

Date: EMBARGOED until 29 March 2019

From: Progressive PR and Publicity on behalf of *Australian Book Review*  
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## Reality television's chamber of horrors

Marriage has come a long way in Australia, from 1788 to last year's historic victory for marriage equality, but it seems there's still a long way to go. Just before Alecia Simmonds left Sydney to spend a week in the Blue Mountains writing a chapter about the history of marriage in Australia, a friend suggested she watch an episode of *Married at First Sight*. Seven days later, with barely any writing done, Simmonds realises there's a problem: MAFs.

Simmonds examines the continuing tension on MAFs between desire and dictate in an entertaining, searing, clear-eyed look at Australia's highest-rating television show and the 'chamber of heterosexual horrors' it reveals.

**'Shows about someone's quest to find the right partner presuppose a person with will and desire; the capacity to choose, seduce, and consent ... What happens when you begin a show with a contract rather than romantic protagonists? And what if this marriage is arranged not according to an individual or a family's wishes, but by technocratic expertise, by a group of psychologists, one of whom appears in a lab coat?'**

**N.B. Alecia Simmond's article will be online at midday on Friday March 29**

**Alecia Simmonds** is an interdisciplinary scholar in law and history at UTS and NYU-Sydney, and a writer for *Gourmet Traveller* and *Fairfax Digital*. Her book *Wild Man: A true story of a police killing, mental illness and the law* won the 2016 Davitt Prize for best crime non-fiction. She is currently working on a book on the historical relationship between love and law in Australia.

Alecia Simmonds is available for interview.  
(See below)



Alecia Simmonds

## Further information

More information about *Australian Book Review* can be found on the [ABR website](#).

Please direct interview requests to Darren Saffin at Progressive PR and Communications on (03) 9696 6417 or [darren@progressivepr.com.au](mailto:darren@progressivepr.com.au)