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978-0-521-80218-5 - Living with the Aftermath: Trauma, Nostalgia and Grief in Post-War Australia

Joy Damousi

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LIVING WITH THE AFTERMATH

Trauma, nostalgia and grief in post-war Australia

This very powerful and moving book on the shifting patterns of mourning and grief focuses on the experiences of Australian women who lost their husbands during the Second World War and the wars in Korea and Vietnam, and those who suffered when their men came home. The book makes use of extensive oral testimonies to illustrate how widows internalised and absorbed the traumas of their husbands' war experiences.

Damousi is able to demonstrate that a significant shift in attitudes towards grieving and loss came about between the mid and the later part of the twentieth century. In charting the memory of grief and its expression, she discerns a move away from the denial and silence which shaped attitudes in the 1950s towards a much fuller expression of grief and mourning and perhaps a new way of understanding death and loss at the beginning of the new century.

Joy Damousi is an Associate Professor in the Department of History at the University of Melbourne. She is the author of *Women Come Rally: Socialism, Communism and Gender in Australia, 1890–1955* (Oxford, 1994), *Depraved and Disorderly: Female Convicts, Sexuality and Gender in Colonial Australia* (1997), *The Labour of Loss: Mourning, Memory and Wartime Bereavement in Australia* (1999), which was shortlisted for the NSW Premier's Australian History Prize in 2000, and co-editor (with Marilyn Lake) of *Gender and War: Australians at War in the Twentieth Century* (1995) (all published by Cambridge University Press). Joy Damousi is also a contributor to *The Oxford Companion to Australian History* (1998) and *The Oxford Companion to Australian Feminism* (1998).

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For my father, George

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JOY DAMOUSI
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