Sam Silverthorne: Menace
(Hachette Livre Australia)
Crew, Gary

Research Background

*Sam Silverthorne: Menace* is a 50,000 word young adult novel. It is the second novel in the *Sam Silverthorne Trilogy*. The work particularly focuses on the aftermath of the Opium Wars, with strong historical references to the British Naturalists collecting species from the newly discovered exotic kingdoms of Britain’s expanding Oriental Empire. The research question posed by the creative work was: Can the 19th Century Boy’s Own Novel be recreated in the 21st Century without the racism and sexism usually found in that peculiarly Victorian Genre of Empire?

Research Contribution

The innovation undertaken by Dr Crew was to write an adventure novel for 21st century boys based on the great Colonial adventures undertaken in the 19th century whereby a young man went in search of new natural science species in order to mount museum exhibitions (particularly in private collections and the newly constructed Museum Of natural History, South Kensington - opened 1881) in order to further the interests of Science. Given the public interest in the survival of threatened species today, Dr Crew felt that there was a market for such novels, especially if the somewhat politically incorrect racism and sexism of the Boy’s Own genre’s 19th Century counterpart was removed for today’s readership.

The new knowledge demonstrated in the book is two fold

[1] Content: The introduction of concepts of the Victorian obsession with the collection of Natural Science Specimens into the contemporary teenage narrative, especially when this obsession (Barber. 1980. pp13-27) is linked to Britain’s aggressive role in inciting the Opium Wars.

[2] Voice: to introduce modern youth to the sophisticated delights of 19th Century language and voice, with which most of today’s youth would be unfamiliar.

Research Significance

On the basis of the success of his first Sam Silverthorne novel, Hachette commissioned this second title in the trilogy.