is,' he says, 'unfortunately bedevilled by a naïve and prejudicial stereotype of lawyers which appears to assume that all lawyers who had anything to do with Maori were crooked shysters. This is not only untrue; it fails to recognize that obtaining legal advice is simply a hallmark of growing commercial sophistication.' Once again, Boast does not identify the exponents of this historiography. I agree that not all lawyers involved in Maori land were crooked shysters and that, on the contrary, many of them contributed ably and sometimes without fee to defending Maori interests in land (as they still do); but not all of them by any means. Boast should examine the papers of Sir Walter Buller, for example. And he could have examined how and why some cases that began in the Native Land Court went through numerous appeals all the way to the Privy Council, at ruinous expense to the Maori litigants.

Though Boast's study and the research on which it is based is confined to Crown purchases of Maori land, the failure to examine complementary private purchases in detail – which, after all were the main objective of the Native Lands Acts of 1862 and 1865 – means that he fails to bring out the full impact of the assault on remaining Maori land in the period. Certainly, there was competition at times but this was overshadowed by the determination of Pakeha colonists to acquire Maori land by hook or by crook: privately, if possible, but by the Crown if necessary, as Boast would have seen had he read more of their debates in parliament and their press. The Pakeha demand to acquire Maori land for settlement was incessant and unforgiving.

But I need not end my discussion of Boast on a sour note. His study of the history of Crown purchases is infused with a fine legal appreciation of the statutory law behind them and what is probably the best examination of the Native Land Court and its judges that I have read.

Finally, I acknowledge that, for the most part, the two books are refreshingly objective. They will go a long way to restoring the reputation of historians in the 'Treaty industry' who are often presumed to be handmaidens of the claimants.

Madness in the Family: Insanity and Institutions in the Australasian Colonial World, 1860-1914

by Catharine Coleborne. Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke, Hampshire and New York, 2010; xv, 220 pp. ISBN 9780230578074

Reviewed by Bronwyn Labrum

As Catharine Coleborne states in her Acknowledgements, she first thought of this project and the related publications, in Melbourne in 1997, and she has been able to bring it to fruition while a member of the History staff

at Waikato University, some 13 years later. In between she has published a steady stream of articles as well as a book from her PhD thesis about gender and madness in the colonial asylum in Victoria in the mid-nineteenth century. The personal shift from Australia to New Zealand is paralleled in her research trajectory: moving from examining one colony to an explicit 'transcolonial' perspective. This comes to fruition in this ambitious book which provides much food for thought for specialists in this field as well as those interested in writing beyond national histories.

The fruits of that deep engagement are evident in the way that Coleborne self-consciously engages with a now very large historiography about lunatic asylums which has flourished in its contemporary form over the last thirty years (but stretches back much longer). In the English-speaking world, and increasingly in colonial and settler contexts, there seem to be very few large public asylums that have not had their histories told, or been used by assiduous historians to examine questions of colonial psychiatry and doctors' careers, public health and welfare and institutional fortunes, and probably most interestingly, the vexed and still fertile field of how one gets at patient experiences. Given the public nature of these asylums and their key place as one of range of colonial institutions that grappled with how to deal with the 'unsuccessful' colonists and occasionally, indigenous peoples, their records have survived in large measure and constitute a considerable treasure trove, which successive generations of historians and their students have come to anew. Through all these studies the source material and institutional archive has loomed large as both an enabling and curtailing vehicle. Given that the asylum records are written primarily for administrative and medical reasons, and not by or from the point of view of patients, there is a lively historiography around how to deal with this and what it means, and a range of key methodological claims have been staked out.

It is the latter set of issues that Coleborne seeks to explore. As she lays out in her introduction, she investigates 'colonial families and their responses to illness, aiming to understand the formation of responses to insanity as an illness problem' (p.2). She emphasizes 'the value of official records and patient cases from four public institutions from each of the four colonies, new South Wales, Victoria, Queensland and New Zealand over the period 1860-1914', arguing that 'the analysis of these sources can contribute significantly to the historical investigation of the European family in the colonial context'. Most studies of asylums stay within national boundaries so Coleborne is to be congratulated for going beyond them. Situating the different asylums in their social and cultural settings, she examines the way that 'families appear inside official asylum writing, and in the letters to the institution, also commenting on how their stories can illuminate historical readings of insanity in this context; and finally, I show that new insights

about families in the colonial period can be gained through the use of asylum records' (p.2). Because the scholarly field has become so large she argues that it needs 'reimagining and reconceptualising'. Coleborne also places great store on bringing together what she argues are the hitherto discrete fields of family history and the history of insanity. She also frames this initial set of goals by saying that she is also bringing together social and cultural histories of this field in a new way. Yet it is really the archive and its potential that is driving the book: the conclusion is not about what this study tells us about families and insanity or the social and cultural history, rather it is titled 'Families, Insanity and the Archive'.

In a series of relatively short chapters, Coleborne looks in turn at 'Colonial psychiatry in the Australasian world' (read south eastern Australia and Auckland, with some mention of Dunedin); 'Families and the colonial hospital system'; 'Families and the language of insanity' (both expert and lay through case notes and other records); 'Writing to and from the asylum' (letters to and from families and patients, where they survive); 'Tracing families for maintenance payments' (and what that might say about family economies); and 'Porous boundaries: families, patients and practices of institutional care' (patients out on leave or probation). Although much of the content of the first three chapters is very familiar to specialists, Coleborne rightly directs our attention to letter-writing and what it reveals (and hides), the whole question of maintenance payments and arrangements more generally for public care and releasing patients on trial or probation. These are areas which have not been given due attention yet.

The study is based on 215 patients across the four institutions, which given the lengthy timeframe and how big these institutions were by 1914 (with thousands of patients) seems rather small. However, she is less interested in, and indeed argues that the field has been dominated by, quantitative work. So it is not until the conclusion that we find out how her 'sampling' (a term used loosely) was done and we never really know how typical or representative her selected patients are (As she notes, most of her material in fact comes from the late nineteenth century, when the records are at their richest). But systematic investigation of that kind is not Coleborne's aim. She is less interested in the classic questions of social history in this area: what we might be able to conclude about those experiences in the past in their own terms and how her post-structural conceptual framework is instantiated in material and social, as well as discursive terms.

So how does the Auckland asylum experience fare? And how does this book contribute to New Zealand studies, broadly conceived? One of the great strengths of this book is the decision to put New Zealand and Australian histories together in the same frame. Coleborne argues that she is not doing comparative or even transnational history (because Australia

was not a federation until 1901, but what about New Zealand's dominion status from 1907?). Nor is she doing trans-Tasman history. She is keen to 'disturb the patterns of nationalistic history-writing which tend to ignore commonalities and exchanges across national boundaries' and focus on the 'transcolonial' which offers up an 'entanglement of imperial and colonial experiences and identities' for analysis by historians. This is not the colony and the metropole relationship of existing transnational histories, but a more 'inclusive, regional history' (pp.13-14). Yet at various points the stubborn differences of New Zealand (Auckland) remain. The different uses of the asylum by Maori and Aborigines is one obvious feature, but so is the different size, scale and geographies of those parts of Australian and New Zealand discussed here, let alone the different urban, family and economic cultures. The different welfare structures and institutions, rightly brought into the same discussion as public health facilities here, are also glossed over rather quickly. One gets the feeling that Auckland is a small outpost of general Australian trends; less time is spent on delineating the differences of the Australian asylums from each other. The fact that a central system of asylum administration operated for much of this period here, whereas the Australian asylums operate under a state system, is one of a series of things that surely made a difference, as did the different situations and experiences that asylum staff and authorities had to contend with.

I am sure that Coleborne had more to say about these and other issues. The book is compact and would have benefitted from more room to elaborate these ideas and to provide more of the wonderful case material that she is interrogating so closely. Terms like 'gender', 'class', 'race', 'public' and 'private' are frequently used, but not closely or historically defined, when all of these changed in meaning over the period of her study. Indeed I would have liked more sense of comparing the family and the institutions at the beginning of the period with the eve of the First World War – a huge period of enormous changes in families, institutions, local and national societies and so on.

A valuable feature of this book is the extensive referencing of the historiography and it is this as well as a clear understanding of what the records can and cannot provide that drives the research and the book's structure. One of the 'major purposes' of this enquiry 'has been to find out how visible families are in the historical record, and to what extent their presence in the official record might shed light on their actions and presence in the past. By looking across colonial and archival sites, I demonstrate both their visibility and their invisibility; their multiple engagements with, and absences from, the problem of mental illness in the past' (p.14). While this might raise as many questions as it answers, it is clear that *Madness in the Family* will stimulate a fresh set of studies, that one hopes also pay

due attention to New Zealand experiences in the context of Australasia, but also the wider world of which both were a part. We need more histories like this that attempt such huge tasks to make us really think about our own frameworks and assumptions, and how we might in Coleborne's words 'extend our readings of families, 'madness', and the asylum for years to come' (p.153).

Hunting: A New Zealand History

by Kate Hunter. Random House, Auckland, 2009; 320 pp.
ISBN 9781869791544

Reviewed by Tom Brooking

This engagingly written and attractively produced book has made a significant contribution to our social, environmental and cultural history by paying attention to a topic neglected for too long by academic historians – hunting. As Kate Hunter demonstrates, nineteenth-century migrants from Britain relished the freedom to hunt and fish without fear of being gaoled or deported for poaching. All kinds of settlers hunted, both to augment their diets and for the sheer pleasure of roaming freely across the land in pursuit of game only available to the aristocracy in Britain. As New Zealand became more urban, hunting and fishing became more specialized in both the occupational and recreational senses, but some New Zealanders, along with tourists, still fish and hunt in the twenty-first century. Yet the only attention paid to this topic by academics apart from Hunter, is a PhD thesis on game hunting by Claire Brennan and another on duck shooting written by Carmen McLeod.

Brennan's work highlights that New Zealand's lack of mammals, or charismatic fauna like that of Australia, caused some problems for a country presenting itself to the world as a kind of parkland waiting to be developed. This lack helped bring about the introduction of large game such as deer, familiar fish, particularly trout and salmon, and familiar birds such as quail and pheasants along with breeds of ducks such as the mallard. Later pests such as rabbits and possums were also introduced to provide game for shooting as well as a supply of fur. The history of hunting is, therefore, intricately linked to the story of acclimatization and, consequently, of the environmental history of New Zealand. Understanding the significance of hunting thereby helps us better understand the making and building of a new society in what Alfred W. Crosby describes as a 'neo-Europe'. Furthermore, the so-called 'cultural turn' in historical writing has shifted attention from the narrow world of high politics and big business towards popular leisure activities and everyday work practice; and hunting involved both dimensions. Hunting has been much written about by so-called amateurs in a range of glossy magazines along with richly illustrated books and it has also received