specific topics. It certainly points the way to other fountains to drink from. It's a book I would like see in the reference section of every library.

A HISTORY OF AUSTRALIAN CRICKET
Reviewed by Richard Cashman, University of New South Wales.

There have been a number of previous histories of Australian cricket, single and even multi-volume works, by Jack Pollard, A.G. 'Johnnie' Moyes and a number of other writers. This history is quite different from any previous work, in fact, remarkably so.

While most previous histories have celebrated almost two centuries of Australian cricket, this book is far more critical. Harte has long been a blunt and forthright critic of many of the policies of the Australian cricket establishment. Because of his tough, uncompromising and sometimes sharp judgments, this book will not be welcome in Australian official cricket circles.

Another feature of this book is the attempt by the author to draw together and synthesise much scholarly research on Australian cricket of the last two decades. This book contains a useful bibliography which lists monographs, articles (including some published in academic journals) and some eleven theses.

But the real value of this book lies in Harte's ready access to hitherto-unseen primary sources. Harte explains his good fortune in the Preface:

Toward the end of 1989 a message left on my answering machine sent me scurrying to the palatial home of a cricket identity. He knew of my work and felt, somewhat strongly, that this cricket history should reflect the truth as best it could. He asked me to look in some trunks. What was there was staggering and forms a large part of this work (p. xv).

Harte is the first historian of Australian cricket who has gained full access to the records of the Australian Cricket Board, including its minutes, He is thus able to write an authoritative political and administrative history of Australian cricket: how it was governed; the ideology of those who ran the game; the relationship of officials to players; the financial structure of the game and the relationship of cricket officials to government, the media and society in general.

The first part of the book explores the rise of local and colonial (now state) cricket associations leading to the need for a more national authority, the Australasian Cricket Council, 1892-1901, which was largely ineffectual because of intercolonial jealousy. The creation of the Board of Control (later the Australian Cricket Board) in 1905 was a different matter because it quickly
stamped its authority on the game crushing player resistance by 1912. The sorry tale of Australian cricket politics' which has claimed 'many fine men right until the present day' (p. 241) is a central theme of this book. The Board's first strongmen, William McElhone and Edward Bean, were both iron-fisted administrators who had little time and thought for the players. They created a tradition which was followed by many later Board members. Harte depicts the Australian Cricket Board (ACB) as dominated by free masons, deeply conservative, often pettyminded and power-hungry. They were a clique, who perpetuated their own and were answerable to no one. While players had a career of a decade or two at the top Board officials were there for life.

Very few first-class cricketers made it to the Board hierarchy. Only three Australian Test captains have been Board members: Joe Darling, Sir Donald Bradman and Greg Chappell. Chappell attempted to introduce reform to the ACB but, frustrated by 'archaic' administrators, he resigned.

This book has many striking revelations about the ACB. For much of its history the ACB has been staunchly Anglophile and imperial but was remarkably unsympathetic to assisting other emerging Commonwealth cricket nations, such as India and New Zealand. ACB officials were also intensely suspicious of the media, radio and later television, and their inability to deal with the more commercial world of televised cricket led to a major crisis of Australian cricket, World Series Cricket, in the late 1970s. Harte catalogues vividly how the ACB had to grovel to a media magnate, Kerry Packer, and his marketing organisation, PBL Marketing, after the truce of 1979.

This is a very revealing and immensely valuable critical history of the ACB. It is a warts and all history in which no issue is avoided. There are interesting references to racism, sectarianism, homosexuality in cricket and their impact on the administration of the game.

While the book contains many insights into the social history of the game, it is not a social history of the game as such. To adequately write a social history may have taken Harte another 800 pages to achieve. Besides, his focus is rather more on those who wield power in the game rather than the players or the spectators. The players are frequently depicted as mere pawns in the hands of manipulative officials. While A History of Australian Cricket does include much useful social history material—such as cricket's high and low points—more explanation is warranted.

Some of Harte's judgments are sharp and even opinionated such as his suggestion that Kim Hughes was prone to 'ego trips and tantrums'. While Harte seems keen to pull Victor Trumper off his 'saintly' pedestal, he seems far less critical of Sir Donald Bradman who is variously described as a 'brilliant administrator', a man with a remarkable 'mind' and 'great vision' who was passionate for the cause of the players. Still Harte does make a case why