Cosgrove, Germaine Greer, Charles Darwin, Charles Dickens, Captain James Cook, David Malouf, Mark Twain, H.G. Wells, Patrick White, Oscar Wilde and Tim Winton. 'This is the most democratic place I have ever been in. And the more I see of democracy, the more I dislike it.' D.H. Lawrence

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## The Australians: Insiders and Outsiders on the National Character since 1770 By John Hirst Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #3535383 in Books
- Brand: Brand: Black Inc
- Published on: 2011-01-04
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 7.80" h x .47" w x 5.08" l, .49 pounds
- Binding: Mass Market Paperback
- 224 pages

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John Hirst is a widely respected historian and social commentator.

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