State Apologies to Indigenous Peoples is a comparative study of the State apologies to Indigenous Peoples in the countries now known as Canada and Australia. It draws from law, history, critical Indigenous studies, politics, and philosophy to deliver an interdisciplinary account of relevance to all these fields.

The argument is presented over seven inter-related chapters. The first chapter introduces the main claims and structure of the book. The second chapter gives a broadly philosophical take on the criteria for effective apologies, both individual and State/collective. Chapter three explains the historic and political contexts for the apologies in Canada and Australia and some of the responses before chapter four delves into more critical perspectives on the apologies. Both these chapters draw extensively on critiques by Indigenous leaders and scholars. Dominello then discusses "apology making as a relational process" in chapter five, exploring what might have made the apologies more meaningful and effective, in particular, a better centring of Indigenous Peoples. The final two chapters review the post-apology actions in Australia and Canada respectively.

Australia and Canada provide a good basis for comparison given many commonalities of their colonial histories and relations between Indigenous and settler Peoples. These include, in no particular order: that they are unions of former British (primarily) colonies which are still part of the Commonwealth and share the same formal Head of State (the monarch of the United Kingdom). They are federal systems. They have multiple, diverse Indigenous Peoples within their borders. State abuses of Indigenous Peoples are historic and ongoing, and both Canada and Australia systematically and forcibly removed native children from their families in an effort to assimilate them into the settler societies. However, in both cases, the State sanctioned child abductions and the abuses inflicted on the children in care are only one aspect of wider colonial policies including land and resource theft, criminalisation of Indigenous traditions, and acts of physical violence. Both States resisted Indigenous calls for an apology for some years before eventually delivering them and neither had yet endorsed the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples at the time the apologies were made.

However, there are some important differences between the States in respect of the relationships between the settler communities and Indigenous Peoples. Canada has a long history of treaty-making and treaty-breaking with First Nations and later Inuit and Métis

while there are no treaties between Australia and Indigenous nations. Canada's apology was ultimately made by the Conservative (right wing) Prime Minister Harper whereas in Australia, the Liberal (right wing) Prime Minister Howard refused to make an apology and it took the election of Labor (left wing) Prime Minister Rudd to make the apology, fulfilling a manifesto pledge. Canada's apology was tied more closely to the litigation leading to the Residential Schools Settlement Act and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action whereas Prime Minister Rudd tried to establish a distance between its Bringing Them Home Report and calls for compensation.

Dominello brings to light the backward-looking and forward-looking elements of an apology. An apology necessarily refers to some past action for which the current speaker expresses regret – and, ideally, responsibility. But to be meaningful, it cannot simply attempt to sweep the past under the proverbial carpet but must include a commitment to revised attitudes and just actions in future. The apologies in these two States were fundamental aspects of wider reconciliation processes aimed at relationship-building between settler and Indigenous communities. They apologies incorporate a form of recognition justice, giving a message to Indigenous Peoples that their accounts are true; that they matter; and that the Indigenous Peoples were wronged. An apology-giver might seek forgiveness but an apology sincerely made cannot be *conditional* on the grant of forgiveness. Forgiveness is at the discretion of the recipients of the apology and in both cases, while Indigenous spokespersons indicated gratitude for the apologies, they did not universally offer forgiveness. Meaningful apologies must be followed by change and substantive reforms may be a precondition of forgiveness. Dominello's review of the current conditions for Indigenous Peoples in Canada and Australia, not least the number of Indigenous children in out of home care, suggests that there is still a great deal of work to be done.

Dominello's exploration of the critical responses of the Indigenous nations concerned and critical literature demonstrates how the apologies themselves reinforce the systems of colonial domination. Apologies are necessary because Indigenous Peoples must continue to live within (and subjugated by) the settler States and independence is not, currently at least, an option for them. Both apologies, but especially the Australian example, emphasised that the removals were lawful at their time. However, they were only lawful according to settler law and not according to the legal systems of the Indigenous nations on whom they were imposed. (Dominello also raises some doubts as to whether the child removals were lawful

under international law.) In this way, the apologies further undermine Indigenous juridical sovereignty: State law is the only one that matters. The deliberate disconnection of the apologies from reparations also weakens their impact. Further, by focusing on the abuses of the child removal policies, the bigger picture of dispossession and domination is obscured. Dominello also explains how the Australian 'Closing the Gap' policy maintains settler standards as the norms to which Indigenous Australians should strive, further marginalising and undermining Indigenous values and negating any call for white Australia to change. Ultimately, the apologies promise change but reinforce the status quo. State sovereignty is uninterrupted, even reinforced.

The text has some limitations, as all such monographs do, and it is unfair to ask why a book did not cover other topics, such as reflections on or implications for other cases of settler colonialism. However, the author might have considered the implications of the respective federal systems for decision-making, responsibility, reparations and possible apologies, as well as the role, if any, of the monarch. The Queen made an apology to Tainui (in Aotearoa) in 1995 but a similar apology does not appear to be under consideration. Why not? A concluding chapter that draws together the main argument would have been another welcome addition. Potential next steps are explored addressed discursively through the text but there is no succinct summary. However, academic texts are probably not the best means of transmitting simple messages to policy-makers and the author may have decided to leave the discussion on future action to Indigenous leaders. The present reviewer was also surprised to find that the author does not include a position statement. Dominello being a highly experienced academic in this field, one can only assume that this was a conscious and deliberate omission.

In short, the book makes a worthy contribution to the growing scholarship on reconciliation efforts in (ostensibly) stable, Western democracies with troubled relations with Indigenous Peoples. Political leaders seeking reconciliation in good faith as well as scholars working in the intersecting academic fields should pay it close attention.