**Representations in Shame**

Mrs Rodolph has a stoic Thatcheresque appearance, grasping a clip board to her chest as she surveys the women workers in her factory. She is shot in a low camera angle to enhance her status and control of her workers. As the sole owner of the only industry in Ginborak, The Meat works factory, Mrs Rodolph represents power, wealth and influence in the town. She employs many of the town’s men and women. Her influence and power can be seen when she fires both Ross and Penny, when Ross questions her lack of control over her son Andrew. She also tries to assert her influence over Lizzie's desire to press charges against the gang of boys who raped her by offering Lizzie a holiday and new clothes. In a final scene in the film after her son Andrew and Danny have accidently killed Lizzie, Mrs Rodolph is present still attempting to protect her son and influence any possible litigation.

Asta Caddell

Asta Caddell the central character in Shame is introduced to the audience as a leather clad bikie and her figure is not initially identified as a male or female. Cultural dominant social values of the production period would indicate a man. The reaction of the men outside the pub to the figure's arrival and removal of helmet-wolf whistle, leers and standing up - is condemned by Asta's firm stare back at them. Her representation immediately challenges the town of Ginborak's dominant social values of defined gender roles and stereotypes. Asta Cadell represents the emerging value during the production period of women’s equality and independence.

During this decade women had some success in their struggle to obtain the same rights as Men. In 1983 the introduction of a new sex discrimination law meant that business could no longer advertise that they either wanted males or females to apply for particular jobs. Women’s status within the workplace was also gaining ground .In 1986 Mary Gaudron became the first women judge in the High court. Women’s emergence in gaining further equality through positions of authority is evident globally through Margaret Thatcher's victory in leading the Tories to win their third successive term in Britain.

Asta's representation as independent women riding a motorcycle through the Australian countryside establishes her as one of the first female protagonists in Australian film. As her character is developed it becomes apparent that she is a city barrister, which further challenges traditional rural values in the text where the women labour to bring up the children or work in the meatworks factory. When Asta becomes immersed in the social conflicts and rape culture inherent in the town she challenges the corrupt administration of the law, demanding justice.

Wal Cuddy

When Asta Cadell arrives at the local pub, enquiring after accommodation, Policeman Wal Cuddy immediately interjects and places an arm on her shoulder "You wouldn’t want to stay in a rough joint like this" In this opening sequence, Cuddy's sexist attitudes and patronising behaviour provides the basic thematic context that is developed throughout the rest of the film. Cuddy is portrayed as overweight, aging country policemen, passively complicit towards the rape culture that has a grip on the town. His name carefully constructed - Wal whose name symptomatically reverses the law, represents its local perversion. Sergeant Wal recalling the sinister representation of chips Rafferty’s cop in Wake in fright, takes it upon himself to direct Asta to the garage, his hand seemingly glued to her shoulder.

As the narrative progresses it becomes evident that it is Cuddy's lack of law administration that allows the terror inflicted upon the town's women to become a rite of passage for the young men. Throughout the film Cuddy’s suspicion of Asta as an outsider is exploited through his condescending remarks and sexual innuendo.

His belligerence to the rape of Lizzie Curtis is evident when he visits the Curtis family and sneers "How’s your family Tim", At the Curtis Garage sergeant Wal Cuddy crowds over Asta, his fly at one point framed above her head as she works over her bike.

Cuddy's representation challenges social values of the production period where justice, law and order and civil liberties where valued in the community.

This was evident in 1987 when an enquiry headed up by Tony Fitzgerald, QC, was set up to investigate claims of corruption in the Queensland police force. After extensive investigation the inquiry found that police and some politicians were guilty of crime and drug trafficking. As a consequence the Queensland Police Commissioner was dismissed and dramatic reforms made to the police and electoral system.

When sergeant Wal angrily utters his most objectionable line of all to Asta about Lizzie's death" well I hope your bloody satisfied"- the reply is significant. Firstly Asta is too hurt to respond herself, Secondly the townspeople take over. Norma looks at Cuddy and holds Asta's hand " No Wal were not bloody satisfied- not by a long way-mate" Cuddy's corrupt influence in the town, like the Fitzgerald inquiry is no longer tolerated and his representation clearly challenges the values of the production period.

Mateship

Australian identity has long been defined in male terms, and with reference to the land (sees notes on bush legend). Mateship has invariably been exclusionary: everyone could join the club, provided they were male, white heterosexual: Australian masculinity is attached to his identity through the bush myth, predicated on his mastery, possession, control of another, the land. Shames social realist treatment of the country town undercuts the myths of mateship and the decent man of the bush. The film focuses on an intrinsic aspect of mateship, the obsession with conformity

The holy trinity of Australian masculinity - cars, drinking and mateship are all critiqued within the film. In particular the pub culture and mateship variously celebrated in Crocodile Dundee are exposed as violent, repressed and segragationalist. Critical upward angles of youths milling around their hot-rod cars, the car horns which announce the streets unsafe for women, alcohol as an alibi for violence , mateship's primacy over heterosexual relationships. A fundamental misogynist is evinced by the final remark of Danny , the leading rapist" Bloody women" Shame not only exposes and challenges the physical ruination in the female other implicit in mateships male self-definition, it also encourages reverberations for the masculines’ of national discourses.

The Land

Masculinity in the film is not heroically defined against the mythic landscape of Man from Snowy River, The Mad Maxes or Crocodile Dundee, who survives in and triumphs over the harsh land: films made during the 80's. Rather it cannot escape its stifling country town location. The representation of the land often romantically celebrated in its function in Australian film is visually restrained in Shame. Once Asta has arrived in Ginborak - with the one exception of the swimming hole, the women’s haven- there are no shots of landscape in epic or picturesque guise. All but two of the shots of Asta exulting in her push bike ride and with Lizzie on her motorbike are either upward -angles or medium close ups which occlude any view of the landscape. It is hard to aesthetics a landscape whose prime function in the film is to supply kangaroo meat. It certainly offers no haven for romance. The townspeople are virtually interned by their oppressive secret: in their homes, at the factory, in the pub, in the supermarket. Only the rapists and the cop enjoy the freedom of cruising the streets, and the roads outside the town. The representation of the land in Shame challenges the production period values where conservation and "Keep Australia Beautiful" campaigns espoused cultural pride and preservation of the Australian landscape. Shame presents the countryside as a dangerous place where the community is vulnerable to acts of violence from the town’s men

**Example of a Representation**

**Indigenous Australians**

In the opening sequence when Asta (after crashing her motorbike) enters the local hotel of the small country town of Ginborak. In this composition an aboriginal man is shown sitting outside the hotel on the balcony floor. A medium to close up eye level shot is used which invites the audience to pay attention to his representation. His long white beard suggests he is an Aboriginal elder. His appearance in old clothes, suggests a low economic status. What is significant however is that he sits alone, away from the groups of men that stand together outside as Asta enters the hotel? he appears an outcast and marginalised from the main group of men standing outside the hotel. His character has no dialogue or significance in the narrative reflective of indigenous people at this time having 'no voice" or simply no access to being heard".

**So how would this representation reflect social values of the production period?**

The aboriginal elder’s representation as an outcast or marginalised reflects social values of the texts production period. During the 80s indigenous Australians experienced poor health , education and social living conditions. Whilst some members of indigenous culture received some land concessions, the majority of aboriginal people experienced hardship. During this

Period a Royal enquiry into aboriginal deaths in custody found that racism was endemic in Australian society. During the 80s it emerged that whilst white Australia began to recognise aboriginal people they remained secondary to white Anglo Australians.