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**Jay Pring. *Abo: A Treacherous Life: The Graham Henry Story*. ABC Books, 2005.**

Reviewed by Gillian Dooley in *The Adelaide Review* on 24 March 2006, p. 19

Jay Pring met former Sydney gangster Graham 'Abo' Henry when he started going out with his daughter. Henry came to trust Pring to the extent that he authorised him to write a book about his life based on notes written during his years in jail. And what a book it is.

Drawn to the criminal life by his admiration for the television gangsters in *The Untouchables*, Henry, with his partner Ned Smith, 'earned' an estimated \$25 million during his years in organised crime — an armed robbery worth less than \$100,000 was hardly worth bothering with. But Henry never went to jail for these crimes. The jail sentence which finally convinced him to give up the life of crime was for stabbing a policeman who was unwise enough to impugn his honour. You couldn't call him a *reformed* criminal, however: Henry's only regrets concern his family, not any of the worthless bastards he put in hospital (and perhaps worse) over the years, much less the companies he preyed upon. Though he despises the law, Henry has a cast iron moral code: don't do drugs, never involve women in your crimes, and above all never rat on a mate.

Pring, relying on Henry's notes and extensive consultation with him, has written the book in the first person. Frightening and astonishing by turns, *Abo* is a strangely seductive feat of sustained impersonation.