# ALKIMOS,

LAND BY THE OCEAN

### **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

DevelopmentWA and Lendlease hereby acknowledge the following individuals for their contribution to this book:

Noongar Traditional Owners Danny Ford, Rose Walley, Theresa Walley and Prof. Len Collard who provided background research into the meaning of place for Alkimos.

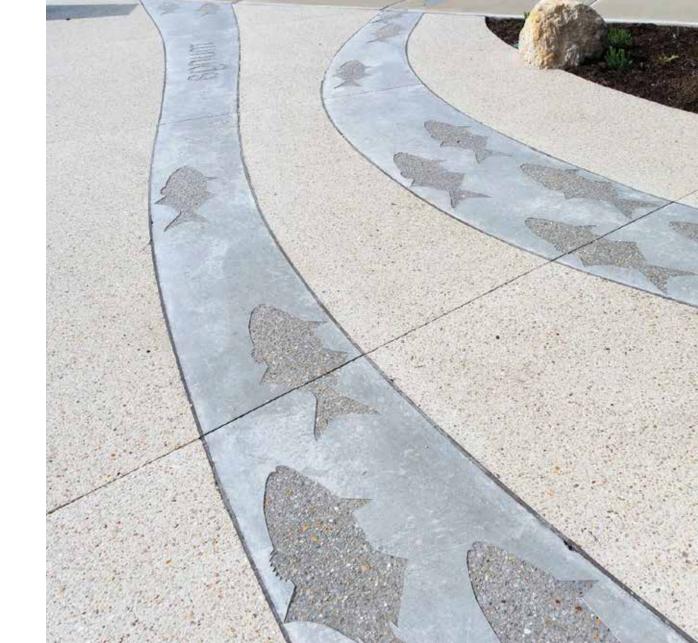
Artists Jade Dolman, Theresa Walley and Troy Bennell for the use of their artwork on the cover and throughout this publication.

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#### **FOREWORD**

To the Noongar people, traditional custodians of the land upon which Alkimos Beach now stands, stories are central to life.

Passed down through the ages, they explain the way things are, keeping Aboriginal culture alive and preserving important knowledge for future generations.

In this booklet, Noongar Elders share some of their stories with you.

Alkimos Beach is a new development yet the land's oral history captures an ancient heritage. Knowing it enriches one's sense of place. It is our hope that publishing these stories will help new residents in their common journey of re-location and connection, and other readers to grow in their appreciation of Indigenous culture.

Lendlease is committed to closing the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. This booklet represents another step in acknowledging and celebrating the proud heritage of Australia's first peoples, which is the foundation of reconciliation. It's also a practical outcome of that Reconciliation Action Plan that we crafted in 2011 with the aim of building deeper, sustainable relationships with Indigenous communities.

We hope you will join us in our journey of understanding.

Matthew Mears

Managing Director, Communities

Lendlease

DevelopmentWA acknowledges the Traditional Owners of this country and respects the diversity of its first peoples. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present and acknowledge the many significant contributions made to the Western Australian community.

Our vision for reconciliation is to play our part in addressing the inequities or unacceptable gaps which exist between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Western Australians.

We wish to lead by example and since 2008, have worked towards improving our reconciliation initiatives, formalising this by way of our first RAP which came into effect in 2009. As our business has grown and evolved, new opportunities for reconciliation have been identified and embedded into many of our diverse land and infrastructure developments across the state. In recent years, we have moved towards finding like-minded partners in our reconciliation journey, such as Lendlease with Alkimos Beach, and will continue to seek others so we may make a bigger difference by working together, rather than independently.

Frank Marra
Chief Executive Officer
DevelopmentWA

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**PART I** 

# **ALKIMOS BEACH**

Where the south-westerly sea breeze dances with the easterly land wind



## AN ANCIENT LAND; A NEW BEGINNING

All day long the lovers flirt. It's here the female south-westerly sea breeze, yorga mar and the male easterly land wind, the maaman mar chase each other back and forth over the wardan – the sea – and across the boodjar – the land. They never tire. They give Alkimos the cooling breezes that shift and play with the seasons.

So goes the Dreamtime story handed down by the Whadjuk Noongar Aboriginal people who in times past knew the place that is now Alkimos Beach as Wardan Gaba Boodjera – the land with the oceans to the west.

Eternally present in their invisible dance, yorga mar and maaman mar still whisper to each other. In the heat of midday, through the vibrant air, the lovers still chase each other over the wardan. We catch glimpses of them through the rustle of the leaves on the trees and the cooling zephyrs that skim the dunes.

They echo the history of the people who have gone before, who in ancient times sang to the kwilena – the Dolphin Spirit – to lure fish into their traps and watched the wardan from the high sand hills.

It is said their spirits still move in the land today as the Noongar stories pass from one generation to the next. Here, we share their tales, keeping alive the history of this ancient land in a new age.





# SEA BOODJAR LAND

Alkimos Beach, Australia's first 6 Star Green Star certified community, is a new masterplanned coastal community 40 kilometres north of Perth, Western Australia. A partnership between Lendlease and DevelopmentWA – Western Australia's state land development agency – Alkimos Beach spans 224 hectares and will ultimately be home to about 6,500 people. Construction began in 2013 and is projected to be complete in 2021.

# FROM KOORA KOORA TO BOORDAWAN

For the Noongar people, the land and spirit are one. Land is held in deep respect. Passed down from the ancestors, it must be kept healthy for the generations to come. As Alkimos Beach grows, custodianship for the land will extend to those who live and work in the new community.

Aboriginal beliefs formed in the koora koora – a long time ago – still guide cultural ideologies, language and customs today. The past is inseparable from the present and both are interwoven into the future. The people and the land with all its plants, creatures and animals will continue to transform themselves from yeye – today – into the boordawan – the future.

Stories of the Dreaming capture these beliefs and explain the activities of ancestral beings as they emerged at the start of time. They provide a blueprint for Aboriginal ways of understanding the land and its spirit.







"Boodjar means land to Aboriginal people. It really is the sense of identity and sense of belonging. This is my country where I belong. This is demangarmarn – my grandmother and grandfather's land. This is their land where their spirits move now. Boorda or 'later on' this is going to be the responsibility of my children and my children's children, their home and this place will always be linked to their spirit."

As told to Danny Ford by a Noongar Elder

Aboriginal Australians have a history going back well over 40,000 years. Noongar is the generic name for the Aboriginal people whose ancestors occupied and managed the whole of the south-west of Western Australia throughout this time. It has various spellings including Nyungar, Nyoongar and Nyoongah.

#### LAND OF THE BRAVE

Yellagonga was a Noongar leader. An article in the Western Mail from 1897 describes Yellagonga as 'most distinguished of all the rulers for his humane, peaceable disposition, and with this he coupled great martial courage'. The writer goes on to state, 'When he was fully roused no warrior, not even Yagan, dared stand before him. To him the settlers were greatly indebted for the protector of their lives and property.'

The boundaries of Yellagonga's territory were reportedly the Indian Ocean to the west, Ellen's Brook to the east, Moore River to the north and the Swan River to the south.





#### STORIES OF THE WAGYL

Dreaming stories describing the travels of the spiritual ancestors are integral to Aboriginal spirituality. Stories shift over time, and between narrators and audiences, but all depict the Wagyl, Waakal or Noongar Rainbow Serpent as central to creation.

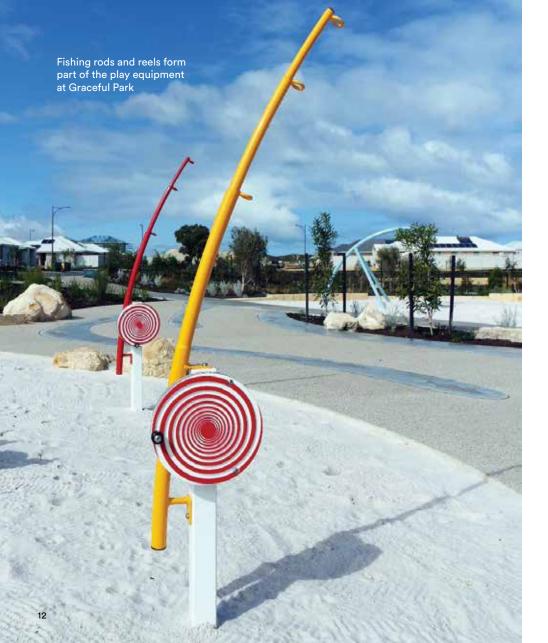
The Wagyl left its mark everywhere. Local lore says it shaped coastal landscapes and made the Dreaming tracks across the region.

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It then went out over the Swan River where the Narrows is now, out over where the Causeway is, out past where Trinity College was built, and it made a track to York. When it got to York, it stopped and had a rest ... the Wagyl went down towards Beverley and Brookton and they reckon the last place it camped was at Boyagin Rock. That was its last resting place or ngoondiny – sleeping place of the Wagyl.

As told to Danny Ford by a Noongar Elder

The coastal limestone features known as the 'Alkimos Wagyl' are part of a Wagyl dreaming track extending from Augusta to Fremantle to Two Rocks and beyond. The touch of the Wagyl can also be seen in local caves and springs.



# FISHING WITH MUNGA AT GRACEFUL PARK

Graceful Park at Alkimos Beach tells the tale of the female serpent that protects the fresh water supplies around the Alkimos area, and the Noongar way of life.

A beautiful space for relaxing, the park also cleanses stormwater run-off from nearby roads and hard surfaces and provides native food plants and habitat for local fauna including the endangered Carnaby's Black Cockatoo.

Designed in collaboration the Whadjuk Noongar Traditional Owners, the park's picnic shelter has images of traditional fish traps, or munga, perforated into its roof. Shadows cast by the shelter trap the imprinted fish 'swimming' in the kep – the water – set into the decorative concrete surface. Indigenous words imprinted into the concrete keep the Noongar language alive.

Located on the corner of Graceful Boulevard and Crowned Way, Graceful Park marks the site of the Welcome to Country ceremony held by the Whadjuk Traditional Land Owners.

## WATER - GIVER OF LIFE

Water is sacred in Noongar culture and people believe that the Wagyl is the giver of life because of its role in creating and maintaining freshwater sources. This belief is as relevant today as it has been for millennia.

The Wagyl made all rivers, swamps, lakes and waterholes in the south west.

The wetlands east of Alkimos including Lake Joondalup, Lake Neerabup and Lake Goollelal have long been the major focus of Noongar life in the region. In the past, communities moved around these sites according to the season.

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Before colonisation Noongar families moved freely from the coast near Alkimos eastward towards Wanneroo and the hills of the Darling Scarp depending on the seasons.

Danny Ford





**PART II** 

# **ALKIMOS DREAMING**

Dreaming stories in the words of the Whadjuk Noongar Traditional Owners







#### THE RAINBOW SERPENT

In the Beginning, in the Dreamtime, or the Nyitiing times as Aboriginal people call it, the world was very, very cold and colourless. It was spongy, grey and the sky laid on the earth or boodjar. The giant, mythical rainbow serpent, the Wagyl, traveled through the world and pushed the sky up and the land down; it formed giant valleys and waterways as it traveled through the boodja. With the sky pushed up, the land became warmer and the spirit creatures were able to move about.

The human, plant and animal spirits could now move about and thrive. They became real and were amazed at how beautiful Noongar Country was. They traveled around and learnt about their lands and how to care for Country.

The Rainbow Serpent brought the most amazing colours to Country and because it had pushed the sky up, it allowed the stars and the moon to be seen at night in all their beauty.

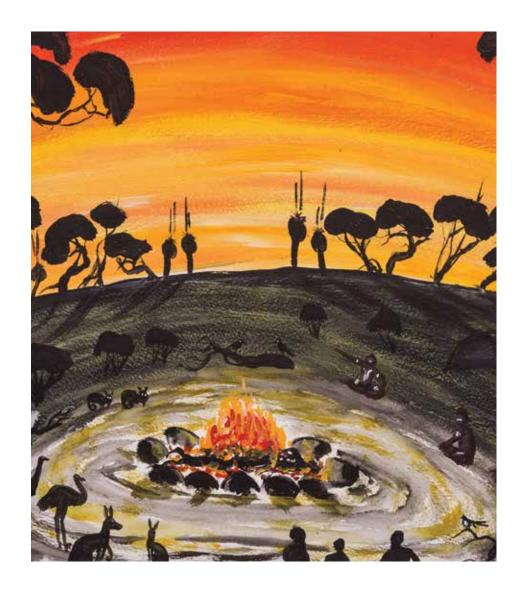
Every day, thank the Wagyl for this beautiful place.

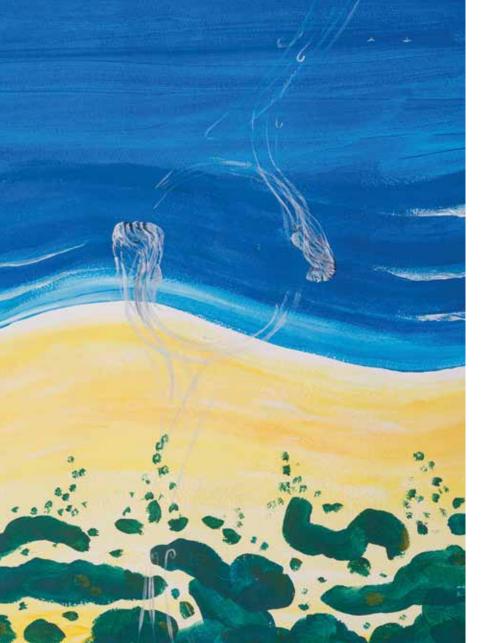
#### LOOKING AFTER COUNTRY

After the Rainbow Serpent made the world as we know it, it filled it full of colour and that made all the spirit people and animals transform and become real. The people, or the Whadjuk Noongar, as they were called at Alkimos, animals like the kangaroo, or yonga, the emu, or waitj, the possum, or koormal, the birds like the willy wagtail, or tjiti tjiti, the raven, or warding, the sulphur-crested cockatoo, or monitj, the insects like the bardi (witchetty) grub, the trees and plants, had to decide how to care for the boodja.

They all had a big meeting. The trees said "We can't look after everything because we can't move but we will help you. You can use us for building your shelters, called mia mias, and for making your fires, called kaal, but don't take all of us." The kangaroos said "We can't be the carers of everything; our arms are too small but we want to help. You can use us for food and use our skins to keep you warm but don't take all of us."

All the creatures decided the Whadjuk Noongars, the human spirits, should look after everything at Alkimos. This was a big responsibility for the Whadjuk people. They had to make sure they cared for everything. For over 40,000 years, Noongar followed their Lore and looked after all the creatures and plants and sacred places in the south-west of Western Australia. It was a very good life as they cared for everything. They never had wars and they made sure that they cared for everything.





#### A PLACE OF ROMANCE

Alkimos was only given its European name in recent times.

Its real name, the name it was known as by the Traditional Owners, the Whadjuk Noongar Aboriginal people, was Wardan Gaba Boodjera. Translated, this means 'the place with the oceans to the west'.

The word wardan in Noongar language means ocean or sea. The wardan is the place where the south-westerly sea breeze, the female wind called yorga mar comes to meet the land breeze, the male easterly land breeze maaman mar. Alkimos is right in the impact of this Dreamtime zone. It will be a common feature that those who live here will experience.

This Noongar Dreamtime story tells how the two lovers yorga mar, or the female wind, and maaman mar, or male breeze, would chase each other back and forth over the wardan or sea and across the boodjar or land. They would chase back and forth, giving Alkimos the daily land or easterly winds and south westerly sea breezes. These lovers still chase each other today over the wardan and you will experience it every day at Alkimos.

You can come down to Wardan Gaba Boodjera and sit under the trees or in the leeside of the high sand dunes in the Alkimos development and listen to the two lovers whispering to each other as the mar blows between the leaves of the trees and across the sand dunes.

Prior to colonisation of Western Australia in 1829, the Whadjuk Noongar would come to Wardan Gaba Boodjera or the sea side in and around the Alkimos development, and watch the wardan from the high sand hills and white sandy beaches. They would see the whales migrating and fish and birds traveling along the coast. As time went by, they saw the European seafarers passing by on their travels up to Indonesia and they told stories of giant seabirds, the sailing ships.

#### THE RED ROBIN AND THE BLUE WREN

Long ago in the Dreamtime, when the world was cold, there were two very good friends, the robin and the little wren. They were just spirit birds and did not have any colour. They built their nest together.

It was so freezing cold that the red robin said, "I have to see Maarlie the black swan. I hear he's got some fire from the moon."

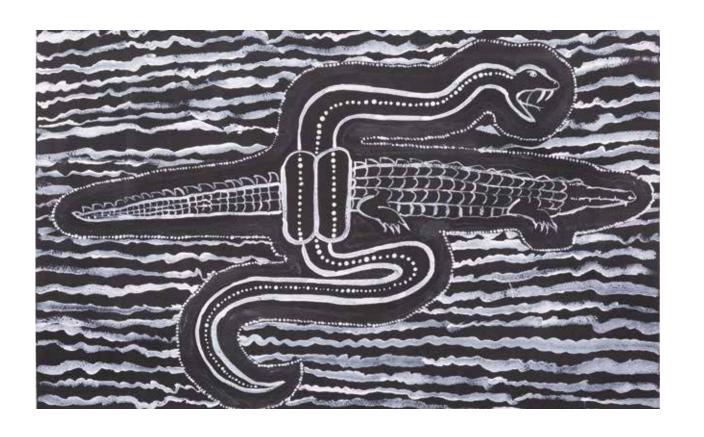
The little wren kept the all their eggs warm as best she could. The generous black swan gave the robin a little fire stick. The robin took it back to the nest and her friend the wren. The robin kept the fire stick close to her chest. When she got back to the nest, she was sick and the fire stick had burned her feathers. The wren rushed and got water and brought it back for the robin and helped her get better. The wren spilt water on her own feathers while trying to help her friend the robin.

In the meantime, Maarlie the black swan brought back enough fire from the moon that she was able to start a fire in the sun that warmed the earth. The fire stick burnt her feathers and since then she has been the black swan. The robin has permanent red feathers on her breast to remind us of the fire stick and the wren has blue feathers from the blue water splashing on her.

The red robin and the blue wren are still very good friends. You always see them together playing in the trees at Alkimos in the Noongar season of Kambarang when the earth is warming up after the cold season of Makuru.







# NO CROCODILES AT ALKIMOS

Back in the Dreamtime, the Crocodile Spirit came down from the north and wanted to set up home all along the coasts and rivers of Noongar Country including Alkimos.

The Rainbow Serpent, or Wagyl, did not want the Crocodile Spirit to set up her home in Noongar Country, so the Wagyl and the Crocodile Spirit had a big fight in the water off the coast between Fremantle and Rottnest – Wadjemup, as it is known.

The Wagyl won the big fight with the Crocodile Spirit and sent it up north which is why the Crocodile now only lives in the Kimberley. If you look from the beach at Alkimos towards Rottnest, you will see the broken tail of the Crocodile Spirit turned to stone in rocky outcrops and sticking out of the water.



### **KWILENA DREAMING**

The Kwilena or Dolphin Spirit lives in the waters off Alkimos. There are lots of dolphins that swim past Alkimos during different seasons, migrating along the coast following the warm water. It is beautiful to watch and feels like magic when you see them.

Kwilena were a very helpful animal to the Noongar people. The Noongar would build fish traps from stones and sticks along the coast and in the river mouths. When the tide came in, the fish would swim into the fish traps and when the tide went out they could not escape and the Noongar people would catch the fish and enjoy them for dinner.

Kwilena were friends of the Noongar and when the old ladies sang the right song, the Kwilena would chase the fish in near the shoreline and the fish traps and help the Noongar to catch the fish. The Noongar always shared their fish with each other and the dolphins.

#### **BUSH TUCKER**

Noongar people moved around their traditional lands and collected food as they went along. They were very healthy, walking many kilometres every. There was no sugar, no gluten or wheat and no dairy. You can't milk a kangaroo! Noongar people enjoyed a healthy diet of fresh fruit like the quandong, bush honey from the native bees, fresh fish, emu eggs and meat from kangaroo and emu. A special treat was, and still, is the balga bush or grass tree. The long, green fronds can be pulled out and the juicy, pale ends – when chewed – are a lot like coconut flavoured chewing gum. The bark is useful for making fire (kaal) and provides a home to the very juicy and tasty bardi (witchetty) grub, which can be eaten raw and wriggling or lightly barbequed.

There is lots of bush tucker at Alkimos to explore and learn about.





#### SIX SEASONS

When the Whadjuk Noongar people traveled to Alkimos, they took great care to look after country. They only took what they needed so there was always food for tomorrow. What food they hunted or gathered was controlled by the seasons. In Whadjuk Country (Alkimos) they knew what things grew and when they grew. They also knew what animals to hunt during each season.

The Noongar calendar has six seasons, which is different to the European calendar. It fits more with the weather in Australia that gradually changes every two months.

The six seasons are:

KAMBARANG | October to November: return of hot weather

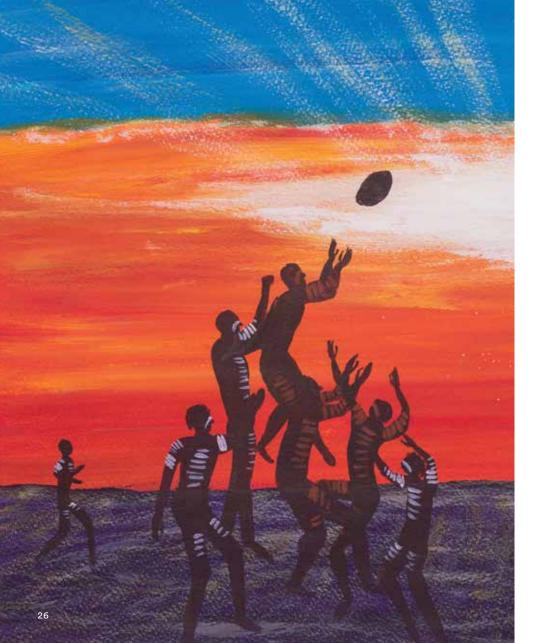
BIRAK | December to January: very hot weather

BUNURU | February to March: not much rain and lots of fish

DJERAN | April to May: cooler weather and eucalyptus trees come to life

MAKURU | June to July: a time of rain and cold weather

DJILBA | August to September: growth of wildflowers and plants



## MARNE GROOK ABORIGINAL FOOTBALL

Aboriginal people have played football since the beginning times. This game, now known as Marne Grook, used a football made of possum skin sewn together in a special shape, like the shape of an AFL football. It was generally stuffed with emu feathers. Sometimes as many as 50 people played the game at any one time. They did not play in teams and everybody had to try and score goals. It was really challenging to try and score a goal when you had 50 opponents. Marne Grook is still very popular today with Noongar children and they get lots of experience kicking a footy and running around chasing their friends. Noongar Country is the home of most of the Aboriginal players playing at the AFL national level.

Go to the AFL Players Association website www.aflpa.com.au and see all the Noongar players in the AFL teams.







#### JADE DOLMAN

Jade is a Whadjuk Noongar (Mother's side), Eastern Arrernte (Father's side) young woman from Perth. She practices acrylic painting on canvas as well as designs logos and murals. Jade remains connected to her culture through painting and family. She has a passion for making a change for Indigenous Australians especially youth through different forms of art, whether it be through painting or dance. She teaches Aboriginal dance and runs Aboriginal art workshops in schools, for organisations and companies.

#### TROY BENNELL

Troy paints watercolour landscapes as well as working in a contemporary style based on Noongar culture through song lines and the six seasons. This style utilises cultural knowledge on Aboriginal travels within the seasons, also Aboriginal knowledge on animal and plant life which allows him to employ bright earthy colours. These spectacular works using bright, earthy colours mixed with local earth, which not only gives each piece a rough, textured, three dimensional feel and appearance, but also ensures each piece has been imbued with a piece of the soul of the Noongar people, their land.

#### THERESA WALLEY

Theresa is a proud well respected Whadjuk Elder and a traditional custodian of the Swan Coastal Plains of Perth. Theresa is a member of the Stolen Generation and has raised seven children. Once they became independent, Theresa took up new vocations such as a tour guide, which involved sharing her Dreamtime stories to school children and others. She has now been an accomplished artist for the past 20 years. She mostly paints the animals, plants and spiritual beings that feature strongly in her Dreamtime stories. Theresa is also a well-known author of Noongar Dreamtime stories and has published four books to date.







