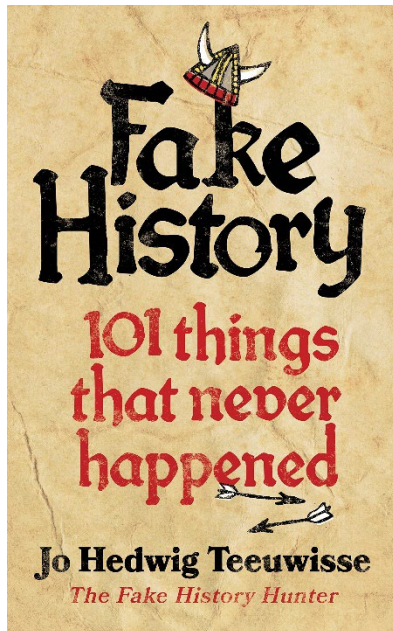


Featured Title

Fake History : 101 things that never happened / Jo Hedwig Teeuwisse

Non Fiction 2023



Fake news about the past is fake history. Did Hugo Boss design the Nazi uniforms? Did Vikings have horns on their helmets? Did Napoleon shoot the nose off the Sphinx? *Spoiler Alert* The answer to all those questions is no.

Jo Teeuwisse, better known as The Fake History Hunter, is on a one-woman mission to hunt down fake history and reclaim the truth for the rest of us. From the famous quote 'Let them eat cake' mistakenly attributed to Marie Antoinette to the apocryphal horns that adorned Viking helmets, fake history continues to shape the story we tell about who we are and how we got here. Yet every day false claims about the past are made in the news, in magazines and especially on social media.

In this funny and illuminating book, Jo Teeuwisse debunks 101 myths so you can correct your friends and family and arm yourself with the tools to spot and debunk fake history wherever you encounter it.

Book Review

<https://www.goodreads.com/>

"History matters. It is a manual that helps us understand the past, figure out the present and sometimes even realise what is ahead of us. ... We can't stop historians, mercenary Twitter accounts and other powerful people using and abusing history, but we can at least do something about them spreading fake history--all it takes is research and knowledge."

Historical myths are everywhere. They are spread on social media, via word of mouth, and yes, you'll even find them in history books, reputable and otherwise. I've been following and engaging with Teeuwisse's "Fake History Hunter" account almost since I started tweeting and in the process, I've learned about myths I once thought were true, and even gotten into historical debunking myself. So of course, when a book was announced, I had to put it on my Christmas list and make it my first read of the new year in 2024.

Fake History: 101 Things That Never Happened is both a methodical debunking of 101 historical myths (ranging from well-known myths such as 'Marie Antoinette said let them eat cake!' to more modern myths, such as a photograph mislabeled as Queen Elizabeth bowing to Haile Selassie) and an exploration of how and why these particular myths are often spread.

Sometimes they are spread to support certain political or ideological agendas. Sometimes the actual history is unknown and new details are invented when images get shared on social media. Sometimes--fairly often--the fault lies with the Victorians, who inflated events and habits of the past in order to boast that the Victorian present was surely "better."

Each myth is presented with the myth that you may have heard and a debunking of that myth. These debunkings are sometimes fascinating simply for a look into the historical rabbit hole that we can fall down when researching something, on top of being interesting for the historical information that these debunkings present.

Some of the debunkings are shorter than others, but not every myth requires a thorough takedown. If you enjoy Teeuwisse's "Fake History Hunter" Twitter account, then you will doubly enjoy the book, since Teeuwisse is not constrained by a tweet character limit, and you get a lot more detail.

Not only do you get more information than you would in a tweet, but Teeuwisse's sense of humor shines through in longform, making it an engaging read. Sometimes it feels a bit like sitting at a cafe table listening to a historian enthusiastically break down historical myths--and what could be more fun than that? ... Don't answer this question if you have an actual different answer!

Of particular interest is the afterword, in which Teeuwisse discusses some of the methods for uncovering and debunking fake history in the first place. These types of methodologies are essential for everyone, whether you're interested in history or not, because they give you the tools to question what you read (online or in a book!) and find out more information yourself. If the people who spread these historical myths took the advice in the afterword, there would be a lot less fake history online, that's for sure.

I recommend this book if you are looking for an engaging debunking of historical myths by someone enthusiastic about the correction of fake history. The afterword provides valuable information for spotting and debunking fake historical information, and there are citations in the sources to take you further if you'd like to dig more into the myths and debunkings being presented.

Anna Gibson 2024

This book was very interesting, I certainly enjoyed learning about some things I didn't know we're fake. Definitely recommended, though there were a few chapters that may not be appropriate for younger readers. I'm interested in reading Jo's *Fake History* blog and continuing the debunking research myself.

Sydney 2024

I heard this author interviewed on the Professor Buzzkill podcast recently and loved what she had to say, especially about medieval Europe. Her book is good and entertaining. But she avoids controversy, not really dealing with problematic examples of 'fake history' that are widely believed today. For example, while she talks about how Hitler did not invent the autobahn, she doesn't grapple with any of the other myths circulating around the Nazi dictator. So contentious issues are not really addressed, and we stay very much on the light entertainment side of the debunking business. That having been said, this was a fun book to read.

Eric Lee 2023

Featured Title

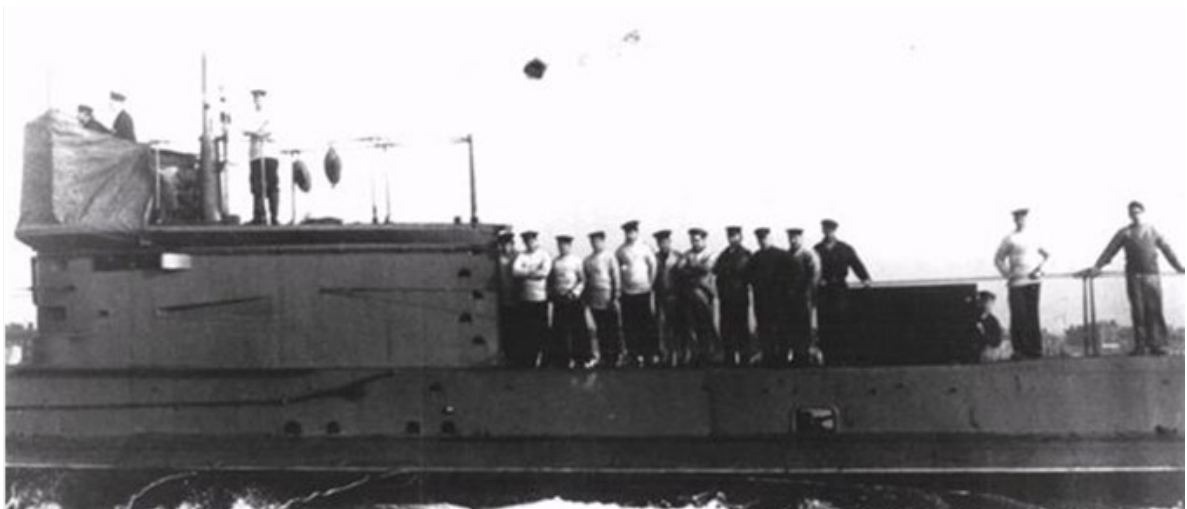
The Mystery of AE1 : Australia's lost submarine and crew / Kathryn Spurling **Non Fiction 2014**

Australia's first submarines, AE1 and AE2, entered Sydney Harbour in time to join the celebration of Empire Day 24 May 1914 after a voyage from Britain of 83 days, 60 of which were spent at sea. Australians were fascinated by their submarines and proud that their young navy was bravely at the forefront of such technology. Britain declared war against Germany on 4 August 1914 and the British Admiralty despatched the Australian fleet to capture German New Guinea and destroy the German Pacific Fleet. On 14 September AE1 left Rabaul Harbour, with orders to patrol east of Cape Gazelle, and was seen off Duke of York Island in St George's Channel. Then AE1 simply disappeared. This was the first loss of a military unit during the First World War and the beginning of a war for Australians. An ensuing search found no trace, and for the families of the 35 officers and men on board AE1 life would never be the same. This book traces the beginnings of Australia's navy and searches for answers to the questions that continue to be asked.

Author Blog (follow link for full story)

<https://kathrynsurling.com/blog/the-mystery-of-ae1/>

It was a brave decision for Australia to include submarines in its nascent navy in 1913 because their capabilities were still largely unknown. The Royal Australian Navy (RAN) purchased two E-class boats built by Vickers-Armstrong in England. They were 55.17 metres long, with a top surface speed of 15 knots and submerged speed of 10 knots. Propulsion depended on two 8-cylinder diesel engines. They were armed with 4 x 18-inch torpedo tubes. Crew consisted of three officers and 32 sailors. Due to a shortage of Australian qualified submariners, it was necessary to loan some Royal Navy (RN) personnel to make up the crews. Their service was arduous, human habitability had received only minimal consideration. The boats were re-commissioned with an A in front of the E, hence AE1 and AE2. The journey to Australia was an amazing achievement breaking all submarine long distance records.



Mechanical difficulties and mishaps overcome by hook and crook, the miles were pushed astern, the weariness of it but lightly relieved by a few days in ports of call.

Passing through the Mediterranean the heat within was so terrible it was decided to paint the boats white. The submarines, repainted black, entered Sydney Harbour in time for Empire Day celebrations, 24 May 1914. The voyage had taken 83 days, 60 of which were spent at sea. For some of the 20,800 km the boats were towed by their escort but 14,400km were under their own power. *The London Times* declared it 'the most remarkable yet performed by a submarine'.

More than half the boat crews were loaned British officers and sailors, but it took little time for some to decide to make Australia their home and to convert their return trip to England to ship passage for their wives and children. Able Seaman Fred Dennis immediately liked what he saw, transferred to the RAN and, sent for wife Florence and children Charles, Catherine and Gwen to join him in this 'wonderful country'. Able Seaman Henry Fisher decided to bring wife Lily and children Eva, 5; Arthur, 3; and six-month old George from Portsmouth to Sydney. Soon 18 AE1 crew called Australia home and 32 children were now RAN dependents.

The crews had bonded during the long journey and the Australian-born did their best to invite the newest Australian crew to their own homes. Given the difficulty and infrequency of long-distance travel this was not possible for Engine Room Artificer John Messenger. John, known as 'Jack' barely got home on leave himself before being recalled to duty. Jack was from Ballarat, Victoria. To some it seemed strange that this country boy would join the navy, but Jack's reason was not entirely motivated by patriotism. He had got into a fight in a Melbourne pub and beat up the other so badly it was believed the man would not survive. Jack's uncle hastily signed him on as a seaman onboard a merchant ship due to leave for England. His adversary survived and on arrival in England Jack joined the RN. When he heard, volunteers were needed to crew submarines bound for Australia he was first in line.

Britain declared war against Germany on 4 August 1914 and Australia's navy was immediately despatched to capture German Pacific islands and flush out any German warships which may be stationed around New Guinea, then a German protectorate. The submarines were undergoing maintenance in Sydney and were delayed. Unseasoned by war their crews were anxious to join the fight. One wrote, 'Our self-pity was extreme'. The submariners could never have imagined how 'extreme' their part in World War 1 would be.

On 2 September the submarines left to journey north to Rabaul. On 14 September at 7am AE1 left Rabaul on patrol in the company of HMAS Parramatta. The warship diverged its course and lost sight of the submarine when AE1 was approximately between Waira and Jaquinot Points in St George's Channel off Duke of York Island.

The first search was delayed but it and subsequent searches found no trace of AE1 or its crew of 35. A crew member of AE2 wrote:

We fear the worst, her loss we mourn, gone forever from our sight ... the sense of loneliness felt in AE2.

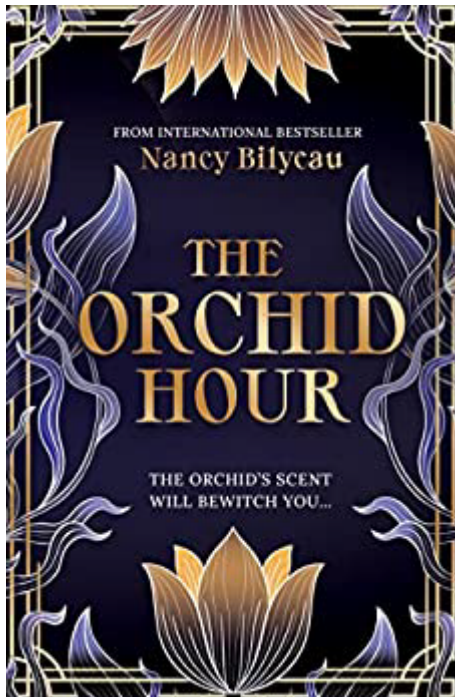
For the relatives of AE1 there was the agony of not knowing. Families arriving from England to rejoin their husbands and fathers were met only to be told they were missing. Personal effects held in storage on a support ship were returned to next of kin.

For many decades there was an Australian Government reluctance to answer the question "What happened to AE1 and where do the crew lie?"

Individuals instigated private searches. Later when in the general area of the disappearance RAN ships searched but without the necessary equipment for deep water. There had never been oil or fuel or wreckage which made it a mystery and eliminated catastrophic explosion, or even collision with another ship or reef whilst submerged. The crew presumably remained entombed in their submarine at the bottom of the ocean.

Featured Title

The Orchid Hour / Nancy Bilyeau Fiction 2023



New York City, 1923. Zia De Luca's life is about to be shattered. Having lost her husband to The Great War, she lives with her son and in-laws in Little Italy and works at the public library. But when a quiet poetry lover is murdered outside the library, the police investigation focuses on Zia. After a second tragedy strikes even closer to home, Zia learns that both crimes are connected to a new speakeasy in Greenwich Village called The Orchid Hour. When the police investigation stalls, Zia decides to find her own answers. A cousin with whom she has a special bond serves as a guide to the shadow realm of The Orchid Hour, a world filled with enticements Zia has shunned up to now. She must contend with a group of players determined to find wealth and power in New York on their own terms. In this heady atmosphere, Zia begins to wonder if she too could rewrite her life's rules. As she's pulled in deeper and deeper, will Zia be able to bring the killers to justice before they learn her secret?

Book Review

<https://www.goodreads.com/>

The Orchid Hour swept me up from the very first page, and didn't let go until the end. Nancy Bilyeau masterfully intertwines historical details and facts (as well as a few real-life characters) into the narrative without slowing the pace or becoming didactic. I enjoyed the atmospheric and immersive glimpse of 1920s New York, especially Greenwich Village. The clothing and food descriptions were divine! This is a novel redolent with sensuality, intrigue, and suspense. If you like Agatha Christie, you will love *The Orchid Hour*.

Zia is a smart, well-read heroine with a steady head on her shoulders. As she navigates the politics of the dangerous underworld she finds herself a reluctant player within, loyalty to her family and her strong sense of integrity serve as a spoil to the illicit dealings she bears witness to. The author demonstrates sensitivity and empathy as she relays the complex realities of the immigrant experience in the US, and balances the sometimes dire situations Zia faces with hopefulness and a bit of romance along the way.

Don't miss the author's note, which contains intriguing information about the real-life characters Bilyeau features in the novel. Highly recommend!

PRAISE FOR *THE ORCHID HOUR*

"Bilyeau brilliantly evokes the intoxicating grit and glamour of Jazz Age Manhattan and layers a smooth blend of suspense and romance on top. Historical mystery fans will find this irresistible."

—Publishers Weekly, Starred Review

"With a heroine you can't help rooting for, a fascinating cast of characters, and a tense, high-stakes mystery at its heart, this is a book you can't stop reading."

—Olivia Hawker, bestselling author of *One for the Blackbird*, *One for the Crow*

"Nancy Bilyeau draws you effortlessly into a layered story, rich in historical detail, with a strong, intelligent, determined heroine at its center. I loved Zia from page one."

—Barbara Claypole White, author of *The Perfect Son*

"The structure of the story races you through it at breakneck speed. It is a hard book to put down and all the time there are so many threads binding the story together that the story is like an orchid and its roots."

—Griff Hosker, author of *Hastings*, *Flodden*, and *Lord Edward's Archer* series

"Nancy Bilyeau has created a beautifully layered and utterly seductive tale of a young woman's emotional awakening and search for justice, set against the dangerous criminal world of the 1920s New York City underground. The past comes thrillingly alive as Bilyeau lifts the veil on immigrant communities, speakeasies, gangsters, corruption at the highest levels of city government, and, at its living, tender heart, a strong-willed and magnetic heroine."

—Emilya Naymark, author of *Behind the Lie*, finalist for the 2023 Sue Grafton Award

About the Author

Born in Chicago and a graduate of the University of Michigan, Nancy moved to New York City to work in the magazine business as a writer and editor. After working for publications ranging from *Rolling Stone* to *Good Housekeeping*, she turned to fiction. She wrote the Joanna Stafford trilogy, a trio of thrillers set in Henry VIII's England. Her fourth novel is *The Blue*, an 18th-century thriller revolving around the art & porcelain world. Her latest novel, *The Orchid Hour*, returns to the early 20th century New York City of her novel *Dreamland* to once again tell a story of suspense revolving around a compelling heroine.

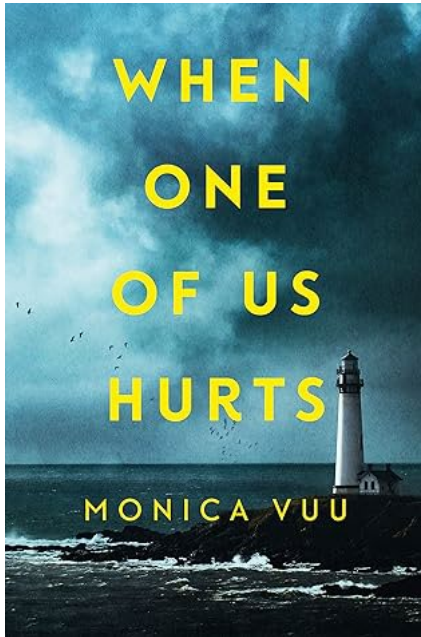
These are the author's words on how and why she became interested in the subject of this novel:

My idea for this historical novel grew from my fascination with Jazz Age New York, a place and time filled with both the exquisite and the ugly. It's almost as if one can't exist without the other.

Her novel shows the precarious balance between the two, and how difficult it was not to stray too far into the dark side.

Featured Title

***When One of us Hurts* / Monica Vuu 2023**



Port Brighton hates outsiders. The small coastal town has its own ways of dealing with the evil, the foolish, the misled, and it holds tightly to them. But the seams start to split after two deaths occur on the same tragic night: a baby abandoned at the foot of a lighthouse, and a drunken teenager drowned in the storming sea.

Livvy is an insider. She keeps a watchful eye on what's happening in town while looking out for her troubled older brother. What has broken inside him - and why?

Marie is an outsider. She's escaped Port Brighton and started a new life, but she can't forget the night at the lighthouse - it changed her family forever. As gossip fuels rumours and tensions erode trust, the bonds that keep Port Brighton together begin to fray, threatening to expose the truth about more than just the two deaths ...

Book Reviews

<https://www.goodreads.com/>

Firstly, I want to say that this book isn't my usual genre, but WOW, I thoroughly enjoyed it!

When One Of Us Hurts is a murder mystery set in Tasmania, in the little town of Port Brighton, a place where nothing is as it seems.

I thought I knew where the story was going but my gosh, it twisted and turned so much that I was on the edge of my seat. The pacing was good, the timeline of events did confuse me a touch but by the last three chapters it all made sense, I really enjoyed Monica's writing style, and the internal monologue was as Aussie as Vegemite toast. I found it relatable and refreshing. There were macabre moments and moments I was not expecting, and I think because I'm not usually a reader of crime fiction, those things caught me off guard. Having said that, it really churned up a riot of emotions in me, and that is a sign of a very well written book, I think.

Murder mystery readers are sure to devour this one, a bold and compelling debut that is a must read for Australian crime fiction fans!

Melissa Kincaid 2023

About the Author

Monica Vuu was born in Langley, British Columbia. She has a background in Cognitive Systems. After graduating she worked with Emirates airlines and lived in Dubai for a couple of years, where she met her Australian partner, who managed to convince her to make the big move to Tasmania in 2019. *When One of Us Hurts* is her first novel and was inspired by the remoteness of rural Tasmania.

<https://pilebythebed.com/>

There is plenty of Australian rural crime fiction but it sometimes feels like the darkest strain comes from Tasmania. The northern Tasmanian coast is the setting for Monica Vuu's debut novel *When One of Us Hurts*, a title that will eventually come back to bite the reader as elements of the plot are revealed. For the most part this is the story of two very damaged characters told from their own twisted and not very reliable perspectives.

The book opens two weeks after a double tragedy. A baby is found abandoned and dead at the base of the local lighthouse at Port Brighton and a young man, Sebastian, is found dead a few days later. The prevailing theory in the town that Sebastian, from an 'Outsider' family, killed the baby for reasons unknown and then committed suicide. Livvy is a fourteen-year-old local, and step-sister of sorts to Sebastian's best friend Johnny, who's participation in the deaths is also suspected by the town. Livvy narrates half of the book, introducing readers to the decidedly weird locals and detailing the leadup to the the night of both the baby's death and Sebastian's disappearance. The other half of the story is narrated by Marie, Johnny's mother, from what appears to be some kind of secure facility. Marie's recollections go much further back, detailing a series of tragedies and eventually coming to the relationship that brought Livvy into her life.

While they are interesting in different ways, neither Livvy nor Marie are particularly likeable characters. Livvy is a teenager who is nowhere near as clever as she thinks she is. She also has not much good to say about anyone, particularly outsiders to the town like Sebastian and his family and a reporter who comes nosing around. Marie is quickly established as vindictive to her roommate and damaged by a life of tragedy. Similarly, the whole town of Port Brighton itself is portrayed as insular and uninviting.

Readers' engagement in this book will depend on how much they are willing to spend time with these two. But more critically, how invested they might be in finding out the real story behind the initial two deaths that neither of the main characters themselves seem to care about. There is more to this narrative than meets the eye, however. And there are some other aspects of *When One of Us Hurts* that draws on some other Australian crime fiction tropes and traditions. To detail those would be spoiling what turns out to be even darker aspects of Vuu's debut. Readers who take the journey just need to be aware that this is a fairly grim crime tale and gird themselves appropriately.

Industry Reviews

<https://www.panmacmillan.com.au/>

'In *When One of Us Hurts*, Vuu shines a light into the darkest corners of small-town life. This a bold and compelling debut, and Monica Vuu is an author to watch.' Mark Brandi

'Monica Vuu is a bright new talent in Australian crime fiction. The twists and surprises came fast and deadly. I was up all night!' Candice Fox

'Twisted, mysterious and darkly creepy, *When One of Us Hurts* is a small-town crime fiction at its shocking best. Monica Vuu has crafted a memorable debut full of macabre surprises.' Ashley Kalagian Blunt