city and that there is no distinctive chapter on urban economy (even though political economy informs the whole text), which he acknowledges is not ideal. The volume would have also benefited from Ewen identifying his place in the field of urban history. Ewen is a leading British urban historian at Leeds Beckett University, England. He undertook his doctoral training at the University of Leicester’s Centre for Urban History, the spiritual and intellectual home of British urban history. Not until halfway through the volume does Ewen insert himself into the text, in reference to his important social histories of British cities. This volume certainly takes the vantage of a leading British urban historian, facing the British, European and North American traditions. Scholarship on cities in Asia, South America and, to a lesser extent, Africa, provides valuable breadth.

Readers of the *Melbourne Historical Journal* would no doubt be interested in the place of the Australian and Aotearoa New Zealand city in this volume. Numerous Australian and New Zealand scholars are referenced. For instance, Graeme Davison on suburbs, John Griffiths on transnational municipalism, Andrew May on the gendered street, and Alan Mayne on Victorian slums. A telling of the Australasian urban history tradition does not explicitly feature, however. Ewen suggests that the strength of urban history in Britain, Europe and North America is in part attributable to established scholarly nodes and networks that furthered the pursuit of urban history. If the Australasian city is to exert an even greater influence on international urban historical practice in the future, scholarship will indeed need to coalesce at research centres and through specialised academic associations. These comments must not detract from what is ultimately a valuable and timely volume. Ewen’s *What is Urban History?* is indispensable for budding historians of cities across the world.

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**Carol Freeman**  
*Paper Tiger: How Pictures Shaped the Thylacine*  
*(Hobart: Forty South, 2014)*  
ISBN 9780992279172 (PBK) $49.95

Eighty-five years ago the final thylacine was shot in the Tasmanian wild, followed in 1936 by the death of the last living specimen in captivity. Since then images of the ‘Tasmanian tiger’ have appeared in everything from beer ads and coats of arms to logos for governments and sporting teams. One could argue it sits alongside the dodo as an icon of extinction in the popular imagination. But while advertising has kept the thylacine in the public eye, and continued unconfirmed sightings contribute to its mythology, Carol
Freeman demonstrates in *Paper Tiger: How Pictures Shaped the Thylacine* that even when alive, images of the animal combined observation with propaganda, hypothesis and myth.

The 2014 edition of *Paper Tiger* is a revised and fully reformatted edition of a book first published in the Netherlands in 2010. An academic and writer based in Hobart, Freeman worked with local Forty South Publishing to make the work available to a wider audience, adding images and editing the text to improve accessibility for a general readership. The result is a clearly written, well produced and richly illustrated survey of representations of the thylacine.

*Paper Tiger* starts with some useful high-level context for the general reader about the ‘tiger’, Tasmania, and the broad evolution of museums and natural history illustration. This is followed by seven numbered chapters and two unnumbered sections, all containing concise but detailed visual analysis of over eighty thylacine images across a roughly chronological series of overlapping periods, from British settlement of Tasmania in 1803 to the death of the last thylacine in 1936, with a final chapter looking at imagery since this time. Freeman moves from first sightings and early illustrations, through the surge of interest in natural history and zoological illustration in the second half of the nineteenth century, to photography and commercial imagery. In doing so, she highlights how the thylacine has been encoded variously as monster, vermin, tiger, wolf, and captive.

Throughout, Freeman aims for more than a chronological narrative. She seeks to understand the way visual culture embodies people’s perceptions of animals, and how representations—inscientificjournals, zoological and natural history publications, popular books, zoo guides, newspapers and magazines—reinforce, or even produce ‘attitudes and actions’ (4). Images, Freeman writes in her introduction, have ‘a constitutive role in what is perceived as “truth”’ (4); and, she argues, the often negative way the thylacine was constituted and presented to the public, combined with social, cultural and political factors (such as the introduction of bounties), ultimately lead to its extinction.

The text effectively combines visual and textual analysis with a range of sources and occasional snatches of theory (from Barthes, Foucault, Sontag and Haraway, among others). While this supporting material is all clearly documented in endnotes and a bibliography for those who wish to explore further, Freeman does not look at non-pictorial sources in any significant detail, nor does she engage with the complexities of the
concepts she employs, with most theorists’ ideas introduced using just a sentence or two. Multi-faceted concepts are stripped back to the point of over-simplification and presented uncritically. This could be problematic for some scholars, academics and others seeking deeper engagement with the ideas put forward, though the result is a clear and accessible read.

The critical evaluation of images is mostly persuasive and well handled. For example, Freeman clearly demonstrates how early illustrations became the source for other images, traces common features of illustrations to specific mounted specimens, and shows how photographs were manipulated, touched up, cropped or essentially ‘faked’—including through the use of stuffed specimens—to highlight particular aspects of the thylacine’s actual or supposed temperament and behaviour.

However, the dedicated focus on thylacine images perhaps makes the work too self-contained, detaching works from more general trends in the natural sciences, zoology and illustration. Though other animals are mentioned in the text, there are eighty-one thylacine images given and only nine of other subjects, with just two of these directly comparable in style and content. This almost relentless dedication to a singular subject means the reader does not come away with any clear sense of whether this story is an exceptional case or just one clear example of something broader. While the constrained scope is clearly intentional, some additional analysis of comparative images using the Tasmanian devil or animals hunted to near or actual extinction elsewhere in the world would strengthen Freeman’s justifiable claim that images, scientific ‘truth’ and the actions of a population toward animals are all entwined in a mutual shaping process.

The work is also notable for its lack of an Indigenous perspective. Freeman notes in the Introduction that there are no known surviving stories, songs, rock engravings or paintings which demonstrate how Aboriginal Tasmanians viewed and interacted with the largest known carnivorous marsupial of modern times. Yet, while she refers to an area of Western Australia as ‘a place of profound absences’ (1), Freeman does not explicitly view her own state through this lens, though the people living in Tasmania at the time of white settlement were themselves driven to near-extinction over a similar period to the demise of the thylacine. One wonders if the constitutive power of ‘natural history’ and other images contributed to this human genocide through a comparable process. Unpicking at least a little of this darker historical seam might have
helped reveal something more about both subjects.

Too far down either path and *Paper Tiger* would be a different, perhaps less approachable book. As it stands, Freeman and Forty South Publishing have produced a clear, tightly focused and richly illustrated survey to interest a general readership. While a causal connection between modes of representation and eventual extinction is not proven, Freeman mounts a convincing argument that the thylacine was indeed shaped by pictures.

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**Stephen High**
*Oral History at the Crossroads: Sharing Life Stories of Survival and Displacement*  
(Vancouver: The University of British Columbia, 2014)  
ISBN: 9780774826846  
(Pbk) 34.95 USD

Oral history scholarship is in a transitional period, moving away from collection and testimony and an era defending oral history’s relevance and reliability, towards a collaborative and community focus which is attempting to address one of the dark secrets of oral history; who is listening? As we cement ourselves more fully in the digital age, it presents new opportunities for practitioners of oral history to work collaboratively with others to share stories of the past.

Stephen High’s *Oral history at the Crossroads: Sharing Life Stories of Survival and Displacement* is the result of the Montreal Life Stories major collaborative seven year project investigating stories of genocide and mass violence, displacement and survival. It advocates for ‘shared authority’ and a collaborative community-university approach to oral history projects. Engaging with community groups, members of the public, survivors and university researchers, this project is firmly positioned at the crossroads of oral history. High demonstrates new approaches in oral history through digital media technologies which provide new ways of telling and sharing stories. It has a firm methodological and theoretical background, building on past scholarship and developments in oral history to transition into a new space. Well researched and written it includes extensive notes and appendices as well as online resources. The many photographs included provide a real face to the project, though they could be linked more specifically to the focus of each chapter. The project aimed to go beyond the hitherto traditional collection mode of oral history to a curatorial one, viewing the interview as one step on a continuing collaborative path.