

Human Rights & Equal Opportunity Commission
GPO Box 5218
Sydney NSW 2001

Dear Sir,

Re: complaint 2020381FC9 (David Thomason)

I can see no grounds for conciliation of this matter and therefore give you my written reply as follows:

- 1) I myself am English having migrated to Australia about 25 years ago.
- 2) Section 18D of the Racial Discrimination Act gives the following exemption in relation to a breach of Section C of the Act:
“(b) in the course of any ... publication ... made or held for any genuine academic ... purpose or any other genuine purpose in the public interest.”
Please see points 3, 4 and 5 below.
- 3) I receive frequent requests from schools worldwide for permission to reproduce the page for the further education of their pupils. I have never refused permission.
- 4) A Google search for link:www.koalanet.com.au/australian-slang.html shows that 167 web sites link to the page and my stats indicate that the number is considerably greater than that. One such site is <http://www.uklinks4.com/languages.htm> which describes itself as "UKLinks4... the most useful sites on the web. Internet directory tailored for UK based surfers."
- 5) Another typical site is the University of Picardy in France:
http://www.u-picardie.fr/CRL/minimes/anglais/voc_gb.htm
- 6) The term "sheepshagger" for a New Zealander doesn't appear on the page but thanks for the suggestion.
- 7) The terms "wop", "dago", "kraut" etc. don't appear because they aren't originally Australian slang. The header on the page says "It wasn't easy but we've tried to include uniquely Australian slang here and to exclude British and American slang even though these are commonly used in Australia. We see no point in informing the world that "fridge" is Australian slang for a "refrigerator"."
- 8) The term "wog" appears twice on the page. Its meaning in Australia is slightly different from that in the UK.
- 9) I consider the word "Abo" for an Aborigine to be offensive as it is never used affectionately so have exercised my power of censorship and excluded it.
- 10) My 1976 edition of The Concise Oxford Dictionary (Oxford University Press) gives:
Pommy, pommie, n. (Austral & N.Z. sl.) British person, esp. recent immigrant. [20th c.; orig. uncert.]
I hesitate to dispute the erudition of the compilers of that wonderful book but I wonder why it was Austral & NZ slang in 1976 and derogatory in 1989.
- 11) The definition for "Pommy's towel, as dry as" is moderated by saying that it is based on the *canard* that Poms bathe about once a month. Pom, Pommy bastard, Pommy shower and Pommy's towel are all next to each other in the list.

- 12) The definition for "bastard" says that it is a term of endearment.
- 13) I have told a few Englishmen of my acquaintance (one of them used to play cricket for England) about this complaint and they all, without exception, thought it was frivolous and laughable.
- 14) I have made the following changes to the page:
 - a) added "sheepshagger"
 - b) added "pommie" as an alternative spelling
 - c) added a q.v. "bastard" for "Pommy bastard"

Yours sincerely,

Howard Martin
Koala Net