



# Rewriting History: Peter Carey's Fictional Biography of Australia. (Costerus New)

*Andreas Gaile*

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Andreas Gaile

**Rewriting History: Peter Carey's Fictional Biography of Australia. (Costerus New)** Andreas Gaile  
Peter Carey is one of the most richly awarded and critically acclaimed novelists of the present day. Most of his fictions relate to questions of Australian history and identity. *Rewriting History* argues that taken together Carey's novels make up a fictional biography of Australia. The reading proposed here considers both key events in the life of the subject of Carey's biography (such as the exploration of the interior of the continent, the dispossession of the Aborigines, the convict experience, the process of Australia's coming of age as a postcolonial country) as well as its identity. *Rewriting History* demonstrates how Carey exposes the lies and deceptions that make up the traditional representations of Australian history and supplants them with a new national story - one that because of its fictional status is not bound to the rigidities of traditional historical discourse. At a time of momentous cultural change, when Australia is being transformed from a "New Britannia in another world" to a nation not merely in, but actually of the Asia-Pacific region, Carey's fiction, this book argues, calls for the construction of a postcolonial national identity that acknowledges the wrongs of the past and gives Australians a sense of cultural orientation between their British past and their multicultural present.

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