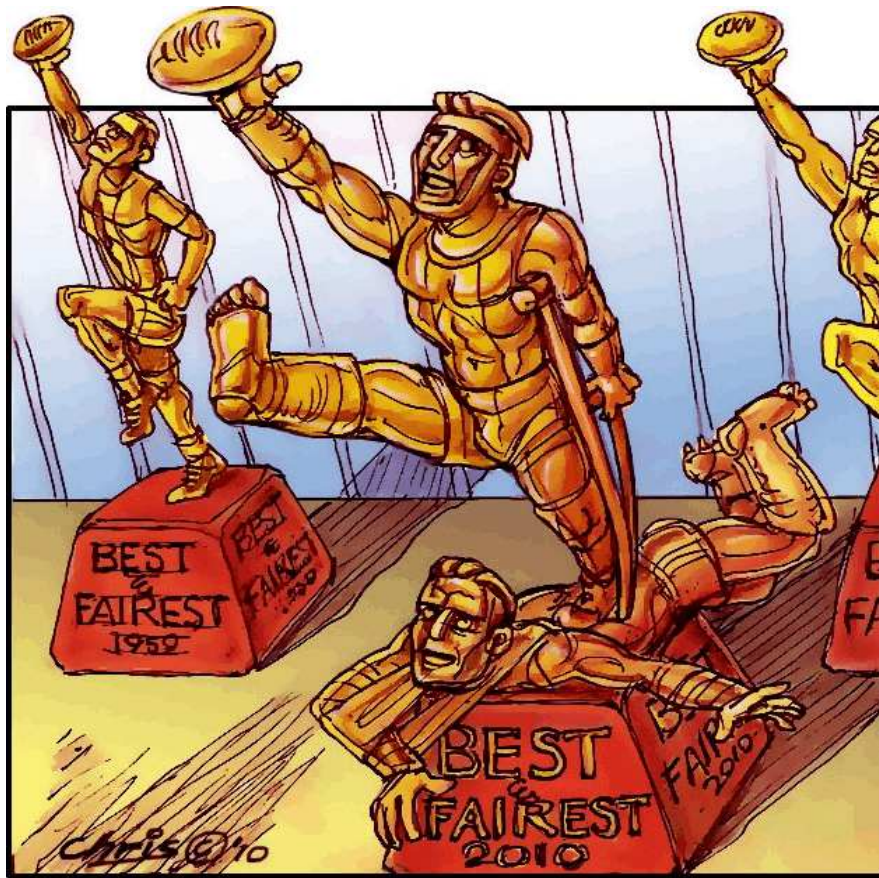


|   |                           |
|---|---------------------------|
| Aussie Zen Buddhist's religious prize<br><i>Peter Kirkwood</i> . . . . .                  | <a href="#"><u>1</u></a>  |
| Time for detention reform<br><i>Kerry Murphy</i> . . . . .                                | <a href="#"><u>2</u></a>  |
| Mary MacKillop's template for the Independents<br><i>Andrew Hamilton</i> . . . . .        | <a href="#"><u>4</u></a>  |
| Confessions of a football feral<br><i>Tim Kroenert</i> . . . . .                          | <a href="#"><u>6</u></a>  |
| Lessons from a loveless marriage<br><i>Gillian Bouras</i> . . . . .                       | <a href="#"><u>8</u></a>  |
| No rain on Pope's UK parade<br><i>Peter Scally</i> . . . . .                              | <a href="#"><u>10</u></a> |
| A matter of conscience<br><i>Fiona Katauskas</i> . . . . .                                | <a href="#"><u>12</u></a> |
| Hung parliament no place to be ham-fisted on euthanasia<br><i>Frank Brennan</i> . . . . . | <a href="#"><u>13</u></a> |
| Weapon on a train<br><i>A. Frances Johnson</i> . . . . .                                  | <a href="#"><u>16</u></a> |
| Pope-hate in broken Britain<br><i>Michael Mullins</i> . . . . .                           | <a href="#"><u>20</u></a> |
| Beating up on football thuggery<br><i>Frank O'Shea</i> . . . . .                          | <a href="#"><u>22</u></a> |
| The boy who thought he was Jesus<br><i>Morag Fraser</i> . . . . .                         | <a href="#"><u>24</u></a> |
| The rise of Catholicophobia<br><i>Paul Collins</i> . . . . .                              | <a href="#"><u>26</u></a> |
| What liberated women wear<br><i>Alison Sampson</i> . . . . .                              | <a href="#"><u>28</u></a> |
| Damaged men, desperate deeds<br><i>Tim Kroenert</i> . . . . .                             | <a href="#"><u>30</u></a> |
| Gillard's education afterthought<br><i>Neil Ormerod</i> . . . . .                         | <a href="#"><u>32</u></a> |
| Sharing the selfish illness<br><i>Helen Brake</i> . . . . .                               | <a href="#"><u>34</u></a> |
| The Timor Solution?<br><i>Fiona Katauskas</i> . . . . .                                   | <a href="#"><u>37</u></a> |
| Remembering the other 9/11<br><i>Antonio Castillo</i> . . . . .                           | <a href="#"><u>38</u></a> |
| Ain't that what religion is for?<br><i>Various</i> . . . . .                              | <a href="#"><u>41</u></a> |
| Pork-barrel politics rolls regional Australia<br><i>Michael Mullins</i> . . . . .         | <a href="#"><u>46</u></a> |
| Hedonists miss the point of travel<br><i>Catherine Marshall</i> . . . . .                 | <a href="#"><u>48</u></a> |



---

Eureka Street is published fortnightly online, a minimum of 24 times per year by Eureka Street Magazine Pty Ltd

Requests for permission to reprint material from the website and this edition should be addressed to the Editor.

PO Box 553  
Richmond  
VIC 3121  
Australia

Responsibility for editorial content is accepted by the publisher.

Unsolicited manuscripts will not be returned.

Tel +61 3 9427 7311  
Fax +61 3 9428 4450  
Eureka@eurekastreet.com.au

©2010 EurekaStreet.com.au

---

©2010 EurekaStreet.com.au

## **Aussie Zen Buddhist's religious prize**

### VIDEO

*Peter Kirkwood*

This is a big year for Australian poet Tasha Sudan who is featured in this interview with Eureka Street TV. She just won the Blake Prize for [Religious Poetry](#), a recent addition to the suite of prizes in the Blake Prize for Religious Art. And in October she will be ordained in the Zen Buddhist monastery where she lives in the south of Japan.(Continues below)

Sudan's [winning poem](#) is called 'Rahula', which is the name of the Buddha's son, and is a word that, in Pali, means 'bond' or 'fetter'. In simple but evocative language the poem speaks of the Buddha from his son's point of view. In their citation for the prize, the judges said:

'Rahula' is a nuanced and original poem marked with crisp, clear language that remained consistently on-theme throughout. It's a mesmeric rendering of a portion of the life of Buddha seen through the eyes of his son ... Trance-like and exceedingly beautiful, Rahula explores gender, families and the choices the spiritual life requires.

As a child, Sudan lived in Canberra, and on the NSW south coast. After studying journalism and writing at university in Melbourne, she opted out in order to live in the country as she searched for deeper meaning in life. As part of the same spiritual quest she then travelled overseas, and discovered Zen Buddhism in Japan.

Sudan now lives in a Soto Zen temple called Toshoji in Okayama, halfway between Kyoto and Hiroshima, in the south of Japan. Her teacher is Seido Suzuki Roshi. Zen is a form of Mahayana Buddhism, and it has three schools in Japan: Soto, Rinzai and Obaku. Soto Zen is the most popular, and most widely practised of the three schools.

This video features Sudan in conversation with well known poet, Judith Beveridge, who is Poetry Editor for [Meanjin](#) literary magazine.

The Blake Poetry Prize is sponsored by Leichhardt Municipality in Sydney, and by the NSW Writers' Centre.

## **Time for detention reform**

### HUMAN RIGHTS

*Kerry Murphy*

The recent tragic death of a man in Villawood Detention Centre has again raised questions about the need for Australia's harmful detention policy. It is not appropriate to discuss the particular case as it will likely be subject to a coronial inquest. However these events again remind us that immigration detention is still in need of urgent reform. Deprivation of liberty should be the last resort, not the first.

There are many reports about the harmful effects of detention on mental health. Governments have known this for many years yet still we have laws requiring detention in a number of circumstances. New centres are built and old ones expanded. Some people will only be mildly affected by detention, but for others, even a short period in detention could be very harmful, irrespective of age or gender.

Prolonged detention has been shown to be the most harmful. Asylum seekers are already traumatised and detention can make this trauma worse.

Those who have experienced it report that the worst part is the uncertainty that comes from significant delays in processing, or from the perception that the processing is not being done fairly, due to an unfair case officer, poor interpreter or an inadequate or unresponsive lawyer. Freezing processing, as occurred in April for Afghans and Sri Lankans, adds to the uncertainty and unfairness while also prolonging detention.

There are three different systems used by Australian Immigration officers for assessing refugee cases. The fairest process provides for a strict legal assessment, an interview, and independent review by the Refugee Review Tribunal (RRT). There are avenues of appeal to the courts on errors of law. This is the process for protection visa applicants, most of whom are living in the community and are not in detention.

The second process is a less transparent system with no real independent review. People arriving by boat or plane without a visa must be detained. If sent to Christmas Island, they are classified as 'offshore entry persons' which means that they can only make an application for refugee status if the Minister allows them. They will be interviewed but must stay in detention throughout the process.

This system has less accountability than the onshore processing system and is designed to keep claimants away from the courts.

The third system applies to those who are offshore, maybe in camps in Africa or the suburbs of Damascus or Amman. This system does not even require an interview and most of these cases are refused on the papers.

Most asylum seekers in detention are in the second system. Very few detainees get the benefit of the more scrutinised 'onshore' system. This creates anxiety for people who wonder why they are being treated differently. This fear is inevitable, regardless of the quality of the decision-makers, because the assessment system is flawed.

Given the legal, administrative and health concerns about the detention system, what can be done? The Uniting Church National Assembly recently stated:

Instead of expanding the failed paradigm of detention facilities and offshore processing, just a small proportion of that money could fund alternative programs which allow asylum seekers — after health, security and identity checks have been done — to reside peacefully in the community while their claims for refugee protection are assessed.

This is the current practice for those who arrive by air and then claim asylum.

This is certainly a start and it is not the first time such a reform has been suggested. Whilst nothing will help the man who died, hopefully this tragedy will lead to some genuine reforms of detention. In July 2008, the former Immigration Minister Senator Chris Evans announced a series of reforms to immigration detention.

The challenge for Labor, having tackled the worst excesses of the Howard immigration legacy, is to introduce a new set of values to immigration detention — values that seek to emphasise a risk-based approach to detention and prompt resolution of cases rather than punishment ...

Labor rejects the notion that dehumanising and punishing unauthorised arrivals with long-term detention is an effective or civilised response. Desperate people are not deterred by the threat of harsh detention — they are often fleeing much worse circumstances. The Howard Government's punitive policies did much damage to those individuals detained and brought great shame on Australia.

Senator Evans announced seven immigration values. Two key ones are:

Detention that is indefinite or otherwise arbitrary is not acceptable and the length and conditions of detention, including the appropriateness of both the accommodation and the services provided, would be subject to regular review. Detention in immigration detention centres is only to be used as a last resort and for the shortest practicable time.

Leadership is required to reform the process, apply these values and abandon the 'race to the bottom' we saw during the election.

## Mary MacKillop's template for the Independents

### RELIGION

*Andrew Hamilton*

The aftermath of the election gave play to the mythical Australian preference for the underdog. The stuffed shirts didn't like it, but people generally enjoyed the Greens' and Independents' day in the sun. It echoed the instinctive sympathy given to the little Aussie battlers, the hometown heroes, who are picked on by distant governments and big corporations.

This sympathy for the local and the simple over the larger, the sophisticated and the more powerful applies also to churches. When local bishops come into conflict with local congregations or clergy, the media commonly represent them as the heavy, remote and dogmatic hand that crushes the brave, shrewd struggler.

The obloquy grows when feisty local congregations fall foul of universal church law. This is seen as a battle between the light-armed David who knows the local terrain, and the heavy-footed Goliath who can cause great destruction but knows nothing much worth knowing.

This natural bias towards the local makes it difficult to argue to the average Catholic audience that the Roman bureaucracy and of a universal code of canon law can benefit local congregations.

Yet one of the surprising conclusions to be drawn from the life of Mary MacKillop is that the authority and legal framework of Roman government defended her sisters against the tyrannies and the chicanery of the local. Rome gave her and her sisters space for living. Her experience might lead us to review our instinct in favour of the local and straightforward.

When MacKillop became the central figure in the new congregation of Josephite Sisters, she was 24. By the time she was 30 she had been excommunicated by one Bishop of Adelaide, and had been investigated and deposed by another. She had also been forced to withdraw her sisters from two local churches because of the hostility of their bishops.

She had to travel to Rome to seek initial approval for the Rule of her Congregation, and had to apply to Rome again to have the Rule definitively approved in the face of the local churches.

At one level MacKillop can be seen as the brave, honest woman taking on the power and trickery of the Bishops. Bishop Sheil, an erratic man, excommunicated her with total lack of due process. Bishop Reynolds, a weak administrator, untruthfully claimed Roman authority for an investigation into MacKillop's leadership, and broke both Church and State law in binding the sisters to give evidence under oath.



The Quinn brothers, Bishops of Brisbane and Bathurst, bullied, cajoled and dissimulated in order to place the sisters under their own control.

But beneath the disgraceful way in which MacKillop was treated lay a tension between her broad vision of a congregation that could respond to the needs of poor children across Australasia, and the bishops' responsibility to assess and to meet the local needs of their own dioceses. The local bishops wanted control over the sisters to ensure that they would serve the diocesan priorities determined by themselves.

MacKillop was committed to work cooperatively with bishops. She did not want to work in dioceses where her sisters were not wanted. She was content for the bishops to form and control local congregations modelled on her own.

She also agreed that her own sisters could join these new congregations, provided they were first freed from the vows they had made in the Josephites. The issue was whether local bishops could take control of the Josephite sisters against their will and contrary to the Rule which specified the obligations and ideals to which they had committed themselves.

Mary regarded this as intolerable because it violated the conscience of the sisters. They had committed themselves to serve the poor through education, and had pledged obedience to the government centralised within the Congregation.

She gained a fair and informed hearing in Rome. The Roman Congregations received submissions from all parties, worked from a broad knowledge of personalities and conditions in Australia, and were taught by experience about what provisions of religious Rules could work. It put order into the very sketchy initial rule, but approved the central elements that defined it.

The Roman approval provided a redress to the arbitrary authority of the bishops and to the illegal processes they set in train to force the sisters to bend to their will.

This may make us look afresh at the Independents. Paradoxically, they were little battlers who consistently looked to the national interest, disregarding advice to consider only the opinions of their local electorate. And they tried to reform parliamentary procedures to ensure they served the interests of the nation rather than of the major parties.

It shows that battlers, even saints, need good laws and impartial administration.

## Confessions of a football feral

SPORT

*Tim Kroenert*

On the eve of the AFL Grand Final, I publicly declare my allegiance to the Collingwood Magpies. Yes, I am a Collingwood supporter, although I've always liked to think I'm not one of *those* Collingwood supporters: the mythical 'ferals' that give every non-Collingwood supporter slugging rights — no, I'm not one of *them*.

Recently, I had cause to wonder. During their round 21 match against the Adelaide Crows, the Pies, who had been in red-hot form, played poorly against an unexpectedly competitive opponent, and trailed all night. My wife (a fellow Pies supporter) and I were at the game, sitting directly in front of a flock of Crows.

One of them, a stout, middle-aged woman, was very vocal; justifiably smug about her team's dominance, but also making derogatory comments about Collingwood players and supporters. I stayed silent — we were losing, after all — and stewed.

When Collingwood won — just — through a combination of desperation and dumb luck, my relief in the wake of frustration got the better of me. I turned, leaned close to the woman behind me and screamed 'C'mon Pies!' into her slack, dejected face.

Ungracious. This woman had crossed state lines to watch her beloved team play, only to see them lose after leading all night. To top it off, she had now been savaged by one of *those* Collingwood ferals, which is what I must have seemed to her.

I felt ashamed, and even tried to apologise, although the effort was not well received. She believed she'd seen my true colours. I wondered if she was right. Perhaps I'd changed.

Barracking for the Pies is a bipolar experience. On the one hand I am part of the largest and most dedicated fan base of any AFL club. On the other, I suffer the vilification that has been meted upon Collingwood supporters throughout time immemorial.

The truism that anyone who doesn't love Collingwood, hates them and their fans, is long-standing and, as far as I can tell, has no basis other than tradition. The nature of the slights — Collingwood supporters are rowdy, toothless, illiterate — suggests that the stereotype has its roots amid the blue-collar communities of Collingwood and Abbotsford a century and a half ago. Whenever my brothers give me schtick about donning the black-and-white, I wink and accuse them of class prejudice.

My support has paid dividends, and not just because the Pies play an entertaining brand of football built on a foundation of guts, belief and hard work. On Friday night, they smashed the Geelong Cats, the reigning premiers and the most dominant team of the past four years, in the



## Preliminary Final.

That night, the Collingwood faithful finally mastered the spine-tingling slow chant — *Col-ling-wo-od* — that was just made for moments such as these. Our train carriage on the way home housed a content and collegial community clad in garments of black-and-white. This was footy fandom at its best.

The Magpies enter this week's Grand Final as favourites, but anything can happen on the day. The Pies' recent finals history against their opponents the St Kilda Saints favours the Saints. The St Kilda hopeful look to the last time the two faced off in a Grand Final, in 1966, when the Saints pinched it by a point.

There is a more recent, pertinent portent: in round three this year, the Saints deposed of the Pies comfortably, despite losing their superheroic captain Nick Riewoldt to a hamstring injury early in the game. The team ended up finishing third despite being sans-Riewoldt for most of the year.

This is a team with a lot of spirit, and a hunger for the premiership that is piqued by the fact that last year, they lost it to the Cats.

All of these factors are for me fueling what I can only describe as Grand Final anxiety. I've been sleeping badly. On Sunday night I dreamed of the Magpies scrambling for the ball at ground level inside their forward 50, desperate to kick a game-winning goal in the dying minutes of the match, but flooded by an equally desperate St Kilda defence.

I awoke before the siren sounded, so I have no idea if this nightmare Grand Final had a happy ending.

Or, more to the point, whose happy ending it was. Because disappointment this Saturday for Collingwood fans does of course translate to joy for St Kilda fans. Among them, one regular *Eureka Street* [contributor](#); a close friend; and most importantly, my younger brother, Andy.

If the Magpies lose, I hope that amid my misery I can harbour some happiness for him. Blood is, after all, thicker and warmer than a mid-strength, plastic-cupped MCG beer.

Maybe I haven't become totally corrupted, after all?

## Lessons from a loveless marriage

NON-FICTION

*Gillian Bouras*



Once upon a time a man told me that he had gone ahead and married his wife, even though he knew he didn't love her.

'But why?' I asked, mystified, for surely living with someone you are not in love with is the hardest thing in the world.

He looked straight at me and then said levelly, 'Because it wasn't important.'

I gasped; I distinctly remember gasping, even though I had long moved in a world of arranged marriages, where love, if it came, was a big fat bonus.

But this man was not part of such a world.

Much later, a Catholic friend and I were discussing the matter of justice. She made the point that justice does prevail, if not in this world, in the next: she is a firm believer in God as Judge, while I am not. Neither do I know my way through theological mazes: what I do know, however, is that I want justice here and now and not in the sweet by-and-by. So I had a question: 'Do you believe God considers we are as important as all that?'

Her answer was a resounding, unequivocal *Yes*, and I was reminded once more of the biblical notion that God heeds every sparrow that falls, and also of the accompanying assertion that we humans are of rather more value than the average sparrow in any case.

We do not guess this when we are young, but our idea of what is important changes over time, and so the man who married heedlessly and in haste eventually realised that his decision had been important, after all: regret, I think, figured largely in his learning, but then regret is so often part of learning and ageing.

Perhaps one of the few advantages of the latter process is that we have an opportunity to re-organise our priorities. And so we ask ourselves the question: How important is it? Finding an answer is invariably difficult. Of course it is. But we learn to shed the little things. Eventually. Usually.

Recently I decided I simply had to go to England, after a gap of nine years: I felt compelled to see three of my girlfriends. I use the word *girl* advisedly, though, for they are aged 94, 90 and 86. I felt it important to visit them before it was too late; it is important to them to meet extreme old age with courage, charm and grace.

And this is what they are doing: they take pleasure in family and friends, in their gardens,

and in the blessing of relatively good health, but they are also brave in facing setbacks and in coping with the sure and certain knowledge of an end. They seem to be quite unafraid of the future and the inevitable great change. This was a significant lesson taught me, because, frail vessel that I am, I do not know how to cope with such knowledge.

But these three are still choosing to accept any invitation life extends; they are still choosing to create each day in a positive fashion. They continue to make life new, even if they themselves are old.

Recently I was on a ferry, travelling between Crete and the island of Kythera. The winds were high, the wine-dark seas were extremely rough: when I ventured out on to the deck I could hardly stand up. People with sensitive stomachs were being sick everywhere, and a boy of about ten moved from hanging miserably over the deck rail, and lay down in the shade.

Then his thin 12-year-old sister appeared. No wind or sea was going to subdue her, or her spirit. As I watched, she proceeded to turn cartwheels against the elements, and that act suddenly seemed to me to sum up the whole matter of importance: deciding what it is, really, and acting upon the decision. Even if you are only 12. And if you've got that problem resolved then, well ...

But of course it is not as simple as that. It just isn't. I found myself hoping, nevertheless, and with all my heart, that the little girl could keep on turning cartwheels for as long as necessary, and on every windswept deck, no matter what the fates throw up at her in future. That's important.

## No rain on Pope's UK parade

RELIGION

*Peter Scally*

Although I was present at the big, open-air Mass at Bellahouston Park in Glasgow on Thursday, where the Pope got a rapturous reception from the crowds, it was not until I was watching the TV coverage later that I realised something quite significant about how this visit was going to be received by the rest of the country.

The build-up had not been encouraging. Weeks of negative headlines about the Church, about the disappointing take-up of tickets and the organisation and cost of the visit had started to wear down Catholic enthusiasm.

Just days before the Pope's arrival, Channel 4 chose to devote an hour of screen time to a documentary on Benedict's papacy by gay rights campaigner, Peter Tatchell, entitled, *The Trouble with the Pope*. The day before he arrived, news bulletins announced that a letter to the *Guardian* opposing the state visit had been signed by 55 writers, academics, politicians and other prominent public figures.

Many Catholics were bewildered, downhearted and wondered what kind of welcome the Pope could expect.

But there was a clue in the list of signatories to that letter that I failed to spot until I was watching the BBC news report of the Bellahouston Mass, and saw the camera pan across the huge crowd and rest for a few moments on the figure of Alex Salmond, the Scottish First Minister, in the front row, joining in the singing of 'Be thou my vision' with head back, mouth wide open.

Now Salmond is not a Catholic, and by his own admission not a regular churchgoer, but here was a man not only glad to welcome the Pope and associate himself with his visit, but delighting in the honour the Pope was doing Scotland, and clearly enjoying himself, too.

Every Scot I have spoken to since then noticed that same shot, and there has been much comment about the reasons for Salmond's enthusiasm, including the obvious one that he is a shrewd politician who wants to win Catholic votes. But even if this were just a cynical calculation, it would still be telling us something.

If there are more votes in welcoming the Pope than in opposing him — if backing the Pope is a vote-winner — then what does that tell us about what ordinary Scots, or ordinary Brits, think of the Holy Father?

It was then that I checked the list of signatories to the much-vaunted letter to the *Guardian*. Out of 55 prominent people, I counted nine whom you might call 'politicians'. Eight were

members of the House of Lords. The ninth was a retired MP. No one in elected office. Not a single one who was ever going to have to face voters again.

Despite what is often said about politicians being 'out of touch' with ordinary people, the fact is that Britain's MPs have a much better sense of ordinary people's views than most academics, commentators and journalists, because it is part of their job to listen to those views. They get hundreds of letters a week, they run weekly face-to-face 'surgeries' in their constituencies, and they go round the streets knocking on doors at election time — which is at least once a year if you include local and European elections.

And as well as the means, elected politicians also have the motive to know what ordinary people think — they need their votes.

So, if British MPs think that, on balance, dissing the Pope is a vote-loser, they are probably right, and that tells us a great deal about the views of ordinary British people — as opposed to the views of the relatively small band of metropolitan 'opinion-formers' who work in the media, or who write letters to the *Guardian*.

And that is exactly what the last few days have shown: while most Britons showed no strong feelings about the Pope's visit, of those who did have strong feelings, the vast majority welcomed him with considerable enthusiasm: 125,000 lined the streets of Edinburgh; 70,000 came to the Mass in Glasgow; 80,000 turned out in Hyde Park and another 55,000 braved the drizzle in Birmingham.

These are not massive figures when compared to the crowds John Paul II attracted in 1982, but they look huge next to the 11,000 that the organisers of the most significant protest march claimed to have mustered in London last Saturday under the banner, 'Protest the Pope'. It is not only their grammar they've got wrong, it seems: they have also gravely misjudged the public mood.

Because, while Britain is often described as a 'secular' country, it is by no means an aggressively secular country. Secularism holds that religion's place in public life should not be a specially privileged one. Aggressive secularism tries to drive it out of public life completely.

Ironically, it was precisely these 'more aggressive forms of secularism' that Pope Benedict warned against in the first address of his visit to the Queen and civic leaders at Holyroodhouse, and these same more aggressive forms of secularism that so conspicuously failed, despite months of planning and the help of allies in key positions in the media, to rain on his parade.

## A matter of conscience

CARTOON

*Fiona Katauskas*





## Hung parliament no place to be ham-fisted on euthanasia

THE MEDDLING PRIEST

*Frank Brennan*



In 1995, the Northern Territory Parliament passed Australia's first euthanasia law: The Rights of the Terminally Ill Act (NT). In 1997, the Commonwealth Parliament overrode the Territory law with its own Euthanasia Laws Act. The Commonwealth law did not repeal the Territory law but it rendered it inoperative.

In 2008, Greens leader Senator Bob Brown took the opportunity, once the Howard Government was out of power and no longer in control of the Senate, to introduce his Rights of the Terminally Ill (Euthanasia Laws Repeal) Bill. It was a very shoddy piece of legislative drafting and went nowhere.

The introduction of the bill was ham-fisted. Even the Northern Territory Government opposed the bill. The Chief Minister of the Northern Territory, Paul Henderson, said at the time, 'I find it very high-handed and arrogant of Bob Brown from Tasmania to be introducing legislation in the Federal Parliament that affects the Northern Territory, without any consultation at all with the Territory Government, or the people of the Northern Territory.'

If the bill had been passed, it would have had the effect of resuming the operation of the original 1995 Territory law which by then even Dr Philip Nitschke had conceded in an article in *The Lancet* was defective legislation.

The NT law requires a psychiatrist to have 'confirmed that the patient is not suffering from a treatable clinical depression in respect of the illness' before a medical practitioner is allowed to administer the lethal injection. Nitschke and his co-author stated:

Confirmation was not easy since patients perceived such a mandatory assessment as a hurdle to be overcome. [Philip Nitschke] understood that every patient held that view. To what extent was the psychiatrist trusted with important data and able to build an appropriate alliance that permitted a genuine understanding of a patient's plight?

Some senators were concerned to learn that Dr Nitschke had personally paid the fee for the psychiatric assessment of one of the patients he euthanased.

So now we have a hung parliament and Brown wants to agitate the issue of euthanasia once again. There are three distinct issues.

First, the 1995 Northern Territory law is a bad law even for those who favour euthanasia with appropriate safeguards. So before any other step is taken the Northern Territory parliament should repeal the 1995 law, so we can start with a blank slate.

Second, since 1997 the legislatures of the Northern Territory, the ACT and Norfolk Island have been precluded by the Commonwealth parliament from passing laws providing for euthanasia. Presumably Brown will make sure he has the politicians and the people of the territories in the cart before he moves this time.

But there is no hurry. There is little pressure from the people and legislatures in these places about what is presently an academic issue. To date no state parliament has legislated for euthanasia. Two years ago, I said to the Senate committee:

[W]hat has changed in 10 years? In terms of what has changed, if you look at the United States, Oregon is still the only state which has euthanasia. Since the Commonwealth exercise the US Supreme Court has said there is no right to euthanasia. Lord Joffe's United Kingdom legislation has gone down, and we have had very clear statements from the medical authorities in the United Kingdom and a quite eloquent submission here from the AMA. So it would seem to me that on balance nothing has changed or, if anything, the anti-euthanasia case is probably slightly strengthened if we look at developments in equivalent jurisdictions.

Third, there is the difficulty of providing adequate safeguards for vulnerable individuals in their dying days. Last year there was a lot of attention on Christian Rossiter's request for termination of hydration and nutrition. The WA Supreme Court gave the go-ahead. But he decided not to continue the request.

A month after the judgment the media reported on Rossiter's condition, speculating that he might die soon from a respiratory infection. The *Sunday Age* reported:

The sad irony here, according to Dr Nitschke, 'is that [after the court case] he'd picked up a bit in himself, because people have been paying him attention'. He'd been particularly cheered by the ministrations of an outreach carer from Perth Home Care services. The *Sunday Age* understands the woman, who has been refused permission to speak to the media, had encouraged Mr Rossiter to record his life story, notably about his childhood in South Africa, with the idea of publishing a memoir.

What then was the court case about? He may well have been suffering intense pre-mortem loneliness, as distinct from depression. He died of a chest infection more than a month after the court gave the all clear for his carers to terminate hydration and nutrition should he request it.

Then came the case of Mr JT in the ACT Supreme Court with doctors wanting to terminate treatment. Chief Justice Higgins said:

The patient here lacks both understanding of the proposed conduct and the capacity to give informed consent to it. Thus, those charged with JT's care remain under the common law duty to provide that care to the best of their skill and ability.

The Chief Justice had cause to comment on 'an outrageous approach to ethical standards'

disclosed in the case.

The real quandary with assisted suicide through removal of nutrition and hydration is determining when the law will deem a decision to terminate life an act of informed consent, being irrevocable even though the patient has mood swings and moves in and out of consciousness. Not everyone who says, 'I wish to die. Please terminate all nutrition' will remain clearly of that resolve.

The law will need to specify the conditions for presuming that a patient has made an irrevocable choice for death even when no one would be adversely affected by the health provider complying with the later revoked wish of the failing patient clutching to life.

Presumably, there will be a need to impose an obligation on health professionals to ensure that the choice to die remains firm until loss of consciousness. If this obligation were always to be faithfully discharged (which it won't be), it would be very onerous.

I doubt that a hung parliament will have the time and resources to consider these complex issues in its early days. As Tony Abbott says, there are real 'bread and butter concerns' that this parliament needs to get its head around. Of the three issues raised, only the second is a Commonwealth concern.

Whether hung or not, the Commonwealth parliament needs to get on with its core business. Neither Rossiter nor Mr JT would have been helped by a repeat of the NT euthanasia law. Our leaders need to address the more urgent national questions.

## **Weapon on a train**

POETRY

*A. Frances Johnson*

### **Eyelash curler, Geelong Train 6.45am**

The weapon was extracted  
from a small black bag  
on a peak hour train  
Held sharp and confident as a new razor  
against the shunt and shuck  
of the carriage  
Throwback to industrial tortures  
held against the soft wet eye  
of a suburban *chien Andalou*  
We reach deep into coat pockets  
and turn the private sphere  
as if it were a spare glass eyeball  
twist it tight as tyrants, keep it safe  
An engineer contends with the droop  
(eyelash weight to time)  
while across the aisle  
a smart young man secretly yearns  
to borrow a gadget such as this  
for his big Friday night  
The woman in seat 53B stares —  
It's been years since she's seen  
the eyes of those she loves up close  
This brazen flourishing

of weaponry, as though beauty  
could no longer be bothered  
concealing machination or end  
— was pure contraption within contraption  
the pinned back eye  
the speeding train  
The gaze of the modern  
curled in on itself  
failing to entreat  
rain, steam and speed  
to shocking new anything  
a quaintness of cold-eyed progress  
blinking into the mirror  
of hard-eyed futures  
already past  
Later, in the tamed view of afternoon  
Some of us wondered whether the woman  
had suddenly seen more  
whether we too could slow time  
open eyes again  
to worlds unlashed

**Bird of rights**

*Es sitzt en Vogel auf dem Leim ... |*  
— *Erich Kastner*

You poets muck it up for birds  
this muck is not like rain  
bringing seeds and grubs and image

to the dirt-black page again  
Well we won't rent out feathered similes  
to pacify your game  
the lyric tunnel of your rifle-sights  
will shoot us just the same  
No more supply of birds on wire  
No cosy-nested schlock  
No holiday hires of *wingÃ©d* clocks  
for sustainable chariots  
You still confuse bird war for song  
*Twitter, chirrup, farrk, croon*  
our battle cries strung like sentimental flags  
on seedless iMac tombs  
You fuck over our migratory paths  
And yet our call-sign isn't bitter  
My soft head catches in landing gear:  
And you insist: 'This soaring flight'? 'Where eagles dare'?

You see why I do not 'twitter'

**The will of birds**

The parrot, like art, is 'mortal in its cornered sphere'\*  
*of the air and off the air*  
With their flights assured I inherit the world  
and its solemnly metered oxygen tanks  
But call and response are less defended than ever  
*landscape* is for dead connoisseurs  
*poesis* for the soon-to-be-dead



With this sobriety in mind  
I climb the grey stone stairs  
dragging my life behind me in a box  
the size of something in which I once interred  
a corella as a pious child  
A lawyer reads my carbon-coloured will  
in perfect sonorous pinstripe  
The air soft across my larynx is the same soft air  
as that curling about my hand  
My fingers open tentatively to sign  
I pull a quill from my own skin  
and staunch the flow  
With every downstroke I seek  
to bequeath all to those beautiful fugitives:  
wingmarks over the blond paddocks

*\*From Robert Pinsky, Song from Jersey Rain, 'The Impetus was Delight', c. 2001*

## Pope-hate in broken Britain

EDITORIAL

*Michael Mullins*

In troubled times, it is natural for humans to return to old ways of thinking. In Britain the optimism that preceded the global financial crisis was largely founded on economic prosperity. With that gone, Britons feel they have nothing to hold on to, and therefore the lead up to the papal visit has witnessed an uncovering of the unseemly tribalism of the past that was largely defined by a division between the Protestant majority and Catholic minority.



As the Pope was arriving in the UK on Thursday, social commentator Frank Furedi [wrote](#) in *Spiked Online* that the visit has provided the opinion leaders of Britain's cultural elite with 'a figure that it is okay to hate'. He described displays of animosity towards the Pope as 'the kind of conformism that is usually seen amongst children who, under peer pressure, compete to see who can come up with the meanest phrase to castigate the playground scapegoat'.

Catholic officials themselves appeared callous, with the Pope [associating](#) atheism with the Nazis, after Cardinal Walter Kasper had declared upon his arrival in London that 'an aggressive new atheism has spread through Britain'.

The Catholic paper *The Tablet* [dismissed](#) Cardinal Kasper's assertion in its editorial on Friday. It suggested that the problem is common to all faiths, and also to religious believers and atheists. It alluded to the slogan 'Broken Britain' that was used by the Conservatives before the May election, arguing that the phrase should not be equated with the loss of religious faith, but instead a depletion of social capital.

We might regard the present angst in Britain as a manifestation of the growing pains that are to be expected in a world of emerging pluralism. Earlier this month, *Eureka Street* published Peter Kirkwood's [obituary](#) for inter-religious dialogue pioneer Raimon Panikkar. Panikkar influenced US theologian Ewert Cousins, who used the term 'mutation' to describe the period of profound religious change we're currently in the midst of.

According to Cousins, the globalisation that followed World War II precipitated a mutation into a 'global matrix of cultures' that involves 'mutational men' from the future drawing others from the past 'across the abyss of the present and into the mutational world of the future'.

The grafting together of different faiths and cultures also has implications for Australia. We can think of ourselves as part of the 'new world' and therefore somewhat immune to tribal animosities that go back for much of the past millennium. But in fact we still have a long way

to go in establishing the trust and respect necessary fuse Indigenous and non-Indigenous beliefs and cultures, at least to the extent that any nation must be founded on common beliefs.

## Beating up on football thuggery

SPORT

*Frank O'Shea*



Recently our local paper published a list of players who were going to miss finals football because of injury. These were not people who had fallen down a hole, or been in a road accident or been beaten by their wife with a golf club. These people had been injured by opponents in what is ostensibly a game.

I ask whether any activity where players set out to damage their opponents can lay claim to be called sport, and whether such an activity should be allowed to draw on the country's medical resources to mend that damage.

The injury lists could probably have been taken from any of the past 20 weeks, the result of highly trained young men attacking each other in front of thousands of people. I am not talking about fighting, affectionately known as biff. I am talking about the game itself, in which the chances of winning are greatly increased by causing as much pain as possible to your opponents.

Police look on benignly; clergymen bless them; a politician may turn up to watch. There is no emperor in the stands to give a thumbs up or down for performance; instead there are fans (short for fanatics) who applaud thuggery and suggest that any participant who is less than enthusiastic in battering an opponent is unworthy to be part of the spectacle.

They may not put it like that — it is usually couched in terms suggesting uncertain parentage, indeterminate gender and unconventional sexual practices.

Read your local paper any weekend for the litany of concussions, broken bones, coked thighs, sprained ankles and damaged vertebrae — bodies that have been absorbing punishment that if it were meted out in any other context would attract a prison sentence. Monday after Monday we read it: players out for weeks, players on crutches, eye gouges, broken cheekbones, dislocated joints.

And the adults who are in charge of these muddied oafs protect the offending player ('it's a man's game') and hire a Queen's Counsel accustomed to defending murderers to plead their case in front of the judiciary, so that they can be back the next weekend to continue the havoc.

I pick on the rugby codes in particular. Aussie Rules does require a number of skills — you have to be able to catch and run and kick, and the playing field is sufficiently large that all these skills are needed.

Even though they glory in the name *football*, the rugby codes require no more than two or three people on each side who can actually kick a ball; in one of the codes, a player is selected for his ability to throw a ball straight over a distance of about ten metres; in a recent Rugby League game, a player was praised because, in the 80 minutes the game lasted, he had carried the ball for a distance of 100m.

Many of these players are thrown into the sport at an early age, to be hammered senseless by older blokes. In time, they learn the tricks of the trade and hand out the same punishment to hungry youngsters coming along after them. It is the same logic that in the past was used by trainee officers in military academies: *we* got bastardised when we started; why shouldn't *they* be initiated too?

And all those injuries — the hammies and groins, the months of rehabilitation, the shoulder reconstructions, the knee makeovers, the torn ligaments — their treatment has to be paid for, presumably by their club whose insurance claims push up the premiums for the rest of us.

And 20 or 30 years from now, who will pay for the hip replacements, the osteoarthritis, the knee jobs? Actually, let us not bring the whole thing down to money. Has any study been done on the long term effects of the battering which these tattooed, muscled-up young men give each other week after week? Put in another way, would you be happy if your daughter wanted to marry a man guaranteed to be a limping wreck by the age of 45?

The medical profession has rightly opposed boxing — an easy target, especially when you see a pathetic shell like Mohammed Ali. How can these same people be so sanguine about the weekly mayhem on our football fields? Is it cynical to suggest that it is because football is a nice little earner for the medical profession, not to mention the physiotherapists, chiropractors, osteopaths, psychologists and providers of X-rays and MRI scans?

As for what these young men do in their spare time, better not go there.

## The boy who thought he was Jesus

### BOOKS

Morag Fraser

Joel Magarey: *Exposure: A Journey*. Wakefield Press, 2009. ISBN 97818625448237. [Website](#)

For his first 12 years Joel Magarey believed he was Jesus, ‘the Son of the Most High’. Even when reality bit with the onset of puberty, he retained his immortal longing, and it is the intensity of his experience that lends this sometimes boyish tale of growth, journeying, love and obsession a depth and seriousness that lifts it out of any conventional travel genre.

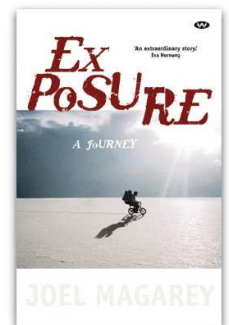
‘Hunger’ is his word for the impulse to seek out the numinous. As a boy, on a coastal bay of South Australia, sitting astride a rock pillar like a cadet Simeon Stylites, he followed that impulse and recognised its pitch:

Often, during summer dusks as I sat on the pillar ... following the slow rise of an orange moon, I’d hear the sound of a note playing on the air ... Sometimes that haunting sound, the embrace of the warm wind, and the dark passion of the raging waves would gradually invade me until my thoughts had faded away, and in that darkness I would feel the presence of a force or power, a living presence it felt like — yes, it was the living presence of the universe, humming through the wind and the waves and the ocean and the island and all things.

That feeling, a pressing, often painful awareness of the sacredness of the natural world and of the human lives lived in accordance with its imperatives, is the dominant tone of Magarey’s storytelling. But it’s a tone interrupted, distorted and sometimes drowned out by the compulsions that drive a young man as he travels in order to feed or escape his capricious demons.

*Exposure* is part memoir, part travelogue, and part apologia: a hybrid ‘tracking across the hurtling world’ narrative that traces Magarey’s many youthful journeys, physical and psychological. There is more than a touch of the Tom Jones in his sexual meanderings, and a bathetic absurdity in his ambition to sample a multicultural smorgasbord. What he enjoys in Ecuador — if that is the word for such highly-strung and Catholic-guilt-infused sexual dallings — you won’t find in the Lonely Planet Guide.

It is also the diary of a young man suffering from a form of obsessive-compulsive disorder, which manifests in excruciating symptoms. There is his inability to make decisions (hence the weeks wasted in Los Angeles while he chases the impossible dream of the perfect, lofting down sleeping bag that will keep him alive while he sleeps rough — very rough and very cold — in Alaska); there is the recurrent, neurotic conviction that he has fathered a child with Mhely, a Filipina woman in Hong Kong, a child who just might inherit his own psychological





afflictions — if he or she exists.

More interesting, and more agonising, is his driven response to poverty and to suffering when he encounters it. In Bombay he goes on a crazed alms race, spending all his rupees on the streets, believing he can salve blindness. Only his travelling companion (in every sense), Penny, his long deflected love and the story's fulcrum, saves him by breathing her own deep sanity into his fevered frame.

Penny, and the attenuated story of their on-again, off-again love affair, gives the book a gravitas that it needs to counterbalance the picaresque, sometimes grotesque adventuring of its hero/antihero. Penny seems to understand what impels her obsessive adventurer: she is his context, his compass, and in ways almost too deep to fathom, she is also the warrant for much of his manic seeking.

Because Penny trusts him, so do we as readers — though not enough to embark on a trip down an Alaskan river in a canoe with him, or to go trekking in bear country or walking in a Scotland that he populates with importunate ghosts. If trust it is, it is of a different kind — to do with his understanding of what is meant by the humming of the wind and the waves.

Magarey is a brave and driven — you could say foolhardy — traveller. And this is very exposed writing: revealing, rindless, self-critical, scarifying, for all its self-deprecating comedy. The title itself, *Exposure*, refers to the psychological technique the writer is supposed to employ in order to learn to live with his obsessions — by listening to them on tape, domesticating them almost.

You want to wish him luck, but at the same time you don't want to see his Dostoevskian energy, his way of listening to the pulse of the universe dissipate, or grow less passionate, or committed.

## The rise of Catholicophobia

### RELIGION

Paul Collins



Recently I've been asked to discuss Islamophobia on several ABC stations. This issue has come to the fore as a result of the threat of Koran-burning by a fundamentalist preacher in Florida. However, I've never been asked to talk about 'Catholicophobia' or, to put it bluntly, 'putting the boot into the Micks'. Generally I think Catholics should 'cop it sweet', although my patience is at present getting pretty thin.

Take the responses to a thoughtful opinion piece by UK Prime Minister David Cameron reprinted in the Fairfax media yesterday. Entitled 'Faith is a gift to be cherished, not a problem to be overcome', Cameron [speaks](#) of John Henry Newman 'as one of the greatest Englishmen' and refers specifically to his view of conscience. He also refers to his work 'as a simple parish priest' in Birmingham. He comments that 'Like other faith groups, the Catholic Church proclaims a message of peace and justice to the world' and says the UK government shares the same ideals.

But it is the sentiments in the blog that follows that are most interesting. Take this: 'The Pope; mouthpiece for the Great Sky Fairy, instiller of fear, harbinger of rites, rituals, and other blithering nonsense, perpetuator of ignorance, bringer of pointless mumbo-jumbo, leader of a mega-rich theocracy that sucks its adherents dry to lavish its temple walls with gold.'

Or this: 'The Catholic Church has either been the instigator or has been complicit in so many wrongs perpetrated against humanity.' Or this: 'The end of organised religion can not come around soon enough. There are already studies that show secular democracies, with a large atheist base, are better societies to live in than faith based societies.' And so on. *The Rock*, the Protestant paper, is far from dead!

All of the blogs are anonymous, of course. These are people too cowardly to put their full names to such views. But they are not alone. Liberal broadsheets in the UK such as *The Independent* and *The Guardian*, the BBC, Channel 4 and the chattering classes generally have been falling over themselves to publicly criticise Catholicism and Benedict XVI. Take actor Stephen Fry: 'You can't be part of an autocratic kingdom on Earth like the Catholic place is and claim to be a spiritual leader and expect the British taxpayer to foot the bill for your visit.'

Anti-Catholicism is a staple that goes back as far as 'Bloody Mary' in British history. Newman himself suffered from it. In the infamous Achilli trial for criminal defamation in the 1850s Newman was tried before an openly anti-Catholic Evangelical, Lord Chief Justice Campbell, was found guilty and at his sentencing was hectored from the bench for half an hour — Newman described it as 'a horrible jobation' — by Mr Justice Coleridge.

He was told that he, one of ‘the bright lights of Protestantism’, was much changed for the worse since he became a papist. As Newman says: ‘He held me up as a ‘spectacle’ how men deteriorate when they became Catholics.’

This is not to say that Catholicism has nothing to answer for. The sexual abuse crisis has understandably created a justifiably horrible impression in the public at large. But the problem is that caricatures quickly become facts. For instance the UK *Independent* reported that ‘over 10,000 people have come forward [in the US] to say they were raped [by priests] as part of this misery-go-round’.

In a clinical analysis of these figures the web page [Spiked](#) shows that 1203 individuals, not 10,667, were raped by priests in the legal meaning of the word. Of course, this is appalling, but it shows how caricatures morph into facts. The web page does a similar analysis for Ireland.

Geoffrey Robertson QC has been one of the ‘no popery’ advocates claiming that Benedict XVI should be arrested and put on trial because as Cardinal Ratzinger he ran a parallel system of justice — canon law. He implies that this was highly secret.

Whatever you might think of canon law it was hardly secret; I have a copy here on my reference desk.

One of the issues in conflict is whether the Vatican is a state. It certainly has a longer claim than any other state in Europe, having been established as the Republic of St Peter in the seventh century with continuous existence until 1870. The popes never surrendered their claims, and the Vatican City State was established in the Lateran Treaties of 1929. DFAT Australia’s position is that this ‘small territorial base’ gives the Holy See ‘recognition as an independent sovereign entity in international law’.

As I said: many Catholics have learned to ‘cop it sweet’ and not take themselves too seriously. After all, Catholicism is a big target. But there comes a point where you have to say something, and I think the papal visit to the UK might just be it.

Although I must admit I almost despaired yesterday morning when I read Cardinal Walter Kasper’s remarks that ‘when you land at Heathrow [Airport] you think at times you have landed in a Third World country’. He went on to say: ‘Above all, an aggressive new atheism has spread through Britain.’

What a stupid, ham-fisted comment from a man who should know better!

## What liberated women wear

### HUMAN RIGHTS

*Alison Sampson*

A while back, I was out shopping for underwear. As I deliberated over my usual modest choices, five women in burqas came into the store. Chatting and laughing, they headed over to a selection of lacy g-strings, holding up the garments for all to see as they checked sizes and made loud comments about each pair of panties.



Years before, I had tried on a burqa in an Afghani rug shop. I had been shocked at how it had obscured my vision, and at how heavily it hung. But when I heard these joyful, sexy, belly-laughing women, invisible behind their veils, it occurred to me that there may be levels of choice and layers of meaning behind the concept of modesty and how it is expressed.

Extroverted women in burqas shopping for fancy lingerie may not be the oppressed victims often portrayed in the media; more to the point, women in burqas in Australia may not embody the same meaning as women in burqas in Afghanistan or anywhere else that forces women to wear it by law.

Then again, perhaps they too are oppressed. But if we are to discuss the burqa in Australia, as we have since the recent decision by a Perth judge that a witness cannot wear a burqa in court, then let's have a proper conversation. Let's avoid inflammatory language and gross generalisations; and let's be honest, too, about the masks we 'liberated' women wear.

Regarding my own masks, I am considered low maintenance. I get my hair cropped short four or five times a year. I wax only when the weather warms up. But I don't get my hair cut by just anyone; I have it carefully trimmed in a salon. I don't wax at home, but shell out to have some other woman smear hot wax on my legs and rip it, and the hairs, off.

I'm getting flak as my sides go salty — most of my friends dye their hair. I don't wear make-up, but many women won't leave the house without lipstick and a swipe of eyeliner. Many wax their bikini lines or more. And I can't tell you the number of times people have suggested I have my eyebrows shaped — they aren't heavy, but one is slightly crooked.

A shockingly high number of women I know have had plastic surgery of one kind or another — ears pinned, breasts reduced, breasts inflated, tummies tucked, forehead lines filled in.

Women will say that they do these things according to their own choice. And they are right; no one is threatening to stone them if they leave the house without a touch of lippy.

And yet when I ask friends why they wax, the most common response is 'I feel dirty'; they wear make-up because otherwise they 'look like death'. Ironically, it is often mothers and sisters who are the worst offenders when it comes to pressuring a woman to shave her legs, lose some weight, and look attractive; in other words, to submit to the male gaze.

In this enlightened society of ours, I have been 'flashed' half a dozen times; the first time, I was eight. Years later, out for an evening stroll with my father, money was thrown at me from a moving car as the occupants hollered 'slut!'. I can still feel the sting of coins hitting my cheek.

In this same liberated society, many women use cosmetics and clothing to conceal bruising; the majority of sexual assaults are against children under the age of 14; I can't leaf through a newspaper without seeing airbrushed bodies and lingerie ads; a major department store sells 'bras' for three-year-olds; and younger and younger women are refusing to eat in their attempts to be desirably thin.

So much of a woman's experience tells her that without a certain level of grooming she is grotty and, worse, unattractive. So much suggests that she is being watched by predatory eyes. No wonder we all wear masks.

I am by no means comfortable with the burqa, but I can understand the desire to wear a veil in one form or another. Any public conversation about the decision to wear a burqa — and in Australia it is often a decision — must be respectful. It must hear from women who wear the garment if it is to be any more than paternalism.

And any critique would be far more credible if we also talked about the ways Western women protectively mask themselves, with cosmetics and hair dye and fashionable clothes, and why they do so. I am not particularly familiar with the teachings of the Prophet, but as another famous prophet once said, 'If you want to remove the splinter from another's eye, first remove the plank from your own.'

Or perhaps just take off the mascara.

## Damaged men, desperate deeds

### FILMS

*Tim Kroenert*

***The Disappearance of Alice Creed* (MA). Director: J. Blakeson. Starring: Martin Compston, Eddie Marsan, Gemma Arterton. 96 minutes**



The word is 'methodical'.

During the tense opening minutes of *The Disappearance of Alice Creed*, two blue-collar thugs (Compston and Marsan) go about the task of transforming an abandoned apartment into a prison. There are plans afoot, presumably unpleasant plans. The sight of them purchasing and employing seemingly innocuous tools and materials — including a double bed — is imbued with an air of menace.

Methodical. We are transfixed by the rhythmic workmanship of these two men as they board up windows, reinforce doors, soundproof walls, without needing to exchange a word or barely a glance. Clearly, theirs are well-laid plans. And you know what they say about even the best-laid plans.

So from the outset the tension in *The Disappearance of Alice Creed* runs high. As the men assemble and make up the bed, it's easy to anticipate that unpleasant things are going to happen upon it.

Sure enough, moments later they don balaclavas, head out through the streets in a nondescript white van, kidnap a young woman (Arterton) and bring her back to this prison.

And that's only the beginning.

'Methodical' is also a good word for the way the plot unfolds, although don't take 'methodical' as being synonymous with 'slow'; in fact the plot is relentless, and always surprising. It would be a disservice to prospective audiences to give too much away, as this superbly crafted thriller thrives on plot twists that are often astounding but never incongruous.

Suffice it to say there is a ransom to be paid, and the kidnappers' scheme involves humiliating and sometimes physically bullying the young woman, Alice. This makes for nasty, uncomfortable viewing, although it's in keeping with the premise: these are damaged men committing desperate deeds; things are bound to get dangerous.

The film is undoubtedly a case of 'style over substance', although love and betrayal emerge as key, poignant themes. Most of the action takes place within the apartment, an intimate environment that imprisons the viewer along with Alice, allowing them no escape from the



atrocities that occur therein.

The cast is limited to this trio of characters, who form a triangle that itself becomes as claustrophobic as the setting. The performances are all strong, especially from Marsan, an accomplished UK character actor who here adds 'enigmatic brute' to his repertoire.

Importantly, the film is also very funny. If hearing a joke is as much about anticipating the punchline as it is about the punchline itself, then *The Disappearance of Alice Creed* nails this relationship between humour and tension. A set-up that involves one character trying to discreetly dispose of an expelled bullet casing is one such hilarious knuckle-whitener; a potentially fatal joke that is expertly told, provoking both gasps and laughter.

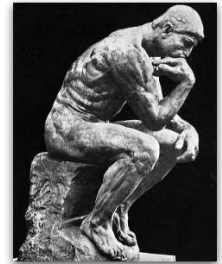
## Gillard's education afterthought

### EDUCATION

*Neil Ormerod*

When I picked up the newspaper on Sunday morning, my first question of the new Gillard ministry was: Who got education?

Call it self-interest if you will, but the rhetoric of the 'education revolution' would make one think that this Government, or at least its previous incarnation, placed a high value on education, although of course it had previously been lumped together with employment and workplace relations in a mega-portfolio which was meant to keep Julia Gillard busy and not plotting against the PM Kevin Rudd.



Some of us had hoped that education might now be split off into its own ministry, which it deserves. But search as I may I could not find the word education in any of the designated ministries. Schools, yes, but education, no.

Only yesterday, as an afterthought, were the words 'tertiary education' added to Minister Evans' responsibilities. But a clear statement of priorities had already been sent, revealing just where the Government believes universities belong: lumped together under the heading of 'skills'.

'The universities are not going to like this,' I said to my wife.

And so it came to pass that on ABC radio's *AM* program, Dr Glenn Withers, chief executive of Universities Australia, complained that both education and research had dropped from among the Gillard ministries. The tertiary sector, along with one of its chief *raison d'Êtres*, research, had been rendered invisible.

Withers said: '[The minister] may be overlooking the range of occupations and products of universities that produce widespread benefits of a very generic kind like arts graduates, commerce graduates and so on who don't fit a narrow definition of skills.'

He went on to identify areas such as philosophy and theology as ones which would contribute to a broader education, but not fit into the area of employable skills.

Placing universities under the heading of 'skills' is an indication of the declining understanding of higher education within Australian society. As federal budgets became tight and governments wondered why they were putting so much money into higher education, the university sector pushed the idea that they played an important role in training people, skilling up doctors and engineers, nurses and teachers, all of whom would contribute to the work force and wellbeing of the society.

Governments took them at their word and government policy has been increasingly focused on universities as places where people should learn employable skills.

Now universities are beginning to see the hole they have dug for themselves and are seeking ways out. Melbourne University has developed an approach more along the US lines where students complete a generalist undergraduate degree to broaden their education, and then enrol in a professional graduate degree.

Steven Schwartz, vice-chancellor of Macquarie University, has suggested universities need to focus less on skills and more in imparting wisdom: 'We once were about character building but now we are about money' — though whose wisdom is not so clear: 'we want our graduates to be familiar with the many different paths to wisdom'.

Notre Dame Australia has, and Australian Catholic University is, developing, a core curriculum which reflects the Catholic values and tradition of those institutions. Will this be enough to counter the trend?

The collapse of education into 'skills training' parallels the rise of *homo economicus*, an economic vision of human life, where everything is directed to economic production and consumption. How often I used to shudder when then treasurer Peter Costello would refer to 'Australian consumers' when presumably he meant citizens. How small a vision of life, of its meaning and purpose, can we tolerate?

But if you have never been exposed to the work of Plato and Aristotle, of Augustine and Aquinas, or Schwartz's apparent favourite, the ancient Chinese scholar Gu Yanwu, perhaps you would not know any different. You might think life was all about getting a job, starting a family, buying a house and then a larger house, earning enough to retire early and then playing lots of golf.

But the real purpose of education is not to shape you into a viable economic unit, but to teach you to think, to open you up to the full range of human flourishing. And as philosopher Alasdair MacIntyre has pointed out, one aspect of human flourishing is the exploration of the very notion of human flourishing itself. Asking the question, 'What constitutes human flourishing?' is itself essential to achieving it.

If this is the case then there may be more to Withers' mention of philosophy and theology than meets the eye. These are the major disciplines which take seriously the question of what constitutes human flourishing. As I [argued](#) in a previous piece in *Eureka Street*, these two disciplines once provided universities with their basic rationale as universities. They were the disciplines which sought to integrate all other studies within a single vision, the 'one word' of the uni-verse-ity.

Now Schwartz has argued, 'education should be a moral enterprise'. Perhaps the time is ripe to reinstate philosophy and theology to their proper place within university education.

## Sharing the selfish illness

NON-FICTION

*Helen Brake*



As I grated the sandpaper across my face, the skin rubbed away but didn't bleed as I expected. Goopy plasma softened the paper's rigid surface. I picked another piece and tried again, over the weeping skin. This time I got blood and was satisfied that if I explained that my face was the result of tripping up the stairs I could remain in the house for a few more days. I went inside and tried my hardest to remove all thoughts from my mind.

Three weeks later I was diagnosed with major depressive disorder.

It's a selfish illness: the desire to reverse your existence. However, in recent months my GP has found me medication that has been effective and I am returning to a feeling, whole human. Earlier this year, after a lousy day, I recognised I was both bored and frustrated — and went a little mad with happiness. It had been almost three years since I hadn't regularly feigned emotions.

Since becoming well, it has been difficult to describe what it was like living with depression. To get some distance and so to better articulate what it can be like, I asked a friend if he would allow me to share his story.

I remember meeting Mathieu more than 10 years ago on a youth group activity that involved catching a train to the CBD. He was miming a lawn sprinkler break-dance while moving up the carriage walkway; he encouraged other passengers to suggest different moves or join in themselves.

His lanky, uncordinated but enthusiastic efforts were too funny to ignore and broke the no-talking-listening-or-acknowledging-others-on-public-transport norm. Strangers, other youth members and I exchanged grins.

In short, Mathieu isn't someone you forget. Spending time with him makes you feel that the world holds colours you never dreamt existed: together you have stepped from a water-colour world to one of vivid oils and charcoal.

Until recently, I knew very little of his struggles. I knew he was sometimes moody, and he would frustrate me by disappearing out of my life for a few months, then popping up again as if nothing had happened.

Mathieu was bullied throughout primary school for being dramatic and 'different'. It was something of a surprise when, at high school, this 'difference' was not only tolerated, but gave him a counter-mainstream popularity among other kids who didn't fit in.

However, from year 10 onwards he struggled with thoughts of purging his mind and body. After absently-minded writing some poetry on an exam paper a couple of months before graduation, his teacher contacted his mother and suggested he see a psychiatrist immediately, as his teacher was worried Mathieu was going to kill himself.

Mathieu was diagnosed with major depressive disorder and anxiety disabilities, and began taking medication. Six months later, wanting to be free from medical 'control', Mathieu stopped taking his antidepressants.

He began listening to heavy techno music and binge drinking. He would stay awake as long as he could, because every time he awoke it was to the despondency of still existing.

During periods when he felt well, he would find work. However, shortly after starting a new job he would usually experience a panic attack, and the humiliation of explaining to an employer why he couldn't work but had to leave immediately meant he sometimes left without explanation and didn't return.

One year he decided to get a tattoo, and when his depression was thickest, he would ask his tattooist to work on the skin closest to the bones in his hands so the pain might distract him.

Several months ago, when looking through his father's office for a DVD he had misplaced, Mathieu found antidepressants prescribed to his dad. Hurt that he never knew his father also suffered from depression, he confronted his mother. She told him yes; both his father and grandfather experienced chronic major depression but she had felt it was his father's decision whether to share this with Mathieu.

Mathieu and his father still haven't spoken about their experiences. What example do they have when their thoughts and emotions are so far from the stereotypically laconic and relaxed Aussie blokes'?

Mathieu has been determined to break his cycle of short-term employment; six months ago, when he began his most recent job, Mathieu was open with his boss and let him know he may sometimes need to leave work suddenly, or arrive late. Since then, his boss has been supportive, has recognised Mathieu's many talents, and now wants him to stay beyond his six month contract.

At the moment, Mathieu is well and cautiously optimistic. He describes us both as 'sober depressives': he's well now and hopefully for a long time, but could become sick again. Mathieu wants a family, but fears how his illness may affect his future wife and kids if he is unwell for long periods.

I share this concern, especially for my one-day husband. What may I put him through when I'm unwell? Will I block him out like I recently did with those I love? How badly will I hurt him, and possibly our kids?

Although these are issues to consider, I continue to hope and work towards a strong marriage and wonderful family. I believe this is more likely to happen if we who suffer from depression share our experiences.

By the very irrationality of the thoughts it produces, it can be overwhelmingly difficult to even attempt explaining this part of yourself to someone who has never experienced a mental illness.

However, it is important to continue trying to remove the stigma that surrounds mental illness; otherwise, many men and women with major depression will continue keeping quiet and allowing their behaviour to be interpreted as slackness, unreliability or laziness, and the consequences will be perpetuated through future generations.

## The Timor Solution?

CARTOON

*Fiona Katauskas*





## Remembering the other 9/11

### HUMAN RIGHTS

*Antonio Castillo*



Historical memory is fragile and selective. And so I try to excuse the fact that the *other* 9/11 didn't even make it into our news daily's filler.

Not a single expression of grief for Chile's 9/11, when a criminal, US-backed military coup deposed the democratically elected Socialist government of President Salvador Allende, on 11 September 1973.

At least the thousands of those who survived Chile's 9/11 — myself included — didn't have to stomach the phoney sombre Australian journalists remembering, *live from New York*, 'the day the world stood still'; or the sight of a former Prime Minister crossing the Brooklyn bridge clad an ACB tracksuit, expressing sorrow on behalf of the Australian nation. 'It's still one of those moments in my life that I'll never forget,' the former Prime Minister solemnly declared.

Chile's 9/11 is one of those moments that I'll never forget either. How can I forget La Moneda, Chile's government palace and the symbol of the most lasting democratic system in the world, engulfed by flames after been bombarded by Hawker Hunter jet fighters. These were not murdering jihadists, but Chilean pilots executing Washington's international terrorist act.

We are still waiting for the United States' admission of guilt. No US government has ever recognised its involvement in Chile's 9/11.

As I revised some of my notes this week for a university lecture I came across the handwritten memo, taken by former CIA director Richard Helms, which records the orders of US President Richard Nixon to foster a coup in Chile.

'1 in 10 chance perhaps, but save Chile!; worth spending; not concerned; no involvement of embassy; \$10,000,00 available, more if necessary; full-time job-best men we have; game plan; make the economy scream; 48 hours for plan of action. This presidential directive initiates major covert operations to block Allende's ascension to office, and promote a coup in Chile.'

This memo goes back to 15 September 1970. How terrifyingly efficient all of this was. In three years, Allende's Chilean peaceful road to socialism was over, as was Chile's democracy.

The military coup of 9/11 left an indelible mark on Chilean life. That September had an auspicious beginning for my own family. My sister Marcela was born on 1 September.

The first day of September was traditionally the beginning of *el mes de la patria* (the month

of the motherland) and marked the beginning of spring. It is a windy month and the clear skies are decorated with colourful kites.

September was traditionally a month of celebration — a month that marks Chile's independence from colonial Spanish rule in 1810. Up until 1973, September was a month of unity. The coup ended all of that. September has never regained that sense of national unity and celebration. Now it is a month when we remember our fallen.

The coup submerged Chile into the darkest period of its history. Thousands were murdered and many others became *desaparecidos* (missing people). Torture became a terrifying prospect and exile — borrowing Milan Kundera's remark — amputated the life of thousands of Chileans.

I remember as if it were yesterday the day that General Pinochet's dictatorship began. As a young kid, I was out playing street football with my best friend Guille, when my mother shouted to me to get inside immediately: 'Allende has been killed.' He had died inside of La Moneda.

Despite my mother's caution, there was a sense of calm in our sleepy town in the north of Chile. Santiago, the capital city and the epicentre of the coup, was a long way from our home.

Soon we realised that the brutality of the armed forces would reach us too. On 13 September, my father did not come home from work. He had been arrested, and his workplace — a *nido de comunistas* (nest of communists) for the new authorities — became a military concentration camp, where the cancer *marxista* (Marxist cancer) would be extirpated. My father survived. Many of my friends' fathers or mothers didn't.

Chile's 9/11 reminds me that I am a product of a defeated political and social project. Last week I told one of my students — who was grieving her own defeat in the Australian elections — 'Your political defeat was at least a result of democratic means.' Mine wasn't.

I am one of the children of the dictatorship; the generation who lived most of their formative years under Pinochet's brutal rule. As a school student — and then at university — we were more concerned with the next resistance campaign than submitting assignments.

Later on, our professional careers were put on hold. As the doors of the media were firmly closed, we developed alternative ways to communicate, educate and re-socialise Chileans about the democratic values and norms we aspired to. *Revista Periferia* (*Periphery Magazine*) and *Radio Umbral* (Umbral Radio) became our main tools of resistance and struggle.

And yes, we considered other means of struggle too; until we realised that it was a foolish idea — a military defeat of the US-trained and -equipped Chilean army was impossible.

Journalist Robert Fisk says any story has victims and perpetrators. On 11 September 2001, the US was the victim of a terrible crime. Twenty-eight years earlier, on 11 September 1973, the

US was the perpetrator of a terrible crime in Chile.

More than two decades have passed since Chile finally recovered its democracy, in 1989. And today while I remember Chile's 9/11, a fragment of Pablo Neruda's 'Sonnet 20' flies to my mind — '*nosotros, los de entonces, ya no somos los mismos* (us, the we of then, are no longer the same)'.

It is true, we have changed, but we have not forgotten that event that changed our lives forever.

## **Ain't that what religion is for?**

POETRY

*Various*

### **Belong Be Love**

*Come as you are, that's how I want you,*

*Come as you are, feel quite at home,*

*Come to my heart, loved and forgiven*

*Come as you are, why stand alone?*

Come as you are, Britney

that's how I want you, Peter Kennedy

Come as you are, Geoffrey Robinson

feel quite at home, Michael Morwood

Come to my heart, loved and forgiven

Come as you are, why stand alone?

No need to fear, nameless and hungry

love sets no limits, rapist and pedophile

No need to fear, itinerant, broken

love never ends, pretender and bankrupt

Don't run away, Catherine Deveney

ashamed and disheartened, Andres Serrano

Rest in my love, K. D. Lang

trust me again, Germaine Greer

I came to call sinners, Mother Teresa

not just the virtuous, Hans Kung

I came to bring peace, Adolf Hitler

not to condemn, Ben Cousins

Each time you fail, to live by my promise

Why do you think, I'd love you the less?  
Come as you are, Marilyn Manson  
that's how I love you, George Bush  
Come as you are, John Kerr  
trust me again, Gough Whitlam  
Nothing can change, Pope Benedict  
the love that I bear you, George Pell  
All will be well, Julian

Just come as you are  
Come as you are, Benedict  
that's how I love you, Gough  
Come as you are, George  
trust me again, John  
Nothing can change, Marilyn  
the love that I bear you, George  
All will be well, Julian  
Just come as you are ...

—*Marlene Marburg*

*Adapted. Deirdre Brown 'Come As You Are' Â©*

**somewhere a church**

somewhere a church  
who accepts silence,  
remembers before  
all was spoken  
from meandering minds,  
who doesn't know about crying  
rooms

a church grateful for being  
together simply  
a church who tolerates hell  
breaking loose  
still glad to be  
family  
there is a church  
who opens her arms  
to divorcees,  
welcomes  
rainbows  
yobbos and yuppies  
and studs and tats  
and me  
at the shared meal  
a church who knows  
her own addiction  
his own dissension  
who loves  
the disgraced  
with prodigal grace  
somewhere a church  
grateful for being  
together simply

—*Marlene Marburg*

**The Presbyterian Pump**

Who needs Hare Krishna or Hatha Yoga

Druidic robes or Buddhist butter yellow toga  
Gregorian chanting or ayatollahs ranting  
when you are born to a creed that has all you need  
and nothing more.  
Ain't that what religion is for?  
Forget the mosques and synagogues  
the bribery of kings and demagogues,  
the cathedrals glorious with spires victorious  
so full of gold and priceless and old  
the doors need locks —  
nobody robs a bare wooden box.  
What's the use of Sanskrit mantras,  
or Hindu shakti bahkti mudra or tantra,  
Tibetan mandalas and Viking Valhallas,  
prayer-wheels that you spin and penance for your sins —  
it's gilding the lily,  
and anything more than just plain is just plain silly.  
Do you think that Zen koans will still your mind  
or sitting pretzel-legged in a frozen cave with a numb behind?  
Then try contemplation on free will and predestination  
or spend an hour or two on a hard wooden pew —  
it's enough.  
Committee work can wait till you're really tough.  
Say goodbye to cantors, choirs, and solo sopranos.  
All you need is a tuning fork or at most an organ or upright piano.  
Pump the bellows of your lungs, pump the muscle of your tongue,  
open up your mouth and boom so the hymn fills up the room



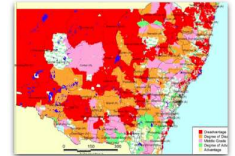
and that'll do —  
God does all the rest, not me or you.  
—*Edith Speers*

## **Pork-barrel politics rolls regional Australia**

EDITORIAL

*Michael Mullins*

The post-election political chaos has brought the disadvantage of regional Australia to the nation's attention. This geographical inequity was portrayed by Emeritus Professor Tony Vinson as 'hidden', in a 2007 [report](#) titled *Dropping Off The Edge The Distribution Of Disadvantage In Australia*. Vinson demonstrated that extreme social disadvantage is real, measurable, endemic to a small number of locations in regional areas, and fixable.



Fortuitous political circumstances have now forced the Federal Government to act. If that is what the 'new paradigm' is all about, it can only be a good thing. Except that allocating a fairer share of Commonwealth funding for the bush will probably lead to a fresh set of inequities, because it is being driven by the need to buy political support, and not the demonstrated needs of rural Australians.

Hospitals will be renewed in the electorates of Lyne and New England, while others in equal or greater need will miss out. Wagga Wagga Base Hospital is rundown, and it had been ranked at the top of the priority list for rebuilding. But last week, hospitals at Tamworth and Port Macquarie won preferential treatment under the deals struck between Prime Minister Julia Gillard and Independent MPs Tony Windsor and Rob Oakeshott.

There is also speculation that communities in Lyne and New England will be given priority for connection to the National Broadband Network. If the common good or the most pressing need were previously the determining factors, they have now been cast aside.

Pork-barrelling has always been part of the political process, but that does not make it any less of a scandal. Politicians steal from those whose votes do not count and give to others whose votes ensure their political security. If Labor is serious about governing for all Australians, it will find a way of convincing the Independents to support funding allocations and priorities for regional Australia that address the greatest need.

The Independents are not in an unassailable position, as was apparent last week when Windsor let slip his belief that the alliance with Labor rather than the Coalition is more likely to allow him to remain in his pivotal position of power. If she wants to, Gillard is surely able to use this to ensure a more appropriate distribution of funds among rural Australians.

It is not the case that experts lack a detailed breakdown of where regional Australia's greatest needs lie. Various studies have been completed, such as the work done by Vinson, which was on behalf of Jesuit Social Services and Catholic Social Services Australia.

Using data provided by entities such as the Australian Bureau of Statistics, the Australian Taxation Office, Centrelink and the Australian Health Insurance Commission, he produced a map intended to assist governments to better grapple with rural disadvantage. He [specified](#) ten postcodes of high national priority, none of which lies inside the electorates of Lyne and New England.

Significantly non-government organisations have been most proactive in collating data that is readily available, in order to tell a story that happens to reflect many decades of neglect of regional areas by both sides of government. Governments would do well to routinely collect and analyse this data themselves, and own the task of addressing regional disadvantage.

The data itself makes a strong case for special programs and assistance for rural areas, and this ought to be a priority that attracts bipartisan support.

It becomes more urgent when given the context of the population debate and decisions — both difficult and exciting — about the future of regional and remote communities. Where is the White Paper articulating government policy for regional Australia for the next 10—20 years? If any good comes out of pork-barrelling, we might hope for such a blueprint and subsequent delivery of programs.

## Hedonists miss the point of travel

### HUMAN RIGHTS

*Catherine Marshall*



‘The world is a book and those who do not travel read only a page,’ said the wise and worldly St Augustine. Implicit in this metaphor is the exhortation that readers of the great big ‘book’ in which we live undertake their task with intent, savouring each word, underlining pertinent sentences, revisiting favourite passages and turning the final page having changed for the better.

Today, cheaper airfares, package deals and higher incomes have helped to shrink the world, enabling more Australians than ever to take heed of Augustine’s sage advice. School leavers routinely take gap years, striking out to far corners of the globe in search of themselves; increasingly, middle class families eschew Australia’s bush and beaches in favour of foreign destinations; retirees indulge in SKI trips — Spending the Kids’ Inheritance — discovering while they’re at it a world that was once largely off limits to all but the wealthy and the intrepid.

Along with this change has come a devaluation of the slow and wondrous art of travel, with transport itself now little more than the humdrum means to a far more glamorous end. Unwilling to spend two days driving to the North Queensland tropics, people will think nothing of sitting for 24 hours on a tightly-packed plane bound for London. Once the sacred gateways to imagined lands, airports have morphed into flashy bus depots flanked by fast food outlets and chain stores in which tourists can occupy themselves before takeoff.

Where once the journey was the destination, and packing was part of the fun, today a holiday hasn’t started until you’ve sipped your first piñata colada.

But there are other, more disturbing consequences wrought by the ubiquity of global pleasure seekers, among them the bad impression they so often leave behind. According to a [recent report](#) in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, ‘many foreign destinations are cracking down on hard-partying, bawdy behaviour and cultural offences, saying inconsiderate tourists are ruining their image and making life hell for locals and other visitors’.

Spain, Brazil and the Vatican are among the countries fed up with tourists’ nakedness, public promiscuity and rampant debauchery.

Australians are said to be generally good at avoiding cultural offence, but they are often guilty of alcohol-related offences. ‘When they’re not drunk, they’re fine; that [alcohol] is when the problem starts,’ said Shawn Low, a spokesman for Lonely Planet.

Drunk, libidinous and scantily-clad tourists unleashed on idyllic locales were certainly not

what Augustine had in mind when he spoke so eloquently of the virtue of travel. Nor would he have approved of the hedonistic seeking out luxurious resorts moored in a sea of poverty, or the narrow-minded and culturally inept building barriers with careless flicks of the tongue.

Indeed, Augustine's philosophy suggests that travel loses all value when travellers ignore the lessons therein, when their interpretation is shallow, or when they fail to engage with the people whose space they have entered.

I was reminded of this on a recent trip to Fiji when, while visiting a village, I overheard a woman comparing the developing island nation to 'civilised countries, such as Australia'. Later, while waiting to disembark from the plane back home, an Australian couple flinched visibly at the touch of the sweet, boisterous Fijian children waiting in line behind them.

'They've just spent four hours screaming in my ear, and now they're pushing me!' shouted the woman with unconcealed distaste. I had sat not far from these same children, and hadn't heard a peep. The woman's deep tan was evidence of a sun-splashed itinerary, one from which the people of paradise had clearly been excluded.

Whilst travel is supposed to broaden the mind and open the heart, too often both remain imperviously shut.

Thankfully, there are antidotes to such insensitivities, travellers who use their privilege to connect with people they may otherwise never have met, building bridges that span not just individual lives but entire cultures.

People like Ed, who was so touched by what he saw in Cambodia that he set up a [foundation](#) which supports local projects; Beth, who [raises](#) funds to help empower the poverty-stricken people she befriended in Paraguay; Jay, whose childhood friendship with a Fijian motivated him to move back there and establish a socially responsible tourism [venture](#); and Gemma, who was so overcome by the deprivation she witnessed while travelling through Africa that she started a [school](#) in Tanzania for the poorest of students.

Not all of us are able to take such proactive steps on behalf of the people we meet on our journeys. But we can enlarge — and hence improve — our world by opening our eyes, scratching the surface, listening with interest to the stories we are told and leaving behind us enough goodwill to fill a city. We can take Augustine to heart, and make an intensive, fruitful study of this great big book in which we all live.