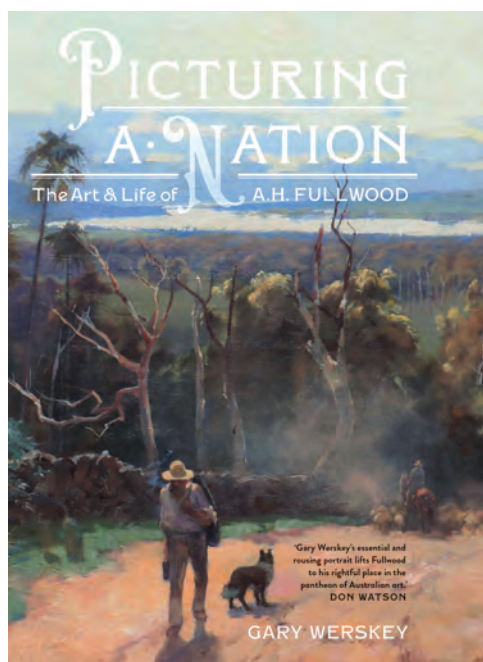
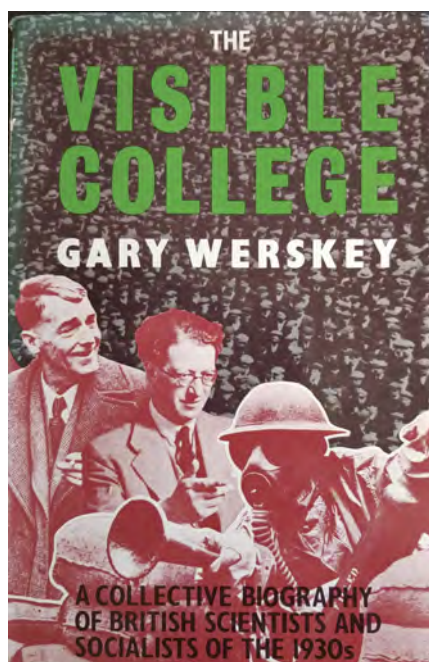


Falling Short: Learning from My Shortcomings as a Biographer



Australian
National
University



BIOGRAPHY WORKSHOP SERIES 2022

Biography Workshop National
Centre of Biography (ANU)

During the past four decades Gary Werskey has written biographies of British left-wing scientists and a forgotten British-Australian artist, as well as family histories and memoirs of his own life as a scholar-activist. In this talk Gary reflects on his attraction to the genre of biography, his own shortcomings as a biographer, and what he has learned from his diverse journeys into the labyrinth of other peoples' lives and his own. Speaking to his younger self, he would now stress the importance of maintaining a more rigorous dialectic between biography and autobiography; better imagining how his subjects visualised their own lives and times; and recognising from the outset both the impossibility and necessity of biography – the queen of the human sciences.

Dr Gary Werskey was educated at Northwestern and Harvard Universities before taking up academic positions at Edinburgh University, Imperial College, and the University of New South Wales. He is currently an Honorary Associate in the University of Sydney's Department of History. His best-known work is *The Visible College: A Collective Biography of British Scientists and Socialists of the 1930s* (Allen Lane and Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1978; Free Association Books, 1988). His latest publication is *Picturing a Nation: The Art & Life of A.H. Fullwood* (NewSouth Books, 2021). He also co-curated the National Library of Australia's 2021 exhibition *A Nation Imagined: The Artists of the Picturesque Atlas*.

Time:

Thursday 26 May 2022
11:00am–12:30 pm

In Person:

Seminar Room 4.69
Level 4 RSSS Building
146 Ellery Crescent

Zoom option:

Meeting ID:
849 0058 9945

Password: 630803

Join Zoom Meeting:
bit.ly/BioWorkshop2022