



Claiming Territorial Rights: Peter Carey's Novels in a Global Literary Marketplace

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Abstract

This article engages with and builds upon scholarship that positions Peter Carey as a global novelist by examining the history and bibliographical detail of the majority of Carey's Australian, US and UK first editions. Paul Eggert has described the production of *True History of the Kelly Gang* (2000), as “one of the last significant works of literature to appear in a century that had seen remarkable advances in the technology of book production” and demonstrates “the difficulties faced by authors and publishers in attempting to produce identical editions for different markets” (Eggert 2006, 195–98). Stuart Glover extends Eggert's account to argue that, more broadly, such difficulties “introduced a tension into the previously cohesive triad of author, editor, and the single authorized text” (Glover 2011, 54). This article also extends Eggert's account of the editing and production of *True History of the Kelly Gang* by examining in more detail the production history of Carey's previous and subsequent novels to validate Eggert's claims, but, also, to acknowledge the many occasions when “identical editions” were achieved. In doing so, I will examine the conceptual space that emerges in the transnational negotiations between publishers, agents, editors, authors and other stakeholders, a space where the legal, cultural and logistical demands of distinct territories play out in the process of book production for each territory at different periods of time. This is significant in the case of Peter Carey's novels, because the University of Queensland Press (UQP) also played a role in contesting that space to assert the rights and cultural identity of Australian writers. The following account of Peter Carey and UQP in a global marketplace for books will serve as a touchstone for future research on the influence of territorial rights on the careers of Australian authors and their Australian publishers, and the subsequent distribution of books across established territorial boundaries.

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Introduction

This article engages with and builds upon scholarship that positions Peter Carey as a global novelist by examining the bibliographical detail of the majority of Carey's Australian, US and UK first editions. Paul Eggert has described the production of *True History of the Kelly Gang* (2000), as "one of the last significant works of literature to appear in a century that had seen remarkable advances in the technology of book production" and demonstrates "the difficulties faced by authors and publishers in attempting to produce identical editions for different markets" (Eggert 2006, 195–98). Stuart Glover extends Eggert's account to argue that, more broadly, such difficulties "introduced a tension into the previously cohesive triad of author, editor, and the single authorized text" (Glover 2011, 54). This article also extends Eggert's account of the editing and production of *True History of the Kelly Gang* by examining in more detail the production history of Carey's previous and subsequent novels to validate his claims, but, also, to acknowledge the many occasions when "identical editions" were achieved. In doing so, I will examine the conceptual space that emerges in the transnational negotiations between publishers, agents, editors, authors and other stakeholders, a space where the legal, cultural and logistical demands of distinct territories play out in the process of book production for each territory at different periods of time. This is significant in the case of Peter Carey's novels, because the University of Queensland Press (UQP) played a significant role in contesting that space to assert the rights and cultural identity of Australian writers (Poland and Indyk 2010; Jordan 2010). The following account of Peter Carey and UQP in a global marketplace for books will serve as a touchstone for future research on the influence of territorial rights on the careers of Australian authors and their Australian publishers, and the subsequent distribution of books across established territorial boundaries.

The descriptions and analyses of this approach are inevitably entangled with the questions posed by Keyvan Allahyari in *Peter Carey: The Making of a Global Novelist* (2023). Allahyari's mapping of distinct "geographies of literature" amplifies the tensions caused by negotiations conducted across territorial boundaries: "The struggle embedded in ... international literary geopolitics operates on a logic of unequal distribution of cultural significance to national territories, with authors associated with nations disposed to having or lacking a certain type of literary prestige" (4). While aiming to avoid perpetuating the dichotomy of "centre" and "periphery," Allahyari asks whether "a writer [can] be mainstream and canonical in the periphery, and anti-canonical in Britain or the United States?" (Allahyari 2023, 5–6). In taking this approach, Allahyari follows David Damrosch's idea of "elliptical refraction": "instead of seeing London as the centre of a circle ... we can present the literary culture of London as one focus of an ellipse, or more precisely as one focus for many different partially overlapping ellipses, each with a second focus elsewhere" (Damrosch 1995, 129–30). The "partially overlapping" segments of each ellipsis represent the main points of tension where cultural exchange and negotiation occur. It is during moments of such tension that we see that "Carey is a book phenomenon

as much as an author phenomenon, shaped by and in turn shaping the contemporaneous global publishing” (Allahyari 2023, 6).

It is “Carey as a book phenomenon” observed within the “partially overlapping” segments of three distinct publishing territories that is foregrounded in this article. The theoretical underpinnings of the approach taken here combine with traditional bibliographical description that aims to identify unique manifestations of a work, usually identified as separate editions for different markets or readers. Peter Carey might be regarded as an Australian novelist who writes Australian novels, but the circumstances of production means that his novels are published as American books and English books and Australian books. As Eggert and Glover have demonstrated, globalized publishing and improvements in technology have not guaranteed “a single text across all territories,” and yet, in many cases during Peter Carey’s career, this has been achieved in cost-cutting co-publishing arrangements that have shared camera-ready copy for offsetting in other territories. Such co-publishing arrangements affect bibliographical description and, ultimately, the meaning of the books that are produced.

In his *Principles of Bibliographical Description*, Fredson Bowers provides guidance for dealing with books produced through mechanical means such as stereotyping, electrotyping or photolithographic processes to produce copies of a distinct edition of a literary work. In effect, any book that is produced for another publisher in this way is, including the provision of camera-ready copy or the delivery of run-on sheets for binding with new title pages to indicate the new publishing context, a “subsidiary edition” of a “parent edition” that originated in the setting of type for production as a book (Bowers 1994, 381–88). While most readers will not blink an eye at this distinction, it is important for an account of a global author such as Peter Carey. In most cases, many of the so-called first editions of Carey’s novels in Australia, UK or USA are actually subsidiary editions that carry with them the book design and production cycles of an originating publisher. This bibliographical detail is obfuscated by new title pages, paper, binding and dustjackets, but necessary for a comprehensive description of the transmission of text from an author to their readers. As we will see in the case of Peter Carey’s novels, bibliographical detail is particularly important to describe the transmission of text when things go wrong. And yet, when things go right, the family resemblances of Australian, UK and US editions also tell us something about their existence within a global market for books.

The bibliographical details of a Peter Carey novel are a sign of the negotiations conducted in the overlapping sections of transnational literary space. If, as David Carter argues, Thomas Keneally’s is “an exemplary transnational career” because of his long-term presence in “world or international ‘literary space’” (Carter 2013, 365), Peter Carey’s career and UQP’s role in supporting this career are not far behind. Writers such as Keneally and Carey expand the scope of what Dan Sinykin has observed of American publishers in the so-called conglomerate era, especially the range and number of “people who live inside the colophon” of well-known publishing houses (Sinykin 2023, 3). This article looks beyond the US colophons to examine the tensions and outcomes for Peter Carey’s novels at the “partially overlapping” segments of the ellipses of the shifting “literary space” of Australian, British and US publishing. To achieve this, the following sections will describe the

formation of such literary spaces through various territorial agreements and copyright legislation. This will be followed by a section that positions Carey, UQP and other stakeholders within those fields, laying the foundations for a closer examination of individual cases in Peter Carey's career as a global novelist.

Traditional Markets and Territorial Rights

Peter Carey's international career evolved during a period in which changes to laws relevant to the international book trade disrupted a long-standing British and US monopoly on international rights, enabling Australian publishers to stake a stronger claim on the literary property produced by Australian authors. In his submission to the 2009 Productivity Commission's report on "Copyright Restrictions on the Parallel Importation of Books," Tim Winton described conditions for writers at the beginning of this period of change:

When I began to be published [in the 1980s], Australian writers were still faced with an awkward choice: to be edited and published in Australia and forego a British readership entirely, or to have work originate from London and have Australian readers buy Australian books as imports. (Winton 2009)

Winton's reference to the word "originate" is poignant here because of the competition between publishers to secure this right. The stakes for Australian publishers had risen since the fall of the so-called Traditional Markets Agreement (TMA), which until US courts ruled against it in 1976, had divided world book markets between US and UK territories, with Australasian rights remaining a contest between UK and Australian publishers.¹ As former UQP editor Craig Munro remembered the moment, "Now, our publishers could buy rights in American books and, as a consequence, also sell rights into the lucrative United States market" (Munro 2015, 119). Under such circumstances, negotiations between publishers would also include discussion of editorial control to ensure the quality of any given work, and also to ensure that the final text was suitable for each marketplace. For Munro, originating a novel was essential to maintaining the integrity of a text and the development of an author: "I believed in nurturing writers at every stage of their careers. Yet this was only possible by being the originating publisher" (Munro 2015, 168). Editors such as Munro had the best interests of their author in mind within the business constraints of the publishing house they worked for. The growing reality for authors was that their interests were increasingly managed by a network of stakeholders, including multiple editors, publishers and literary agents (Glover 2011).

In Australia, the fall of the TMA coincided with emergence of the Literature Board of the Australia Council for the Arts from 1973, established to support Australian writers and publishers in the production of Australian literature. By 1985, more than one thousand writers had received support from the Literature Board and

¹ American librarian Mary Nell Bryant has compiled the most comprehensive study of these changes, published in 1979 just three years after the TMA's supposed decline (Bryant 1979).

the publication of more than one thousand books had been subsidized (Carter 2009, 377). While these events had undeniably positive impacts on the writing and publishing of Australian literature, particularly the novel, the impact did not extinguish the uneasy relationship that existed between authors and publishers when it came to sharing the proceeds of direct sales and subsidiary rights, especially when income from international publication was on the cards. Sue Nichterlein's 1980 *Age* article on the impact of the "legal destruction of the agreement" appeared under the headline "Problems for Authors," and underlined the ongoing challenges of publishing "literature":

International rights ... do not bring much money to the author ... There is the satisfaction of having a New York or London imprint, but unless the publisher promotes the title it will be lost among the hundreds published each month, and be dead from lack of attention within 30 days. (Nichterlein 1980, 10)

For Australian publishers, support to authors from the Literature Board led to the perception of a loss of talent overseas, further demonstrating the continuing influence of the "traditional markets." In the words of Laurie Muller, general manager of UQP:

[An] insidious problem ... besets Australian quality fiction publishers—English cultural imperialism. It appears that Literature Board supported writers of obvious talent are targeted quickly for inclusion in London publishers' lists. These writers are edited and published out of England and exported back to Australia ... Think of the talent drain when these, essentially Australian, writers "leave the country" in publishing terms. David Malouf, Thomas Keneally, Morris West, Christopher Koch, Barabara Hanrahan, Patrick White, Randolph Stow, and so the list grows. They are no longer published from this country. (Muller 1985, 18)

Muller wrote several similar articles in the late 1980s, explaining the challenges of publishing economies, and sometimes berating authors for having unreasonable expectations. His objection to Australian writers being "published out of England and exported back to Australia" amplifies the contest to "originate" a work in a particular territory, highlighting the economic and cultural implications (Muller 1987, 29–34). As a UQP author, Carey was acutely aware of his publisher's feelings: "Laurie Muller had to buy the Australian rights to *Illywhacker* from Faber and Faber. I understand this sticks in his craw, and if I was him, I'd feel the same" (Carey 1986, 30).

Despite Carey's public empathy, he was not Laurie Muller and the contest between publishers and authors could become heated. In 1990, responding to Barbara Jefferis's Australian Society of Authors report, *The Good, the Bad and the Greedy: How Australian Publishers are Rated by Their Authors*, Muller wrote, "Authors ... are relatively unprofessional, ignorant of many of the business fundamentals of their profession and lacking in commercial experience" (Muller 1990, 23). While this might have stung a few authors reading these words in the *Australian Author*, Muller also conceded that "This too can be said of many publishers" (Muller

1990, 23). As Muller stressed to his readers, “publishing is fundamentally a business that is not particularly profitable,” an observation that holds true for the past as well as the future. In 1985, writing an account of the Australian publishing scene for the US *Publisher’s Weekly*, UQP’s Frank Thompson expressed a positive tone about the firm’s penetration of the American market that was tempered by disappointment: “Australian publishers have had reasonable success in selling US ... rights at [the Frankfurt Book Fair], but actual book sales to the North American continent have never come close to their potential” (Thompson 1985, 30–32). In terms of the machinations of the American publishing trajectories of many Australian authors in the late 1970s and 1980s, it was the broad economies of publishing and the technologies supporting the industry that frequently swayed the decision-makers in Australian, British and American publishing houses towards new publications.

In the overlapping literary spaces of transnational publishing, decision-making was not done in isolation and so had a material effect on Australian novels that were turned into Australian, British or American books. In the US, the development of printing technologies combined with changes to copyright laws that no longer required non-US citizens to have their work completely manufactured in the USA (i.e. typeset, printed and bound) in order to receive copyright protection.² This meant that publishers could more reasonably consider co-publishing agreements that reduced the costs of book production when one publisher took responsibility for typesetting, copy-editing and printing, either printing extra sheets for another publisher, or providing another publisher with camera ready copy.³ This was usually the responsibility of the originating publisher directly selling rights to another publisher or licensing such rights through an author’s literary agent.

Peter Carey was a vocal critic of any plans to dismantle the territorial copyright that enabled such licensing. At the end of the 1980s, in response to a proposal from the Price Surveillance Authority to abandon territorial copyright and implement an open market, Carey made his position clear: “Copyright is the only thing a writer has to sell ... Writers look at the notion of exclusive copyright territories and know it is their best hope of survival in a very tough world” (Carey 1989/1990, 14). As a UQP author in the early stages of his writing career, Carey was represented in London since the late 1960s by Deborah Rogers, who eventually reached into the American market through Elaine Markson in 1979.⁴ In 1984, UQP’s Laurie Muller asserted a claim on his Australian author that was clear and direct: “We believe the three main English speaking markets for Peter’s work, Australasia/North America/UK, should be treated separately and that we should be able to deal separately for Australasia rather than through a London-based publisher, be it Faber or whoever.”⁵ UQP favored the acquisition of world rights from their authors, enabling

² On the changes to copyright law and the effects of manufacturing and imports, see Schrader (1971, 218); and Rayward (1968).

³ For a good account of the options for Australian publishers in relation to the US market, see Poland and Indyk (2010).

⁴ Elaine Markson to Rob Cowley (Random House), 18 June 1979, Random House Records, 1925–1999, Columbia University, Box 1580.

⁵ Muller to Deborah Rogers, 3 December 1984, UQP Records, Fryer Library.

the publisher to license works in other markets, but it faced challenges from both authors and literary agents. Carey described the conditions for Australian writers at this time as “iniquitous” because of Australian publishers’ expectations that they hold the licence for world rights of an author’s work, leaving the business of selling to other countries to the publishing house, and not an independent literary agent.⁶ This arrangement is in the best interest of the publisher, but rarely in the best interest of the author who might attract a greater income from separate agreements with publishers from different markets, managed by a literary agent. On this topic, Carey wrote, in 1986, “It would not surprise anyone in the publishing world to hear it said that a good London agent will normally be more successful selling novels in London than a publisher who has just flown in from Brisbane” (Carey 1986, 30).

Carey Breaks into the UK and US Book Markets

With support from his London and US literary agents, and independent of UQP, Carey’s literary agents pulled off one of the most difficult maneuvers in Australian book history by having a book of short stories published in New York before a first novel in that territory: *The Fat Man in History, and Other Stories* (Random House, 1980). Carey had been writing fiction since the 1960s and had published many short stories in Australian magazines before UQP published two collections, *The Fat Man in History* (1974) and *War Crimes* (1979). As Carey’s international prospects became more apparent, Deborah Rogers introduced Carey to Faber and Faber, and Elaine Markson reached out to Random House. Markson sent copies of Carey’s books with a selection of reviews to Rob Cowley at Random House in June 1979, noting that “I think Carey is wonderful, as original a talent as Ian McEwan. I hope you’re moved, awed, divinely inspired.”⁷ Cowley had made an offer for the rights to both collections by August 1979, but proposed an alternative publishing situation: “Our feeling was that the best way to introduce Peter Carey to an American audience would be to combine the best stories from the two books into a single collection.”⁸ This proposition set off a complicated series of discussions about copyright and the distribution of profits, because UQP held the rights to the first collection while Rogers was managing the rights of the second volume on behalf of Carey.

In New York, Cowley began to offer editorial suggestions about the stories selected for publication in the American edition, including their order and some problems with similar endings.⁹ He wrote to Faber’s Robert McCrum, who was Carey’s London editor, explaining the situation and organizing the production of sheets or plates in order to share the costs of the edition. Responsibility for setting copy

⁶ Carey in discussion with David Carter, July 2007.

⁷ Elaine Markson to Robert Cowley, 18 June 1979, Random House Records, 1925–1999, Columbia University, Box 1580.

⁸ Cowley to Diana J. Bingham (UQP), 30 August 1979, Random House Records, 1925–1999, Columbia University, Box 1580.

⁹ Carey to Cowley, [‘October the twenty-something’] 1979, Random House Records, 1925–1999, Columbia University, Box 1580.

eventually went to Faber, which meant that the American edition was offset from camera ready copy of the English edition, and so a subsidiary edition, rather than a genuine American edition.¹⁰ Cowley made sure that his editorial suggestions were executed in the English setting, particularly some excessive “weeping” in the closing of stories.¹¹ From the start, the US edition was managed and edited from New York in collaboration with British counterparts, a situation with which Carey was comfortable. In a letter to Cowley, Carey expressed how it felt to be published by Random House: “IT FEELS BLOODY FANTASTIC. THANK YOU.”¹² Except for the copyright negotiations, UQP was not involved in the production of this transatlantic co-published edition of *The Fat Man in History*. This would change with Carey’s novels when UQP staked a stronger claim in the overlapping spaces of the transnational marketplace for books.

The Editorial Logistics of Territorial Publication

Before a permanent move to New York City in 1989, Carey consolidated his international reputation with *Bliss* (1981), *Illywhacker* (1985) and *Oscar and Lucinda* (1988), the latter winning Carey the first of his two Booker Awards. These three novels were published in a partnership between UQP, Faber and, in New York, Harper & Row. During this period, Faber’s Robert McCrum occupied the central editorial role, a position that would remain constant throughout the next phase of Carey’s career, until this post was taken over in New York by Knopf and Gary Fisketjon. Knopf’s first Carey title was *The Tax Inspector*, released in 1992.

As with *The Fat Man in History*, Faber was the originating publisher for *Bliss*, coordinating the typesetting and copy-editing for their UK edition before sending camera ready copy overseas for offsetting the Australian and US editions. In the case of *Bliss*, the UK and Australian editions were printed and bound in Hong Kong, the latter, in addition to changes to title pages, carried a darker dustjacket (Munro 2015, 126). Craig Munro recalls being relegated to “fact-checker” for Faber’s UK edition of *Illywhacker*: “As Faber was the originating publisher—responsible for editing, designing, setting, and proofing the text of the novel—UQP’s involvement in its production was limited” (Munro 2015, 163). Copyright statements in the books declare that the UQP edition was “Typeset by University of Queensland Press” and Faber’s edition was “Photoset by Wilmaset Birkenhead,” but identical page design confirms that UQP offset their edition from Faber’s camera-ready copy, initiating an arrangement that would continue for the next fifteen years.

¹⁰ Cowley to Robert McCrum, 2 November 1979, Random House Records, 1925–1999, Columbia University, Box 1580; Memo Marylea O’Reilly to Cowley, 13 November 1979, Random House Records, 1925–1999, Columbia University, Box 1580. Cowley to McCrum, 7 January 1980, Random House Records, 1925–1999, Columbia University, Box 1580.

¹¹ Cowley to McCrum, 10 January 1979, Random House Records, 1925–1999, Columbia University, Box 1580.

¹² Carey to Cowley, 16 November 1979, Random House Records, 1925–1999, Columbia University, Box 1580.

The editorial work that preceded the typesetting and offsetting of *Illywhacker* aside, each edition faced its readers with alternative jackets: UQP featuring a black cockatoo with three blue cages on a maroon background; and Faber a caricature of an old man chewing a match. Robert Crawford's image for the Harper and Row jacket was much more detailed. As Nicholas Birns describes the US edition, readers are presented with "a light-blue background and a picture of an extravagant and out-sized orange trees against a background of smaller and more conventional-appearing green trees, among which a group of people in the middle distance is gazing not at us but at the landscape" (Birns 2017). Birns concludes that the "cover's imagery ... told its audience to expect high art, in the mode of magical realism." While it is debatable what the other jackets are telling their audience to expect, the variations of livery that enwraps photographic reproductions of the English publisher's typesetting draw attention to the material interface between Carey's narrative and his three primary audiences for whom he was developing a reputation for delivering literary fiction (Fig. 1).

Carey's international profile was boosted when *Illywhacker* was shortlisted for the 1985 Booker Prize, combining with other Australian prizes and short listings to make his future work attractive to publishers across the world. Industry expectations suggest that a Booker win "virtually guaranteed additional UK sales of 50,000 copies or more, and even shortlisted books received a significant sales boost" (Munro 2015, 166). With this success, UQP and Faber remained Carey's Australian and UK publishers, maintaining Faber's Robert McCrum as the primary editorial guide with



Fig. 1 The UQP, Faber and Harper and Row editions of Peter Carey's *Illywhacker*

Harper and Row and UQP providing their own editorial guidance as required. As Carey's literary agents, Deborah Rogers and Elaine Markson stepped in to more directly control the sale of Carey's rights across all markets, rather than leaving their author to defer to Faber as the originating publisher with control over the dispersal of world rights. As Craig Munro put it, "*Illywhacker* was the last of Peter Carey's novels for which UQP would be required to go, cap in hand, to Faber for Australian rights" (Munro 2015, 169). This new arrangement did not mean, however, that the production and distribution of copy for printing by each publisher would go smoothly. From Carey's word-processed pages, or offset or reset from another publisher's copy, Carey's publishers were challenged by the many hands that contributed to the production of a Peter Carey novel. According to Stuart Glover, "the division of writing into a multi-agent, iterative process ... reminds us of the complexity of contemporary book production: that a writer, several editors, different territories, different cover art, different launch dates, and multiple drafts may be involved" (Glover 2011, 60).

The "division of writing" had become routine for Carey by the time the manuscript of *Oscar and Lucinda* arrived on the editorial desks of his three publishers in 1987. Like none of his previous books, Carey "had to weigh up the relative merits of three distinct sets of editorial responses, not counting those of his agents in London and New York" (Munro 2015, 221). Offsetting from camera ready copy ensured that *Bliss* and *Illywhacker* differed only in the paratextual materials that marked them as books designed for particular markets. However, this did not occur in the case of *Oscar and Lucinda* when Harper and Row produced a text replete with printing errors and a monumental "fuck-up" occurred when the entire Chapter 74 was omitted from the first Australian and English editions.¹³ As Carey later explained,

This chapter was somehow dropped out. The printer, seeing the chapters ran from 73 to 75, simply re-numbered all the chapters, which is why the first edition has 110 chapters not 111 ... The American publishers of *Oscar and Lucinda* (Harper's Row) thought that this edition was too thick and heavy. They therefore reset the type! Working from a corrected set of proofs, they managed to include all!!! chapters. However my American editor failed to tell me this, or then check new setting which then went to press with typographical errors. So just as the book was being reviewed by the *New York Times*, it was being recalled. (Carey 2013)

The missing chapter only came to light some years later when a group of literature students from Singapore compared the US and UK editions (Munro 2015, 225). Despite its errors, with superior paper and Fred Marcellino's jacket design of the glass church that features in the novel, the US edition is a much finer book than the UK and Australian editions. With variations in background color and typographical design, the UK and Australian editions display the same image of the faces of the novel's main characters partially obscured by playing cards. The dustjacket was designed by Pierre le Tan, the designer of Faber's *Illywhacker* dustjacket, indicating

¹³ Carey in discussion with David Carter. July 2007.

a continuity in book design for British and Australian readers, thereby distinguishing it from the American book, not only in the text of the novel, but in the appearance it would take on the shelves of booksellers.

Over time, with corrections and reinstatement of the missing chapter, the three texts would more closely align, but remain distinct manifestations of the book that won for Peter Carey his first Booker Prize. Until notices about the Booker win started appearing on book jackets, these early editions directed attention to *Bliss* and *Illywhacker* as Carey's breakthrough novels. With a small square portrait of a grinning Carey on the dustjacket, Faber's edition declared that "The publication of *Illywhacker* established Peter Carey as the most important Australian writer of his generation. *Oscar and Lucinda* places him in the front rank of international fiction today." UQP's edition fills the entire back section of its dustjacket with a portrait of Carey, gazing seriously at the viewer, hands in pockets, and standing in front of a louvred background. Blurbs from the *London Review of Books* and the *Washington Post* announced his international reputation. Harper and Row went with a smiling portrait of a casual Carey and topped off that portrait with the testimony of the enigmatic writer of speculative fiction, Harlan Ellison: "The well of talent from which Peter Carey draws his tales produces work as sweet and refreshing as a mineral spring ... Carey nears the summit occupied by Borges and Pynchon and a very few others." Peter Carey had become more than an Australian writer, brushing shoulders, in the eyes of a growing number, with esteemed writers of speculative fiction, magical realism and absurdist fiction. Carey was fast becoming a global novelist, and yet the book jackets maintained a distinct regional character.

Three years passed before Carey's next novel, *The Tax Inspector*, was co-published in 1991, with Knopf replacing Harper and Row to initiate a new editorial and publishing dynamic, occupying the "overlapping literary space" with UQP and Faber. During this time, Carey had moved to New York to work and write. Like many full-time writers, Carey supplemented his income from writing with teaching jobs, first at New York University one night a week, then later at Princeton, The New School and Barnard College. Alongside these teaching jobs, he wrote *The Tax Inspector* and *The Unusual Life of Tristan Smith*, falling into a self-described financial crisis when these novels did not reach the same sales levels as *Oscar and Lucinda* (Munro 2015, 230). As Carey remembers it: "*Jack Maggs* 'saved my arse.'" ¹⁴ Until *Jack Maggs* was published in 1997, UQP, Faber and Knopf proceeded with a co-publishing arrangements in which Faber set the text and then sent the camera ready copy to the USA and Australia for printing and binding in those territories. ¹⁵ For the UK, this is clearly signaled on the title page of Faber's editions of *The Tax Inspector* and *The Unusual Life of Tristan Smith*: "Photoset by Parker Typesetting Service Leicester." UQP's editions were "Printed in Australia" and Knopf announced their edition was "Manufactured in the United States of America," concealing the transatlantic textual provenance that meant that the Australian and

¹⁴ Carey in discussion with David Carter, July 2007.

¹⁵ Craig Munro to Robert McCrum, 1 March 1991, UQP records, Fryer Library.

US editions were subsidiary editions of Faber's UK edition, indicating a hesitancy within these publishing houses to fully invest in a separate edition.

Nevertheless, the paratextual features of the editions, such as jacket designs and various production values, clearly distinguish the editions as books in their material appearance. UQP's bland yellow dustjacket for *The Tax Inspector* featured another large portrait of the author smiling at the viewer from the back cover, the blandness a stark contrast to the detail of Georges-Pierre Seurat's *Le Cirque*, which appeared on UQP's dustjacket of *The Unusual Life of Tristan Smith*. Blurbs from the Australian critic Peter Pierce and the English novelist Angela Carter were used on both dustjackets, the former reminding readers that "*Illywhacker* is the finest and funniest picaresque novel yet written in Australia," and the latter referring to Carey's Booker success: "Oscar and Lucinda is a novel of extraordinary richness, complexity and strength ... it fills me with wild, savage envy, and no novelist could say fairer than that." In addition to a growing list of praise for each novel from prestigious periodicals, Faber's jackets declared "*The Tax Inspector* is a dark and brilliant achievement, a work of astonishing originality by one of the masters of the contemporary novel" and *The Unusual Life of Tristan Smith* shows Peter Carey "working at the height of his powers, a contemporary master of the picaresque." As the newcomer in this publishing triumvirate, Knopf's jackets include blurbs from a number of veteran reviewers such as *New York Times* reviewer Christopher Lehmann-Haupt, Edmund White of *New Yorker* fame and Carolyn See, a professor of English at UCLA. A well-known Australian voice was used for *The Tax Inspector*, Tom Keneally positioning Carey next to literary masters: "Peter Carey is to Sydney what Joyce is to Dublin ... Carey is an absolute master of language and storytelling. Get your money on him as one of the great figures of the cusp of the millennium." While the dustjackets continued to signal a territorial independence, the reliance of Knopf and UQP on a Faber typesetting suggest an unwillingness to gamble on the extra costs of typesetting and book design for their own editions. This would change with the two novels that amplified his reputation with national and international literary prizes.

With *Jack Maggs* (1998) and *True History of the Kelly Gang* (2000), Carey worked through to the twenty-first century with the same team of editors and publishers that had maintained his position as an Australian expatriate author since 1989. Yet, despite having previous textual histories that were relatively stable because of the use of offset printing technologies through cooperation between publishers on three continents, this stability would start to unravel due to more singular attention to book design within the separate publishing houses. UQP advised Deborah Rogers that, for *Jack Maggs*, "We plan to set/design our own edition entirely," asserting independence from their UK co-publisher.¹⁶ For the first time in the history of publishing Carey's fiction, UQP declared on the title page of *Jack Maggs*: "Typesetting and Design—University of Queensland Press | Typography—12/14 ½ pt Bembo." Knopf also went their own way, declaring in a colophon in the end papers of its edition that the book was set in Caledonia typeface by ComCom, an R.R. Donelley & Sons Company, and printed and bound by Quebecor Printing, Fairfield, Pennsylvania.

¹⁶ UQP to Deborah Rogers, 13 September 1996, UQP Records, Fryer Library.

The copyright page acknowledges that the novel was “Originally published in Great Britain by Faber and Faber Limited,” but this book was “Manufactured in the United States of America,” combining with the colophon to declare itself to be an American book. Faber also went its own way with book design, setting its own text and replacing its series of cartoonish Pierre le Tan jacket designs with a dark and expressionistic multi-media portrait of Jack Maggs by illustrators and stage designers Su Huntley and Donna Muir. This contrasted with UQP’s choice of Atkinson Grimshaw’s impressionistic *Liverpool Quay by Moonlight* (1887) for its jacket design. Providing further evidence of literary excellence, the back cover includes “Ovation from England and Australia | (Where *Jack Maggs* is a #1 Best-seller),” including glowing statements from the British literary critic Frank Kermode and the Australian poet Peter Porter, among others. Porter’s statement emphasizes Carey’s growing status: “Carey is a major world novelist, [and] *Jack Maggs* is a virtuoso piece of novel-writing by any standards ... energy alone makes him a natural to take up the challenge of competing with Dickens. In *Jack Maggs* he goes the full distance with him.” Extracted from the *Australian’s Review of Books* for the back cover of the American edition of *Jack Maggs*, Porter’s praise exemplifies the transnational character of Peter Carey’s fiction as he continued to work across the three main English-speaking territories open to him (Fig. 2).

Both Eggert and Stuart Glover have looked closely at the editorial and production cycles that lie behind *True History of the Kelly Gang*. Their textual studies demonstrate how central Knopf’s Fisketjon was to the texts that were printed for Australia,



Fig. 2 The UQP, Faber and Knopf editions of Peter Carey’s *Jack Maggs*

England and the USA, and also how the design and livery of the Knopf edition created a distinctive American book. Continuing with the editorial procedures consolidated in the production of *Jack Maggs*, Fisketjon asserted the primary editorial voice over Carey's manuscripts as he worked towards publication in the three markets. As Carey described the relationship in his acknowledgments for the American edition of *True History of the Kelly Gang*:

I laboured for four exhilarating weeks in collaboration with my editor Gary Fisketjon, whose green spiderweb annotations (delivered daily by messenger from midtown Manhattan, or Franklin, Tennessee, or Adelaide, South Australia) sometimes precipitated a storm of silent debate but always, day after day, page after page, resulted in a tighter, truer, better book. (Carey 2000, 355)

With Fisketjon at the editorial center of the novel via email, fax and post, the author worked with his other British and Australian editors by exchanging drafts of manuscripts and, eventually, page proofs, each working towards a consistency in word usage, presentation and design. The desire to originate Peter Carey remained strong, but, as Eggert shows, the challenges of Carey's plans to represent nineteenth-century usage and forms were defeated rather than enabled by advances in technology:

[UQP's Laurie] Muller wanted the UQP typesetting to be the source of the Knopf edition, partly from professional pride and partly to guarantee that UQP retained Australian territorial copyright. Carey wanted Australian spellings and diction, as well as historical accuracy, all of which required local editorial input. (Eggert 2006, 196–97)

In this instance, offsetting from camera ready copy was not an option, and so, in the editorial and technical requirements for preparing files ready for printers on three separate continents, "it became inevitable that there would be many differences between the two editions" (Eggert 2006, 197). Furthermore, for the first time, the English, American and Australian editions were all independently typeset, indicating the breakdown in cooperation in the overlapping literary space that had previously seen at least two co-published volumes for each Carey novel.

The most telling differences came in the form of book and jacket design. Knopf's book design and jacket faced the American reader with a definitive statement: "With all the force of a classic Western, *True History of the Kelly Gang* is ... at a distance of more than a century and many thousands of miles—a great American novel." This claim for inclusion in the American canon is subtly subverted by the choice of a detail from Sidney Nolan's painting *Landscape* (1947), the first painting from his Ned Kelly series of paintings, which Nolan himself described as "a tranquil scene for the subsequent violence." Faber went with an historical photograph of a mother and five small children at the front door of a slab hut, sourced from the State Library of New South Wales; and UQP settled on a transparent jacket through which the main title and author's name could be seen. The technical complications that Eggert describes had a significant impact on page design for each edition, leaving the US first edition the superior book in relation to the Faber and UQP editions.

The superiority of the US edition is seen in the map redrawn from the version that appears in UQP's edition as well as the inclusion of historical photographs and a detail of Thomas Carrington's engraving of Ned Kelly in armor with pistol in hand as a paratextual threshold for readers as they leafed through the opening pages. Faber used the same photograph for their title page but did not include a map or the Carrington engraving, using, instead, Allan Jordan's woodcut from Frank Clune's *A Noose for Ned* (1948) as the main feature on the back cover area of the dustjacket. While not commenting on the Faber edition, Carey reported that the US edition "looks more like a novel" than UQP's first edition. If *True History of the Kelly Gang* can be considered a "great American novel," then there might be some truth to one US reviewers claim that "these days Peter Carey is as much a New York novelist as he is an Australian novelist" (Halford 2020).

Such a claim holds up because of Carey's primary editorial influences. After seeing *True History of the Kelly Gang* published, UQP's Laurie Muller retired and Carey followed Carol Davidson to Random House, which remained Carey's Australian imprint until 2010 when Hamish Hamilton, part of Penguin since 1986 (then Penguin Random House since 2013), published *Parrot and Olivier in America* in conjunction with Faber and Knopf. Carey was pragmatic: "I stay where I am known."¹⁷ In New York, Carey was best known by Fisketjon, who stayed on as Carey's primary editor for *My Life as a Fake* (2003), which Fisketjon "didn't seem to be in love with, but did a good job," and *Theft: A Love Story* (2006), with which, according to Carey, Fisketjon was even less enamored.¹⁸ Carey's main editorial focus then shifted to Knopf publisher Sonny Mehta, whom Carey had known for decades. As Carey has said in multiple interviews, living in New York City and working with non-Australian editors has provided him with a useful "gauge to credibility."¹⁹

Even though Carey can say that in terms of readers there are "three countries that are equally important to me,"²⁰ the American marketplace has played a central role in the composition, editing, publishing and promotion of his novels. Indeed, the Random House Australian editions of both *My Life as a Fake* and *Theft: A Love Story* are described on the verso of the title page as "A Knopf book | Published by Random House Australia Pty Ltd" signaling the multinational structures that fall below Bertelsmann's acquisition of Random House in 1998, which also ingested Knopf, Penguin, Doubleday and Vintage, among other imprints. Despite this connection, the Knopf and Faber editions of *My Life as a Fake* both use the Knopf typesetting designed by Virginia Tan and composed by Stratford Publishing Services, Brattleboro, Vermont. The Random House Australian edition went its own way with a design by Jenny Grigg and typesetting going to Midland Typesetters in Maryborough, Victoria. Virginia Tan and Stratford Publishing Services came together again for *Theft: A Love Story*, this time providing the typesetting for Knopf, Faber and Random House, the fifth occasion in which the typesetting of Carey's UK, US and

¹⁷ Carey in discussion with David Carter, July 2007.

¹⁸ Carey in discussion with David Carter, July 2007.

¹⁹ Carey in discussion with David Carter, July 2007.

²⁰ Carey in discussion with David Carter, July 2007.

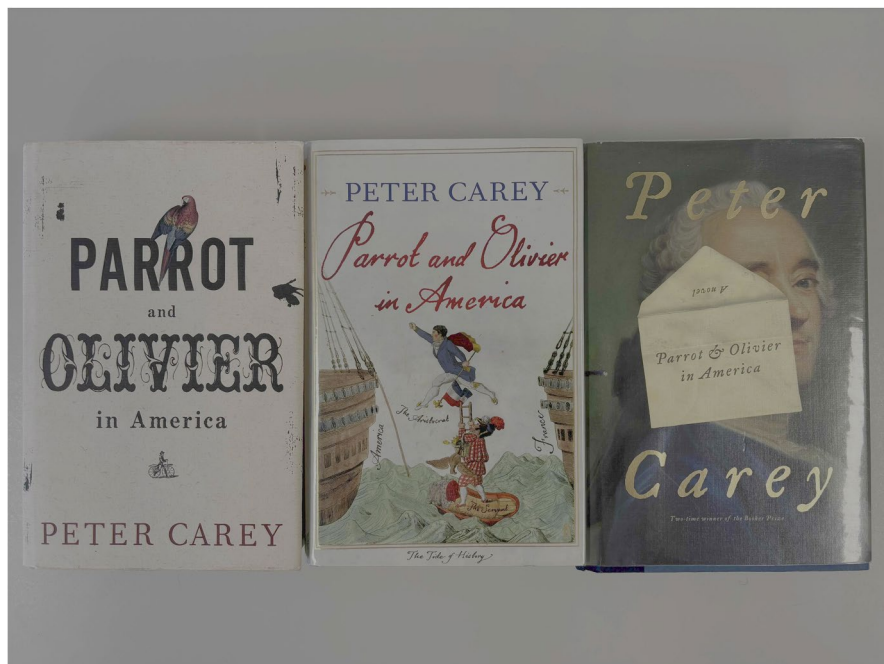


Fig. 3 The Hamish Hamilton, Faber and Knopf editions of Peter Carey's *Parrot and Olivier in America*

Australian editions were identical, albeit with the variations in paratextual features related to title pages, binding and dustjackets. Demonstrating, once again, that such cooperation was rarely stable in Carey's global career, for Carey's next novel, *Parrot and Olivier in America*, Faber used Knopf's typesetting, while Hamish Hamilton organized their own typesetting to produce a unique Australian edition (Fig. 3).

Conclusion

Towards the end of 2025, after fifty years of publishing his fiction, Peter Carey announced that he was no longer writing novels. The first decade of the twentieth century saw the rapid growth of e-commerce in publishing, and the further development of online booksellers such as Amazon that would eventually dominate the market for books. Carey is not a fan of Amazon's international reach: "Amazon doesn't give a fuck about writers and territorial copyright. Amazon is a shop-keeper."²¹ While the effects of the so-called Amazon era (McGurl 2021) on Australian novels in a global marketplace are still emerging, the weakening of territorial constraints on physical books and e-books will be one of the central factors that influence how the books of Australian novelists reach their readers. The desire to originate an

²¹ Carey in discussion with David Carter, July 2007.

Australian novel remains strong amongst independent Australian publishers, and the economic and cultural benefits of territorial restrictions continue to stir up passionate debates (Zwar and Lawson 2021). One way to understand these debates is to look at the long history of Australian books and authors in the global literary marketplace, especially the bibliographical details that distinguish one edition from another or indicate family resemblances that derive from co-publishing arrangements across territorial boundaries. Prominent examples such as Peter Carey's long career as a global novelist provide a rich case study for considering the continuities that extend from previous eras of book production and also the discontinuities or disruptions presented by the developments of the digital era.

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