The editors of this book have gathered together more than 30 essays on diverse aspects of Jewish life in Australia. Grouped into sections on Belonging, Politics, Seeking, Memory and Responsibility, they vary considerably in quality and also in their appeal to the 99.5% of the Australian population who don’t identify themselves as Jewish.

Few contributors aspire to the eloquence of Robert Manne on ‘The Holocaust and Political Identity’ or Andrea Goldsmith on art and the holocaust. Melissa Castan’s homage to her father Ron’s work for indigenous legal rights, and Arnold Zable’s deeply moving meditation on the parallels between his mother’s early experiences as a Russian Jew and the plight of modern-day refugees, also stand out. The editors’ decision to follow Zable’s powerful essay with Johnny Baker’s plea for rationalisation in Jewish day schools is unfortunate, and illustrates the problems of a project like this. New Under the Sun is a worthwhile book but readers are likely to find themselves skimming or skipping many of the essays in favour of those dealing with subjects of more general interest.