EUREKA STREET

A MAGAZINE OF FAITH, HOPE AND THE ARTS AND THEOLOGY
Vol 16 no 3 May–June 2006 $10.95 inc. GST

Frank Brennan on respect

Jenny Stewart on teaching

The *Eureka* moment: **Fifteen years in print**

Iran's young and restless

The photography of Michael Coyne

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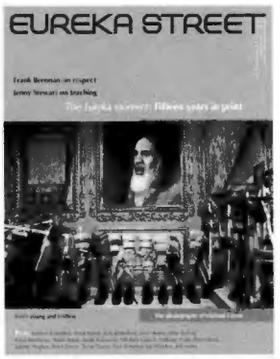

eureka street /ju:'ri:kə stri:t/
I have found it! The exultant cry of 'eureka'. A way, a public road in a city or town, a path to a rebellion. A way of questioning, a place of discovery, a distinctly Australian forum for conversation and new ideas. There are many paths, but there is only one *Eureka Street*.

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This issue
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EUREKA STREET

A MAGAZINE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS, THE ARTS AND THEOLOGY
VOL 16 NO 3 MAY–JUNE 2006

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PUZZLED

Tom Cranitch

Welcome to Mark II

An ageing agnostic introduced me to *Eureka Street* in Rockhampton in the mid-1990s. Joan Brady had led an interesting life: frontierswoman in Central Queensland, mother of ten, consumer advocate, financial counsellor and political activist and an early recipient of a heart transplant.

Her caustic language bewildered and alienated many, yet her passion for social justice, indigenous equality and empowerment of the little person was legendary. Thrusting this weighty publication into my palms, she remarked that it was 'time for me to really get educated'.

Her recommendation did not disappoint; for the next decade I was an occasional reader of *Eureka Street*, consuming it in doctors' surgeries and public libraries, and sharing it with subscriber friends. Sadly, like many others, I never proffered my own cash for the education.

As a communications specialist, I admired the quality of the articles in the magazine and dreamt of seeing my name one day in its print. I envisaged my first article as some prominent commentary on Australian culture lending itself to extensive original thought and acclaim as an important piece of intelligent discourse.

Instead, I find my contribution somewhat less lofty as I try to ease you down gently about the demise of the print edition, while bravely highlighting the numerous advantages of the publication's move to online. We all have our life's expectations unmet on occasion!

As chief executive officer of Jesuit Communications Australia, the owner of the *Eureka Street* masthead on behalf of the Australian Jesuits, I am in the unenviable position of overseeing the ending of this print era. It is not easy. Many of you have taken the opportunity in recent months to let me know the central role the magazine has played in shaping your reading habits and even your lifestyle choices. The pleasure of reflective reading—in bed, on a train or in the garden—being replaced by devotion to a computer screen has proved, and will prove, too much for some of you.

For all those who have built an 'institution' around the print format of the magazine, I apologise for the decision to remove it. Whether it be the closure of transport or other public services, the demise of a sporting club, the rationalisation of churches or the loss of faith in political parties, it is difficult to see positives in the crumbling of 'our' institutions.

But it is my hope that this sense of loss will lead to *Eureka Street*'s great gain. It is no secret that subscriber numbers had been on a downward spiral in past years and that financial losses were mounting. It is a testament to the Jesuits' commitment to independent media and public affairs that the print format had not ceased earlier. This also had much to do with the strong will of several editors and the quiet determination of former publisher and now editorial consultant, Fr Andrew Hamilton SJ.

The gain in going online is in *Eureka Street*'s accessibility to many more readers with significantly lower production costs. Long-term travellers with the magazine would be concerned if this were at the expense of the publication's ethos—to tell stories from a humane perspective often lacking in other media. Care has been taken in the planning stages to affirm this mission and to avoid the pitfalls of populism, so prevalent in all forms of publishing today. *Eureka Street* has had, and will continue to have, a focus on the human dimensions of individual, communal, political and international situations. The online form, with the possibility it offers for quick public response, will enable it to engage its readers more directly and frequently.

For you subscribers, I am acutely aware that proof will be in the tasting.

Eureka Street will launch online on Tuesday 16 May 2006. Most existing subscribers would be aware by now of the other detailed changes including the annual individual subscription price of $45, for which they will receive 24 fortnightly email editions. These will also be accessible, along with several other features including newsletters and editorials, on the publication's website, www.eurekastreet.com.au

Experienced online editor Michael Mullins will be the new editor of *Eureka Street*, replacing print professional Robert Hefner, who very ably took charge of the magazine for much of the past year.

From my desk I overlook the asphalt-laden Eureka Street, a laneway behind our North Richmond office in Melbourne. I watch the street's movements every day. Like other parts of our nation, it forms a great picture of Australian community life. The postie doing his rounds on his two-decades-old bicycle; the female octogenarian pushing her manually powered mower against her handful of grass strips; the Vietnamese school children; the urban professionals in their inner-city playground; the retired; the unemployed (or so it seems to me); and the neighbours who, in the midst of all the busyness of city life, still enjoy a smile, a nod, a conversation or a glass of beer on the verandah on a Friday afternoon.

A far cry from the Anglo-Celtic domiciled, working-class cottages of the street's earlier inhabitants a century or more ago, I think to myself. Yet, no different in many, many more respects. Likewise, welcome to *Eureka Street* Mark II, friends, where the new and old blend together in renewed harmony.

Tom Cranitch is chief executive officer of Jesuit Communications Australia.

Answering the needs of the times

One of the questions I most often found myself answering while working at Jesuit Publications was how I came to be involved. The short answer is that I was propositioned by a Jesuit at a pub. Truly. And like most propositions in pubs, one rarely knows just what one is agreeing to in saying 'yes'. But perhaps this is just as well. While I had no idea of precisely what lay in store for me, I equally could never have predicted how much I'd learn, how many great people I would meet and work beside, or just how fastidious I would become over the placement of a comma.

The experience of working at Jesuit Publications, and on *Eureka Street*, was one that was both rich and unpredictable. The magazine was all-consuming in terms of time and energy, but equally incredibly satisfying.

I wonder about the move to publishing *Eureka Street* online. Publishing is always a gamble, both in what it seeks to do and in terms of the actual process. That's why I found it so addictive. One can never predict just how well an image will work in print, how surprisingly the colours of a cover will leap from the page, or how a sensitive layout can turn a worthy but weighty piece into an effortless read.

Then there is the interactive component of publishing, ranging from fine and considered responses by readers to articles, to the gleeful discovery by an eagle-eyed subscriber of the typo on page 17 that six rounds of proofing missed.

There is something solid and reliable about a printed page. It is a commitment to the reader and to history. Once back from press, there is no running away from the work you've created.

Eureka Street was created to answer the needs of the times. The need for an informed, independent, intelligent and considered forum for public debate remains. And if a new format is required, then again I say 'yes', even though I'm not sure what that means for its future. It has been carried by a loyal and supportive readership, and the generosity of its many talented contributors.

Eureka Street has always punched above its weight. I hope it continues to do so.

Marcelle Mogg
Editor, 2003–2005

Making tea and conversation

Around the time I joined *Eureka Street* I was reading *The Decline of the Tea Lady*, a delightful book by Jenny Stewart (who also writes in this final print issue).

'When I first joined the Australian Public Service in the mid-1970s, life with the tea lady would have been unimaginable,' Stewart wrote. 'The tea ladies began to disappear in the early 1980s, victims of a vaguely defined climate of financial stringency which nevertheless required its sacrificial victims ...

'Both in the making of the tea and in the cleaning up, the tea lady represented (to use the jargon term) significant economies of scale, all now sacrificed in the name of economy.'

With some surprise I discovered that not only had Jesuit Publications held out against this trend, but that its resident tea lady was really a bloke—and no less a figure than Andrew Hamilton SJ, who each morning made the tea and coffee and rolled it out on a trolley for everyone on the editorial floor (and sometimes the whole office, plus visitors) to enjoy.

Many of you know Fr Hamilton only through his writing, which has been a distinguishing feature of *Eureka Street* from its beginning. Through it you have come to know his intellectual rigour, and his sense of fairness, compassion and humour. I have come to know him as a man who lives his faith every day, in every way, not least of which is the preparation of a mighty fine cuppa.

Putting out a magazine, as Morag Fraser says in this issue, is a team effort. I never dreamed, 15 years ago, when my colleague at *The Canberra Times*, Jack Waterford, handed me an early copy of the magazine, that I would someday be part of its editorial team.

That team has changed over the years, but what hasn't changed is the magazine's commitment to good writing, whether by experienced observers such as Jack and Andy, or by emerging voices who have gone on to be heard in the wider world.

Looking back over past issues, what strikes me most is the quality and consistency of the writing.

Some articles stand out, such as Margaret Simons's pieces on the Canberra press gallery and the drought, and Brian Doyle's short essay on taking to one's bed.

But the overall impression that lingers is of a body of fine work, about ideas and issues that often were not being discussed in any other public forum.

It's been a privilege to be, for a short time, a part of that. I'll miss the morning tea, but even more, the conversation it always inspired.

Robert Hefner
Acting Editor

Eureka Street will continue to publish letters from our readers online. Short letters are more likely to be published, and all letters may be edited. Letters should include a contact phone number and the writer's name and address. Email to: eureka@jespub.jesuit.org.au

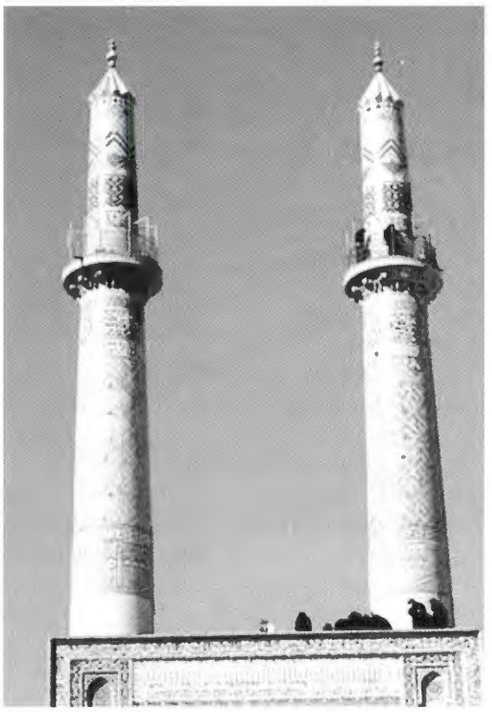
The young and the restless

IRAN'S YOUTH READY FOR CHANGE

AN ANTIQUE TOWN in central Iran, Yazd is poised between two deserts that stretch to the Afghan border. Its low skyline is disturbed only by blue-tiled mosques, mud-brick domes and *badgirs*, box-like wind towers that have for centuries caught hot desert breezes and transformed them into cool interior ventilation.

You can lose yourself in Yazd's meandering alleys, so I'm grateful that my new friend Mohsen helps me find my hotel, the old Malek O Tojar—once a merchant's house—in the belly of the Panjeh-Ali Bazaar.

Mohsen and I met on the bus from Shiraz to Yazd; a country boy, he's heading home for a few days' leave. At age 25, his computer studies have been interrupted by two years' national service: 'All young Iranian men must do this because, you know, the Americans ...'



Women chat on the roof and minaret of the 700-year-old Friday Mosque in Yazd. Photo: Jan Forrester

We head for an old caravanserai in the desert, now under restoration. Mohsen points out a *qanat*, or water channel, running underneath us and surfacing in the courtyard. 'We have had this system for 2000 years. The water comes down from the mountains underground, the channels all dug by Yazd men.'

In the Desert of Emptiness, munching on *pashmak*, a local spun sugar sweet, Mohsen talks of love and marriage. 'Does a man in Australia have to provide a house and a car for a woman before he can marry her?'

I laugh and shake my head.

'I don't want a girlfriend,' he says, 'that's just for sex and fun. I want a wife and children, but how can I think about this? There's no work for young people and jobs pay very low salaries. I am homesick for Yazd, but there are no jobs here.'

Like three-quarters of Iran's population, Mohsen is under 30, a child of Ayatollah Khomeini's social revolution that spent big on literacy, education and primary health care. In the revolution's early days authorities encouraged big families to create an army of Islam. Instead it got an army of unemployed young.

That night at a teahouse I chat with a young man who can't wait for the Americans to come. 'You don't know how I hate these people—the mullahs and their Swiss bank accounts, their big Mercedes.'

I was gobsmacked. 'You see Iraq next door and you want Americans here?'

'You know, my cousin is learning Persian dancing. If the government finds out they will close it down. Persian dancing! Governments do what they like, what can we do to change things?'

Next morning I am on the bus to Esfahan, the jewel in the crown of medieval Persia. In the late 16th century the Safavid ruler Shah Abbas the Great moved his capital from the north near the troublesome Turks to strategically safer Esfahan in the desert. He secured the borders that Iran has today, more or less, and defined Persian national identity by promoting Shi'a Islam over the Sunni Islam practised by the Turks.

Esfahan retains Abbas's legacy of tree-lined avenues, palaces in pleasure gardens, mosques with gorgeous tiled and mosaic ornamentation, a labyrinthine bazaar and charming 17th-century footbridges arching the Zayandeh River. You can laze in the winter sun for hours at an outdoor teahouse below the Si-o-Seh (Thirty Three Arches) Bridge.

The cultural heart of Esfahan is the Imam Khomeini Square, but many locals still prefer its old name, Naghsh-e Jahan, Map of the World. It is a huge but intimate courtyard, flanked by two of Islamic architecture's great triumphs—the Imam and Sheikh Lotfullah mosques. The square is essentially an enclosed Persian garden. The old Persian term for enclosed space is *par deiza*, from which Christians derived their paradise.

Drinking *chay* in the teashop above the bazaar at the northern end of the square I listen as Ramin, a young carpet seller, and a visiting Norwegian, discuss the great Sufi poet Hafez, then oil politics, while we watch the dome of the Sheikh Lotfullah Mosque change colour from cream to pink as the light changes.

'Do you know there are 13 million people in Tehran, and five million cars?' says Ramin. 'The government is worried about pollution, but oil is so cheap. How crazy is that?'

In Yazd, country boy Mohsen pines for a girl he can't afford to marry. The government pays out a whopping ten per cent of its GDP in domestic oil subsidies. Housing assistance on the other hand could—maybe—placate a generation of young Iranians.

'Hello, are you American?' Her English is faultless, as is her makeup, and she has trained one long black curl to fall outside her hijab. Under the mandatory long blouse that must cover her backside she wears blue jeans. Her question has upset many European tourists, she says with a laugh that echoes around an empty handicrafts shop. Like many Iranian women, by default or design, she is choosing a single life. 'We need to be free, and I don't mean this,' she says, touching her hijab. 'I mean other, more important things. How will I be able to know a man after three meetings in my parents' house? We cannot meet in public—police will come. Believe me, it still

happens here in Esfahan. I am 31 years old, I have a BA and I work here. The politicians have done nothing for us.'

Now there's just a bus ride back to Tehran. I am finally riding in a Volvo, considered luxurious by my fellow bus travellers. We pass within miles of the Natanz nuclear enrichment facility, buried deep in the desert just south of Kashan, where Shah Abbas the Great lies entombed.

—Jan Forrester

The new philanthropy

WHAT GIVES AUSTRALIA?

All the major religions urge kindness and generosity, and all cultures seem to like stories that celebrate these qualities; for example, the Good Samaritan, Simpson and his donkey and the almost universal obligation to be hospitable to visitors. Sometimes we assess the virtue of a society by the way it cares for its poor, its disabled and its vulnerable. By this measure India probably rates quite highly and the United States rather low, with Australia somewhere in the middle.

Some people see giving as a moral imperative. Philosopher Peter Singer sums it up with characteristic bluntness: 'We need to challenge the idea that you can live a morally decent life just by looking after your own family and not actually causing harm to others. We need to develop a sense that if we have an abundance, we are actually doing wrong if we don't share it.'

These thoughts are partly provoked by the indignant reactions to Kerry Packer's recent publicly funded send-off. It is said that Packer avoided paying tax, an impression that probably arose from his famous 1991 comment when he appeared before a parliamentary committee: 'I pay what [tax] I'm required to pay; not a penny more, not a penny less. If anybody in this country doesn't minimise their tax, they want their head read.'

Actually, this seems pretty reasonable. I don't pay more tax than I have to either. I don't think I know anyone who does.

summa theologiae

The service of the word

In the Catholic funeral liturgy, we hear that 'Life is changed, not ended'. These words, laconic and simple, have stayed with me recently, as I have been with dying and bereaved friends, and lived with the passing over of *Eureka Street* from print to online.

Caught close to dying, the wise attend to their words, and particularly to words that make large claims. They ask what kind of change this might be, and whether, in its living, it is better than an end. Only when they have explored the desolation experienced in bereavement or dying will they seek words for the consolations brought by not ending. They are like dentists who probe the full scope of decay before sealing the cavity.

The grief of many of our readers at the change in *Eureka Street* counsels this same wisdom. It should come naturally to little magazines, because it is central to our service of Australian public life. Our business is with words, and particularly with sifting the bad use of words. It is not just that public language is often ugly, meaningless, stale or incorrectly used. The larger fault is that words are not tested. Whether elegant and literate, or ugly and badly joined, they fail to test the deep human reality of the situations and policies they describe. They decorate them more or less elegantly. This gap, between the way in which people's lives are changed and the words we use to decorate the process, is turf for spin.

It is the task of good writing, as distinct from elegant writing, to enter honestly difficult human reality, particularly where life is changed for the worse. In *Eureka Street* we have tried to do this for people detained, bombed, deprived of legal rights and patronised. The only reason to record such forms of dying is the conviction, against the odds, that life is not ended, and that therefore those whose lives have been destroyed should be remembered.

To sift, purify and measure words against human reality is not a choice. It is a commission. Many have received it, ourselves among the least of them. If *Eureka Street* dies, it matters little. It does matter that, living, *Eureka Street* is faithful.

When speaking of sermons, Lancelot Andrewes criticised those who ignored the claim that words make. By sermons, he meant words shaped with meaning and purpose.

> They seemed to reckon of sermons no otherwise than of songs; to give them the hearing, to commend the air of them, and so let them go. The music of a song, and the rhetoric of a sermon, all is one. A foul error, even in the very nature of the word; for that is a law, a testament, and neither song nor sonnet. A law, enacted to be done.
>
> It is a plain mistaking of the word—which is as seed in a soil, or as a scion in a stock—to take it for a stake in a hedge, there to stick and stand still, and bring forth nothing. Or according to the metaphor … where it is termed 'a glass', which we should look in to do somewhat by; to take away some spot, to mend somewhat amiss, to set somewhat right; and it is plainly to mistake it to look in it and look off it, and forget our chief errand to it.

When we attend upon any of the couplings of living and dying, the service of honest words is both gift and charge. ■

Andrew Hamilton SJ is an editorial consultant for *Eureka Street*.

archimedes

Easy fall guy

A recent task force on abortion in South Dakota came to the conclusion that 'the new recombinant DNA technologies indisputably prove that the unborn child is a whole human being from the moment of fertilisation'. That was news to Archimedes, and to many reproductive biologists as well. And the indisputable pronouncement of the task force was immediately disputed.

The South Dakota report, which served as the basis for the introduction of tough state legislation cracking down on abortion, reads like another example of ideological conservatives selectively using the results of science to bolster their cause. The irony is that, despite all protestations to the contrary, biology can provide no unequivocal, objective starting point for a human life.

Biology can certainly document the process of human reproduction, but whether human life begins at conception, or when an embryo begins to feel pain, or when it becomes conscious, or when it becomes independent, or when it gains a soul, these are not scientific but moral questions, which we ourselves have to decide. And while science can provide evidence to inform such decisions, it actually has nothing to say about what is right or what is wrong.

That's why, as a Christian steeped in science, Archimedes has never had any real problem reconciling the two. To him, they are two different perspectives on the world. While science tries to model the universe as it is, theology helps with deeper questions of good and evil, the purpose of life, the universe and everything.

But the very amorality of science is what makes it such a juicy target for ideological hardliners, religious or political. People driven by unswerving faith have little time for a process such as science, based on probability and doubt. In fact, for them, science becomes an easy fall guy.

We are now seeing this played out all around us as the US neocons take on climate change, fundamentalists fight abortion and evolution, and the Vatican tries to downplay the role of condoms in countering the spread of AIDS. In all these cases, science is not the real opponent, just the messenger providing ammunition.

It's the very strength of the scientific method—the fact that nothing is sacred, and everything is tested—that becomes both evil and weak in the face of ideologues. Science is evil precisely because it is amoral and dares to question even the unquestionable, and it is weak because it can never take a firm, unswerving stand against any idea. That would be against its very nature.

So, after a couple of hundred years of respect since the Age of Reason, science is now being abused. Nowadays, it's so easy to shoot the messenger. Whether it be abortion, or global warming, or nuclear power, whatever side you are on you can usually find some scientific evidence which supports you. Then the game is simply to denigrate all other evidence.

And that's really the problem with the current crop of political and religious fundamentalists. They tend to believe that the end justifies the means, and that if science doesn't agree with their end, then that's science's problem.

Archimedes finds the morality of a religious or political viewpoint which can justify distorting and ignoring scientific research questionable at the least, and more often downright frightening and dangerous. ■

Tim Thwaites is a freelance science writer.

Anyway, when Kerry went off to confirm his assertion that there is nothing beyond the final curtain, many of his eulogisers spoke of his philanthropy. Writing in *The Monthly* (February 2006) Bridget Griffen-Foley asserted that 'no Australian has left behind such a distinctive gift as "the Packer whacker"—the defibrillator with which he helped equip the New South Wales ambulance fleet'. Putting aside the matter of whether the Myer Music Bowl, the Felton Bequest or the Murdoch Institute might better deserve this distinction, was all this praise warranted?

Well, it seems that he was generous to his employees and was sometimes spontaneously kind. According to Phillip Adams, he was once on the point of creating the El Gordo of Australian philanthropic foundations, until the Costigan Commission's 'Goanna' allegations caused him to change his mind.

Perhaps James Packer will presently announce the establishment of the Packer Foundation, but in the meantime the evidence suggests that Kerry was somewhat less generous than, say, a pensioner who gives away a dollar a week. But this is no surprise. Rich Australians are generally rather mean with their money, especially compared with their counterparts elsewhere. Kerry Packer stands out only because he was the richest.

In 2004 *Forbes* magazine calculated that the 20 richest people in the US had, over time, given away about 15 per cent of their total wealth. If Australia's wealthiest 20 individuals and families (as listed in the *Business Review Weekly* Rich List for 2005) had given the same proportion of their wealth to philanthropic foundations, a total of $6.1 billion would have been added to the estimated $10 billion which (according to Philanthropy Australia) is held by Australian foundations.

This is not to say that all wealthy Australians are ungenerous. Richard Pratt, for example, distributes about $12 million a year through his family foundation, and in December 2005 Greg Poche gave $32 million to Sydney's Mater Hospital. However, these admirable models do not seem to have inspired many of our current millionaires. The top 20 Australian foundations include just a handful of living donors.

The really odd thing about this is that people who do give almost always

find that the experience is, on all levels, a deeply satisfying one. It leads to intellectual adventures, a stronger sense of self-worth, happier families and more motivated employees.

It certainly doesn't impoverish the donor. Daniel Petre, a wealthy *and* generous Australian, has remarked that a person who gives away ten per cent of a $100 million fortune will not experience a noticeable decline in his or her lifestyle.

Some people believe that philanthropy holds greater appeal for people who are moving towards the end of their lives and want to secure some credit points while there's still time. Perhaps they have the opportunity, the maturity and the inclination to reflect on life's bigger questions once the powerful preoccupations of youth (building a career, buying a house, sex) have receded.

A recent issue of *The Economist* carried an excellent series of articles that described the great change that is now taking place in philanthropy. As people have become more financially literate, they are less content to donate money to organisations that will distribute it. Increasingly they want to see a direct connection between their giving and some social outcome. They want to feel that they have given their time, their knowledge and their wisdom, as well as their money.

They are discovering that the more they invest in philanthropy, the more they and their families can get in return. They want writing a cheque to be part of the process, not just the outcome.

Modern philanthropists are not donors, they are social investors.

—Denis Tracey

State of a union

GAY AND MARRIED IN MADRID

When Carlos and Emilio were married in Madrid last July, it marked the end of their 30-year courtship.

The two men met in a Madrid café in February 1975 when Spain was still ruled by the dictator General Francisco Franco and homosexuals were imprisoned under the Law on Social Dangers.

'Back then it was scandalous, but we still moved in together,' a beaming Emilio told reporters after Spain's first gay marriage.

Emilio's mother used to pray for him to change his sexuality. 'Now she's buying us a cruise.'

Almost a year into marriage, Carlos and Emilio are still going strong.

'What makes you feel closer is people's reaction,' says Carlos. 'Now they associate you, put you together. Even though we have been together for 30 years, in the eyes of the law we used to be just room-mates.'

For Emilio, getting married was about more than mere legal recognition of their rights. 'I've noticed a big difference with my mother and siblings,' he says. 'Now they talk about family issues with both of us.'

Like an old married couple, they even finish each other's sentences.

'It's not that we used to fight a lot,' begins Emilio. 'But now we never fight,' concludes Carlos.

The ease with which these most celebrated of newlyweds have settled into married life belies the fact that their union marked something of a social revolution in this once staunchly Catholic country.

Despite polls showing that two-thirds of Spaniards supported the reforms, the legalisation of gay marriage—only Canada has gone as far in extending full legal equality to homosexual unions—prompted a conservative backlash that raised the political temperature across Spain.

The Catholic Church not only opposed the new laws, but did so with a vehemence that alienated many Spaniards.

Before the law was passed, Juan Antonio Martinez Camino, the vocal spokesman for the powerful Spanish Bishops' Conference, said that legalising gay marriage was akin to 'imposing a virus on society' and was the biggest challenge faced by the Church in 2000 years.

During parliamentary hearings into the legislation, Aquilino Polaino, a psychiatry professor from Madrid's Catholic University, appeared before the Senate's Justice Committee at the request of the main opposition Popular Party and testified that homosexuality was 'a disease' that 'can be corrected by therapy'. This 'disease', he assured senators, was caused by 'a hostile, distant, alcoholic or violent father' and 'an overprotective, cold and demanding mother'. Homosexuals, he concluded, 'did not play games as children, may have suffered sexual abuse within the family and are more likely to be promiscuous, take drugs and suffer from schizophrenia.'

A few days later, hundreds of thousands of demonstrators marched through the streets of Madrid to protest against the laws, led by Catholic bishops in full ceremonial regalia.

Although opinion polls reveal that more than two-thirds of Spaniards support the new law, Carlos is still quietly angry about the response to their marriage.

'Everyone deserves the acceptance of their fellow human beings,' he says. 'It's like a balm. That's why it makes us so angry that some people are against it. After six months, nothing has happened. The fact we are married hasn't hurt anyone.'

Emilio, who is Catholic, is more emphatic: 'I am very pissed off at the Church. I have read a lot about it since the law was passed. It shocks me that their position is so categorical.'

The Church's opposition has, however, come to nothing. Since Carlos and Emilio wed, more than 500 gay and lesbian couples have tied the knot.

On 14 January, Spain's Constitutional Court finally rejected a legal challenge brought by Catholic registrars who refused to officiate at gay weddings.

After 30 years of living together, Carlos and Emilio are accustomed to weathering the controversy that surrounds their relationship. What they're yet to get used to is how even mundane events have taken on a whole new meaning.

'A couple of weeks ago, I had to have an endoscopy,' Carlos recalls. 'The nurse asked me who would be accompanying me. Without thinking, I said, "I'm here with my husband."' ■

—Anthony Ham

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by the way

Writing the bloody things

NEAR ENOUGH TO 25 YEARS AGO my friend Vincent O'Sullivan came to Flinders University for a year as Research Fellow. Vince was, and continues to be, a wonderful writer, a brilliant wit, a splendid conversationalist, a stern opponent in argument and, in short, excellent company.

Every week or so, we would retreat to Rigoni's in Leigh Street for a relaxed yarn about writing, sport, the world and its ways. While we worked on our bottle of the house red and *tortellini alla panna* (we never ordered anything else), or when we had moved on to Tattersall's baroque saloon bar for a post-prandial 'cleanser' or two, I would often regale him with some new idea I had for a story or satirical piece or essay, because Vince was a generous and an acute literary mentor.

The trouble with my ideas, however, was that they existed either only in my head, like Keats's 'unheard melodies', or in the form of cryptic reminders in my spiral notebook. For example: 'A bloke who gradually realises that other people are stealing his personal anecdotes and telling them about themselves discovers parts of his body are disappearing.' And, a few pages later: 'Someone who constantly hears his name being mysteriously called in crowds, shops, etc.' Or again: 'Use Smetana's deafness, the note ringing constantly in his ear, as a motif.' Or: 'Story about going to the Picasso Exhibition.' Or a scrawled speculation: 'Story based on how dog lovers become obsessed by their dogs,' and so on.

One day in the winter of that year, we met as usual and some half hour or so into our conversation I said that while travelling into town I'd had a 'terrific idea' for a short story. Vince looked at me not with the usual interest and attentiveness but, on the contrary, with an uncharacteristic hint of exasperation.

'Look, mate,' he said, 'why don't you write these bloody stories instead of just talking about them?'

I admit to having been slightly shocked but when, later, I examined my reaction, I realised it was not so much that I was surprised at Vince's sudden toughness as that I recognised with enormous apprehension that my safe little world of 'terrific ideas for stories' would have to be translated into action or cease to carry any weight. In short, I'd have to 'write the bloody things'.

At just about that same time Christopher Pearson took over the *Adelaide Review* and, with deadlines looming, immediately rang around to conscript contributors. Why he asked me for 'any stories you've got lying around' remains mysterious. I suppose, like Vince, he must have suffered various versions of my 'terrific story' ideas. Anyway, the O'Sullivan/Pearson pincer movement forced my hand.

For the next few months, in the cold dark of early mornings and late at night when the house creaked in the silence, I wrote 22 short stories, the first couple of which I sent off to the *Adelaide Review*. At the same time, encouraged by the *Review*'s voracious need for material during its first vulnerable months, I had a go at a kind of sports writing that I'd been thinking about for ages (another so far untried 'terrific idea')—a sort of comic-satirical take on test cricket and Aussie Rules as both entered into the tightening grip of commercial and television interests.

It was all long ago and seems trivial enough now, but Vince's uncompromising edict and Pearson's out-of-the-blue appeal made a huge difference to my life: in fact, they thoroughly redirected it. A collection of short stories, *Quickening and Other Stories* and *Oval Dreams: Larrikin Essays on Sport and Low Culture*, dedicated respectively to Vincent O'Sullivan and Christopher Pearson, were the immediate results. From that tremor, aftershocks reverberated down the years.

All of which, along with other memories both literary and scurrilous, came back to me as I stood yarning with various luminaries at Writers' Week 2006. Vince was there, now the most distinguished and decorated New Zealand writer of his time, but unspoiled by fame and still telling jokes. And Rob Drewe (*The Shark Net*, *Grace*, Sydney Swans tragic) who, on reading the column about millipedes in these pages a few months ago, offered to bring a ute load of cane toads down from his northern New South Wales eyrie to see if they'd eat my millipedes and solve both our problems in one hit. And Kerryn Goldsworthy, short-story writer, columnist, one-time academic. And Morag Fraser who, as editor of *Eureka Street*, originally asked me to write for it. And waves of former students, many of them now writers of note, who made me feel venerable and absurdly durable in the one moment.

Every one of the dozen or so Writers' Weeks I have attended either as audience or guest has been marvellous. But this one seemed special. It wasn't only the weather—one of Adelaide's most luminous, cloudless autumns—or the excellence of the sessions, masterminded by the amiable, unflappable Writers' Week chairman, Dr Rick Hosking, and his committee. It was something else; perhaps one's *age*, I admit with reluctance. And perhaps, too, the consciousness that the age we live in is in turmoil and that havens, like Writers' Week, of art and culture and conversation among glossy beautiful mounds of threatened books and journals and magazines under the globally warming sun should be valued as never before. ■

Brian Matthews lives in the Clare Valley and is Professor of English at Flinders University. His most recent book is *The Temple Down the Road: The Life and Times of the MCG* (Viking).

Short-term gains

I HAVE WRITTEN AT LEAST a gross of columns for *Eureka Street*—amazingly not having missed an issue—since it began in 1991, and find myself with mixed emotions as I write this for the last printed issue—at about the same time as Communications Minister Helen Coonan is circulating her white paper on the future of the media. I shall write on for the internet edition—assuming the editors want me to—and my job of doing so will not be different, right down to drafting the article on a computer, and sending it to Melbourne, late as usual, by email.

For at least the past 20 years, people have predicted the demise of the newspaper, the magazine, and, probably, ultimately, the book. I do not believe it for a second. Indeed, some of the new technology—not least the ebook—may well lead to a revival of interest in the printed word. Here in Canberra, I have a particular perspective on thinking so.

About 20 per cent of the population of Canberra—a proportion far higher than anywhere else in Australia, and possibly the world—are news junkies. They read, watch, listen to and otherwise access anything they can if it has some relevance to their lives. They are politicians, political staffers, public servants and other government advisers, lobbyists for private and public causes, and members of Canberra's substantial education, military and diplomatic industries. Information and informed views—and being up-to-date on what occurs—are their stock-in-trade.

The news junkies sop up information wherever they can get it. They are the most sophisticated consumers of all mediums. Many get up in the morning and flick on television news and current affairs. They listen to AM on the radio, and browse the newspapers—three on average, sometimes more. As soon as they get to work, they are browsing the internet, and will likely consult news sources several times during their working day. They will go out of their way, if they can, to hear ABC news and current-affairs broadcasts, and to watch key television current-affairs shows. They buy books, particularly non-fiction, and are at least ten times more likely to do so than average Australians—themselves keen book buyers by international standards. And they read magazines, particularly current-affairs ones (a nice example is that about one in every 40 readers of the British magazine *The Spectator* lives in Canberra). They are catholic in doing so. A high proportion of, say, *Quadrant* readers also read *Eureka Street*, *Arena* and *The Bulletin*.

These sophisticates know very well the advantages of particular mediums: the immediacy of radio; images on television; the permanence of print and the capacity it and some delay allows for more detail, analysis and informed commentary; and the value of the internet for research. The highest consumption of any of these mediums—so far as news and views are concerned—is by the people who are the heaviest consumers of the other mediums. By and large, they are not dropping any old mediums for new ones—or where they are, it is not because of technological change or convenience, but because particular old mediums are less competent at doing their particular job, and the reason for using them is less pressing.

The majority of Australians—even of Canberrans—are not like these news junkies. Some people (worryingly, an increasing number) are completely turned off news in any medium at all. They would not read newspapers if they were free. They turn off, or move the dial, on radio and television when news or current affairs come on. They make only the most limited personal use of the internet. But while people note the slow and steady decline of newspaper circulations—about half of what they were 40 years ago—or the declining total audience of television—likewise—it has not been because of a switch of mediums so much as a decreasing engagement by and with audiences, not least in an environment in which the amount of information available is increasing exponentially.

Few media are now owned by people—such as the old Fairfaxes and perhaps the Symes—with some vocational sense of duty to enlighten, inform and influence the world. Owners are now overwhelmingly corporations, often mere wings of corporations, focused on farming potential advertising revenue and maximising profits. They realise that the bigger the audience, the higher the advertising premium, and that quality and quantity of content are critical to that. Increasingly, however, they are focused on costs, and on a dream that costs can be cut by finding 'synergies'—ways of getting bigger audiences for the same content. The dream is of a journalist who will, in the same day, tell it on radio and television—perhaps in an extended way on a subscription channel as well—and write it for the paper, which will, of course, republish it on the internet, probably sending you an SMS as it does so. And, of course, using the power of syndication to do it in separate markets with duplication of journalists. The pursuit of that dream—and the maximum audience—involves the idea that the new media empires should involve all mediums.

It won't, in the long run, work. The hungriest punters do not want the same information repackaged for different mediums, and will only take it once, if at all, given that there are alternative sources. If syndication and cost-cutting make less of the product attractive, relevant, interesting, or urgently demanding to be consumed, the overall demand for the product will fall. A fresh range of market media analysts—a good few of whom are illiterate—will foreshadow impending death and call for more cost-cutting. More media concentration is to be resisted not because proprietors are telling editors and journalists what to write, but because the greater the concentration, the less pressure for quality, breadth and depth. ■

Jack Waterford is editor-at-large for *The Canberra Times*.

Frank Brennan

Are we asleep at the wheel?

In this edited extract from the 2006 Manning Clark Lecture, '5 R's for the Enlargers: Race, Religion, Respect, Rights and the Republic', **Frank Brennan** focuses on respect

It is easy for all of us to be critical of our governments and of our media. But in a democracy we elect our governments and the media feeds us what we like to consume. When we elect leaders without pity, when our judges fail to show pity, when our civil servants act without pity, or when our media pursues ratings by denying pity and love, there is every chance that they are reflecting us back to ourselves. When there is a major failing by government to live up to our public morality, there is every chance that we have all been infected to some extent, adopting the utilitarian calculus that the ends justifies the means, that nothing is good or bad in itself. It depends only on the political or economic consequences. A senator can change parties after election pleading that there is no real difference between the party policies. If that is so, surely political morality dictates that you stay with the party to which you were elected until the next election when you seek to make the move. But self-interest is equated with common sense, and the attempted move is justified if it succeeds. Paul Keating once advised that in any race you should always back self-interest because you know it is trying. In the corporate sector, middle-order managers wonder why they should be honest when directors misuse company property for their own personal benefit.

When retiring as a teacher at the Australian National University in 1975, Manning Clark asked if it had all been worthwhile. He recalled attending the requiem mass at St Christopher's Cathedral in Canberra the previous year for his friend Eris O'Brien:

> The procession after the service reminded me of the Catholic, Protestant, and the Enlightenment—symbolising what one had thought our history was about, in part. But there was a sequel. Outside the church, as that bell tolled its melancholy dirge for the dead, I was seized with that dread which has never been far from me in the last ten or so years: that the bell was tolling a requiem for the only vision of life with which I had any bond. I feared that all these three ways of looking at the world, and the men who believed in them, were about to be replaced by men who believed in nothing; men with the appetites of the sybarite and the morals of the Pharisee; men who were not touched by the story of the prodigal son, or Schiller's great 'Hymn to Joy', or Mozart's *Magic Flute*, or Karl Marx's point about moral infamy, or the teachers of the Enlightenment on tenderness, or Steele Rudd's Dad, or Henry Lawson's Christ figure—men without pity, with that great hell in the heart, of not being able to love or be loved.

This quote haunted me over the summer after I spent an afternoon watching the Cole Commission on the Oil for Food Program. As the historian and preacher, Manning would have no interest in publicly pursuing the government on this matter, and that is not my role. Rather, we need to reflect on how we as a society allowed this state of affairs to develop. Unlike the Bush administration, our government joined the Coalition of the Willing in Iraq with a restricted purpose: to rid Iraq of weapons of mass destruction and to remove the threat to international security, especially the threat to our ally, the United States. Regime change was an additional item on Mr Bush's agenda. As a people we permitted our government to do the moral handstands, signing up to the Coalition without signing up to all the objectives given for war by the leader of the Coalition. While Bush, Cheney and Rumsfeld wanted regime change in Iraq at any cost, Mr Howard told us, 'I couldn't justify on its own a military invasion of Iraq to change the regime. I've never advocated that.' We signed on, in part, paying our dues for our alliance with the US. At the same time, our government (with the support of the Opposition and the nonchalance of most of us) wanted to maintain high wheat sales to the Iraqi regime when everyone knew that to do business in that part of the world you had to pay kickbacks.

Our collectivl moral torpor and national irresponsibility were reflected in the nonchalant acceptance of assurances from our government that all would be well with our wheat sales to Iraq even though we were gearing up for war with Iraq. In return for our government's strong language against Iraq following its failure to permit thorough weapons inspections, the Iraqi government expressed concerns about the contamination of our wheat. We said they had WMD; they said there were iron filings in our wheat. There were neither. The Australian Wheat Board was able to put the sales back on track, with the government telling us the issue 'has been resolved, which is excellent news for the Australian Wheat Board and for Australian wheat farmers and their families'. Mark Vaile told Parliament that this 'certainly vindicated the federal government's faith in the AWB and its ability to successfully manage its commercial dealings with the Iraqi Grains Board'.

In hindsight, were we not all asleep at the wheel while the ship of state sailed through these precarious amoral waters? Commissioner Terence Cole and Opposition Foreign Affairs Spokesman Kevin Rudd will presumably get to the bottom of particular ministers' blame. But what about the blame on all of us? Barnaby

Joyce tells us that even backpackers knew that you had to pay bribes to do business in that part of the world. Commercial reality accommodates some level of such payments. But this was not just any regime in receipt of kickbacks. Our government was convinced that this government was developing weapons of mass destruction. Our government was adamant that there was a need for strict sanctions or war. Our government and anyone else watching were convinced that the Iraqi regime was rorting the oil for food program. But we all turned a blind eye when the AWB told us that all was well. Mysteriously our sales were restored to normal. Not one member of our parliament, and not one of us as far as I am aware, not one straightener and not even one enlarger, stood up and asked, 'How can this be? Is Mr Hussein naïve?' We were all consoled back in September 2002 when Mr Vaile told parliament:

> The way the dispute about quality which had delayed the unloading of several Australian wheat shipments to Iraq was resolved demonstrates the sound commercial relationship between AWB Ltd and the Iraqi Grains Board. We will continue to work closely with AWB Ltd to help maintain and increase its existing market share in Iraq.

When it comes to our national interest and the prospect of increased wheat sales for our farmers and their families, alas we all stand condemned like 'those men who believed in nothing; men with the appetites of the sybarite and the morals of the Pharisee'. It is not that we lack pity or love. Our pity and love were extended by invitation of our leaders to our wheat farmers and their families, but to them alone. In so doing we all turned a blind eye to the processes needed to maintain sanctions in place and to ensure that one thought to be a murderous dictator intent on destruction beyond his national borders was deprived of the resources needed for his exploits. While we pursue those government ministers asleep at the wheel of the ship of state, let's also castigate ourselves and remind ourselves that it is only a materialistic, utilitarian people which is collectively able to work the public conscience into such a state of submission that the nation is able to trade successfully with a despot while convincing itself that necessary and justified sanctions are honoured and all is in readiness for war. Then, even before the war is over, our prime minister is able to tell us that 'the oil for food program has been immorally and shamefully rorted by Saddam Hussein, who has used the proceeds of it to acquire his weapons capacity and support it'. Our money, our neglect; Saddam's immorality, and Saddam's shame. Our disjunction between political and commercial reality on the one hand and public morality on the other ultimately reveals a great disrespect of ourselves. We forfeit the civic virtues when we embrace the credal 'Whatever it takes'. Our pragmatism finally starts to work violence on us, as well as on others.

At the 1988 Yale Conference on Australian Literature Manning lamented:

> A turbulent emptiness has seized the inhabitants of the ancient continent. No one has anything to say. Like other European societies, Australians once had a faith and a morality. Then they had a morality without a faith—the decades of the creedless Puritans. Now most of the legal restraints of the old morality have been taken off the statute book. Everything is up for examination.

The pragmatic, consequentialist ethic in contemporary Australia has long wreaked havoc on outsiders not meriting our respect, but now it is turning on us. We are losing respect even for ourselves. Take the situation of parents who at the last minute feel helpless that their son or daughter may be caught up in a drug

ring operating out of Indonesia. They or an intermediary contact the Australian Federal Police and seek assistance, wanting their child stopped at the airport or at least given a warning. We now know that the Australian Federal Police are instructed to co-operate with the Indonesian police up until the time that charges are laid, even if there be a real risk that the death penalty will be imposed. Being a civil-law country and not a common-law country, Indonesia does not lay charges until the end of the investigation process. In common-law countries like Australia, charges are laid much earlier in the investigation and prosecution process. If Indonesia were a common-law country like Australia, the AFP would be much more restricted in their capacity to co-operate with the Indonesian police when an Australian citizen could be facing death.

But there is something even more troubling than our police pursuing the forensic advantage of delayed charging of suspects in countries like Indonesia. In the recent case of the Bali Nine, a judge of the Federal Court of Australia commenced his judgment suggesting there was a need for the Minister 'to address the procedures and protocols followed by members of the Australian Federal Police (AFP) when providing information to the police forces of another country in circumstances which predictably could result in the charging of a person with an offence that would expose that person to the risk of the death penalty in that country'.

The Minister and the AFP Police Commissioner, Mick Keelty, have said that they see no need for a review of the protocol and processes. The Commissioner has gone one step further and said that there is nothing the police can or ought to do in response to a parental request for assistance. According to Mr Keelty, if anyone connected with the police did respond positively to the parental request, that person would be acting 'dishonourably' and 'corruptly'. Mr Keelty has told Parliament: 'What does that say to the parents of the other children who did travel—that because someone had a mate in the police, they got rescued but their children are subject to the circumstances of the Indonesian judicial system? It is simply a nonsense to even project that as being a way that the AFP should operate.' Bob Myers, the barrister and family friend who had contacted the police on behalf of the parents of Scott Rush, lamented: 'Certainly I know with hindsight now you can't rely on our agencies, Australian agencies, to help us out in a crisis of that sort.' All right-thinking people applaud the efforts of law enforcement authorities taking a strong stand against those who exploit and profit from others' addiction to illegal and harmful drugs. But some of the most honourable and non-corrupt law enforcement officers are those who can take young people aside and warn them off. This cannot be done in every circumstance when an anxious parent seeks assistance as a last resort. But our sense of legalism is too stretched when the Police Commissioner can proclaim that any such instance of this would be dishonourable and corrupt.

We can maintain a respect for the noblest human aspirations, including parents' desire to protect their child, a friend's desire to help a mate, a free and confident nation's desire to spare even their foolish, selfish citizens from the firing squad. The federal police should be empowered to do their job, but their desire to track down criminals and their willingness to sacrifice the life of our citizens should not permit co-operation with other police beyond what would be permitted were the other police in a common-law country where charges would be laid earlier than they are in countries like Indonesia.

The distinguished Victorian Supreme Court judge Murray McInerney told me when I was admitted to the Bar 30 years ago that there was no finer citizen than the good police sergeant in a country town who was able to keep the peace, not primarily by enforcing the law but by having a quiet word to the young fellows around town. There must be a place even in our federal police for co-operation with parents and citizens of good standing wanting to avoid the firing squad for their children and their friends' children.

In 'Trying to Tell the Story', Manning Clark confided: 'I wanted to tell a story of hope—that those who had the courage and the strength to face the truth about the human situation had a chance to be kind and tender with each other. Australia need not always belong to the tough. Australia could and should belong to lovers and believers.' ■

Frank Brennan SJ AO is an adjunct fellow in the Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies at the ANU, professor of law in the Institute of Legal Studies at the Australian Catholic University, and professor of human rights and social justice at the University of Notre Dame Australia. The full text of this lecture, sponsored by Manning Clark House in Canberra and delivered in March at the National Library of Australia, can be found at http://www.manningclark.org.au/papers/MCLecture-2006.html

Geese

(for Margaret Manion)

Monday, and still, as though trumping the dullard
in Brueghel's Proverbs, the geese are barefoot—
Canada migrants, shuffling in snow at Fordham.

By the half-dozen, diamonds patching the sky,
they have their fling, and wheel to earth,
restless colonials, honking of mates and the south.

In their black and tan, as the Bronx itches for spring,
they take the measure of zoo and garden,
of cutting and concourse, the slots and blocks of our living,

but have marshes on mind, or tundra, or muskrat houses:
back of those bills are rumours of corn,
of eel-grass and barley, an orient of rice,

Bermuda flagged by the plucked blade. In sunlight
the cold crystals are still massy,
a sight to see from above the treetops, as

to the same Dutchman's lancing eye when he numbered
Bethlehem's crew, burgher and waif,
a cow nudging the laden mule, and beer

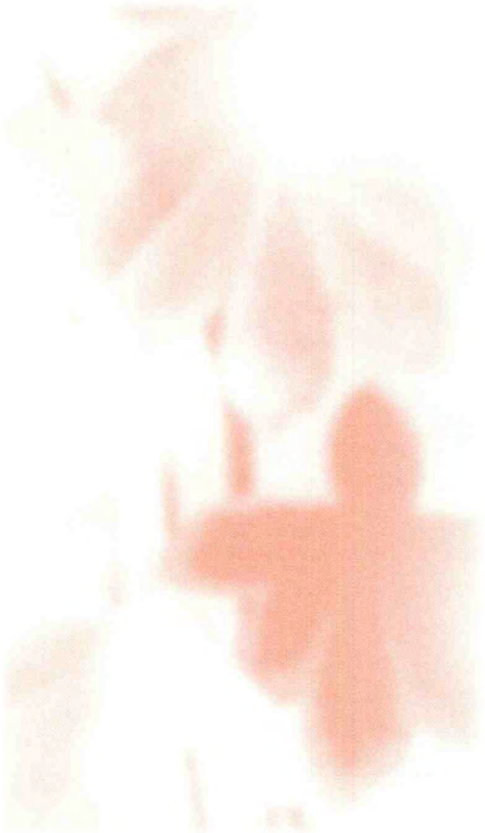
by the wheeled tun a last obex. This morning,
the geese and I are milling in whiteness,
a squirrel for witness there at a tree's vantage,
some at home and all homing.

Peter Steele

Michael Ashby

Denying but not defying

Death is a natural part of our lives, yet in most Western societies it seems to have to be either fought and conquered, or chosen; it cannot just be



THE PROTRACTED AND PUBLIC dying of the late Pope John Paul II, the tube-feeding cases of Terry Schiavo in Florida, Mrs BWV (in the case of that name) and Maria Korp in Victoria, are all examples of a rumbling dialectic in modern Western societies about the limits of medical treatment and causing death.

In *The Tablet* last year, Paul Keeley, a palliative care physician in Glasgow, challenged those responsible for the prolongation of the late pope's dying process. He wondered why the pope was not allowed to die peacefully, 'rather than an ugly medicalised death', being subjected to futile and intrusive treatment, such as a tracheostomy, when afflicted by terminal pneumonia.

One can also only be amazed at the incredible death-denying spin put out by the Vatican medical spokesman throughout the saga. Why were devout Catholics praying for their Holy Father to be further delayed in his reunion with his creator? Keeley rightly points out the spiritual importance and history of the 'good death'.

Why were devout Catholics praying for the Holy Father to be further delayed in his reunion with his creator?

Causal assertions are never far away when the media considers these issues. When talking of the decision by the Public Advocate of Victoria to withdraw tube feeding from Maria Korp, who was dying with severe irreversible brain damage after prolonged asphyxia, a Melbourne newspaper unhelpfully ran a headline stating that she was being 'starved to death'.

In an attempt to improve decision-making at the end of life, specifically for situations where the patient is incompetent, there has been growing interest in the development of advance directive programs in Australia. Programs such as Respecting Patient Choices and Planning My Future Medical Care (the latter currently under consideration by the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference and Catholic Health Australia) attempt to get people to appoint agents and leave written instructions recording their wishes for future care when they are unable to speak for themselves. Similar moves are under way in Britain, and there are long-established legal instruments of this sort in the United States, Canada and several Australian states. So far, however, all such policy-based legalistic approaches have had negligible impacts on care and decision-making at the end of life, despite high hopes.

The problem is that the issue of causing or not causing death, the moral line in the sand, has become virtually the only aspect of care and decision-making at

the end of life that gets societal or media attention. In fact, much of the thinking about death in society centres on the idea of 'natural' death. Though widely used in common parlance, as if its meaning is clearly understood, on closer scrutiny the term actually encompasses two things. At one level, in its forensic sense, it implies absence of any human contribution to the cause of death. At another level, in an existential sense, it implies the self-evident truth that death is an inevitable part of the 'natural' human condition. From this second meaning flows a spiritual, social and behavioural sense of conscious preparation for death, as a key component in the quest for both meaning and dignity in human life, particularly in its final part.

Modern palliative care is deeply imbued with this aspect of the term, and works to assist people to deal with the realities of their situation—as individuals and in their family and social context. However, this palliative-care approach is certainly not value-neutral. It relies on an acceptance, of some sort and at some level, of the inevitability, and hence the 'naturalness' of one's fate, that going with the process rather than fighting against it is the most dignified, comfortable and indeed logical way to proceed when it becomes apparent that further curative-intent treatment, or maintenance of life-support measures, is only postponing the inevitable, and probably causing its own suffering as well. None the less, when giving voice to this apparently almost truistic recognition of reality, palliative care can come into stark conflict with modern individualistic 'human-potential' world views, based as they seem to be on the imperative to fight for everything you want, or even that, if you have enough faith, you will get what you want. Death seems to have to be either fought and conquered, or chosen; it cannot just be.

CAUSE OF DEATH IS, OF COURSE, a matter of central importance for both medicine and the law. Medicine, and in particular, palliative care, that branch of health that cares for people who are dying, adopt the position that medical intervention should neither intend to hasten death nor prolong the process of dying when cure or remission of disease are no longer realistic goals.

This position of what might be called 'causal neutrality' has grown from, and is consistent with, the Judeo-Christian ethic, the dominant one in Australian and other Western societies, and also with Islam. Each of the three major monotheistic religions holds that humans have a natural life span determined by God, that the mode and timing of death does not lie with humans, and that human agency cannot be involved. Law tends to be shaped over centuries by the dominant religious tradition of the country or jurisdiction concerned, and all have historically forbidden causing the death of a person (unless sanctioned by the state for punitive reasons). This position of causal neutrality has been challenged over recent decades on three fronts.

First, euthanasia has become a topic of wide public debate. Overwhelmingly the public has indicated that, in certain circumstances at the end of life, most notably where suffering is unrelieved or where quality of life is impaired to such a degree that the person feels that life is no longer worth living, it is permissible to have someone else help that person to die. This runs directly counter to the values laid down by religion and reflected in the law. With a few notable exceptions, most jurisdictions explicitly forbid third-party assistance in dying.

Second, modern medicine now has the capacity to maintain life, and thereby also to prolong dying, or life in a permanently brain-damaged unconscious person, in ways that were inconceivable when the major religions laid down their moral and legal codes. It is therefore quite mistaken to apply time-honoured absolute interdicts against causing death (although all have allowed the death penalty and some still do) to decisions about modern medical treatment.

Third, in public policy and the law there has long been the assumption that some palliative interventions, or deliberate lack of intervention, do indeed contribute to the cause of death. These interventions include the giving of escalating doses of opioid drugs such as morphine for pain and symptom relief, and sedatives for agitation and distress at the end of life on the one hand, and the cessation or non-initiation of various medical treatments on the other. These are, however, allowed because of the ethical and public policy imperative to relieve suffering and avoid a purposeless prolongation of dying and its attendant suffering and loss of function, as stated so clearly in the objectives sections of the Victorian Medical Treatment Act (1988) and the South Australian Consent to Medical Treatment and Palliative Care Act (1993).

"...modern medicine now has the capacity to maintain life, and thereby also to prolong dying ... in ways that were inconceivable when the major religions laid down their moral and legal codes ..."

However, the assumption concerning cause of death and the use of opioid and sedative drugs in palliative care is wrong. Any drug can endanger life if used inappropriately, but the knowledge and skills built up over some 30 years of palliative-care practice have shown that opioids and other similar drugs can quite safely be used for symptom control without bringing causation into question if the parameters of accepted practice are followed. Pain is treated by opioid drugs without danger to life for weeks and often months before death, and for even longer in people with chronic pain who live a normal life span. It is also true that the use of escalating opioid and sedative drugs close to the point of death has the theoretical potential to have some influence on precise timing of death, although it is not possible to validate such an observation one way or the other, and nor is it ethical, appropriate or important to attempt to do so.

This clinical understanding, generated by modern palliative care experience, did not, however, exist in 1957, when the then Justice Devlin gave advice to an English jury in the famous case of

R v Adams. Devlin, concerned specifically with the use of morphine and heroin in terminal care, was reliant on medical opinion of the day, which held that opioid drugs were dangerous and that their use at the end of life inevitably entailed causing or contributing to the cause of death through respiratory depression. To accommodate this within the law, Devlin introduced, for the first and only time into such legal deliberations, the doctrine of double effect. This has its origin in the Roman Catholic moral theological tradition, in which an outcome forbidden by religion, in this case causing or contributing to the premature death of a dying patient, is permissible, provided that certain conditions are met, notably that this outcome must not be intended.

Despite the general falsity of the medical assumption underpinning it, and the fact that the intentions and motives of the doctor on trial were also open to question, Devlin's advice is still frequently quoted when end-of-life issues are considered in the English common-law tradition. The law continues to assume that palliative care interventions may indeed contribute to cause of death, but takes a commonsense and humane approach to accommodate this, usually as Devlin did, by invocation of the principle of double effect.

Due in no small part to its incorporation into the legal reasoning in this frequently cited case, this false causal assumption, combined with the legacy of the Judeo-Christian imperative, continues to generate anxiety among doctors, nurses and the general public. Health workers, imbued with the scientific tradition, tend to believe that the law just looks at bare causality, and, it seems, palliative care may contribute to cause of death in the eyes of the law. However, while the law looks at the facts of a case, it is also concerned with the legal process of determination of legal liability, and in legal parlance the term 'causation' encompasses both these aspects, and will not even apply a causal analysis if there has been no legal duty established, or illegal conduct.

At the same time, medical practice is to a large degree based on, and informed by, an imperative to keep patients alive at all costs, and to do everything possible to achieve this. The massive technical advances within medicine throughout the 20th century have promoted the illusion, both within medicine and in the public mind, that death can be indefinitely postponed. To admit death is to admit defeat. This, combined with the widespread assumption that palliative interventions may incidentally contribute to a patient's death, has generated a resistance within mainstream medicine to the delivery of appropriate care of people who are dying.

Palliative care teams, especially those working in acute hospitals, often find themselves working through (overtly and covertly) these causal issues in end-of-life care with the treating team, patients and families. They become advocates for the recognition of natural death in the sense of acknowledgment of its imminence and inevitability, often in situations where heroic but futile and disproportionate treatment options are being offered to dying persons. The challenge is to bring about a transition in the goals of care to comfort and dignity rather than cure or length of survival. This tends to be resisted by a willing co-conspiracy between desperate patients and families, and their doctors, in a system which all too readily constructs death as an enemy to be fought at almost any cost until the last possible moment.

> *"Provision of appropriate and timely skilled care for pain and suffering is almost universally agreed upon, regardless of divergences of opinion about euthanasia."*

Most religious groups have been very supportive of palliative care. Provision of appropriate and timely skilled care for pain and suffering is almost universally agreed upon, regardless of divergences of opinion about euthanasia. But religions can further help by reassuring their people that all their scriptural foundations and moral codes were formulated well before we had the capacity to prolong human life, and that none of these traditions require the dying to be treated as if they are curable, that modern medicine does indeed have its limits. Heroic treatment for incurable conditions should be seen as obstruction of the dying process and, for those who believe, ignoring God's call. Despite the continuing secularisation of most societies, religious groups still have a valuable role in reconnecting people to ancient traditions that can bring comfort and meaning to those facing death and loss. If their teachings are being used, however erroneously, to justify *acharnement thérapeutique* (literally, therapeutic harassment as it has been put in French), it would greatly help if they would set the record straight, and reassert the 'naturalness' of death.

In care and decision-making at the end of life it is argued that the deliberative processes and discourse should move away from almost exclusive focus on human agency and death causation, important though this is, and embrace non-obstruction of the dying process and self-determination as well. 'Natural' death should be seen as having a composite meaning, which embraces both forensic and existential senses. And in the final analysis all would surely agree that there is more to a 'good' or 'good enough' death than causality.

Death and dying are everybody's business, and medicine can ease the journey or make it harder; this, and only this, can be our choice. ■

Michael Ashby is director of the Centre for Palliative Care, and Professor of Palliative Medicine, Department of Medicine, St Vincent's Hospital, University of Melbourne.

Sarah Kanowski

The Zen master's stirring spoon

ONCE, THE CHIEF COOK of a Chinese Zen temple was busy preparing lunch. As he was working, there appeared floating above the rice pot the revered Bodhisattva, Manjushri. 'Get away from here!' said the cook, later a noted Zen master. 'I'm making lunch!' To drive him away, the cook finally hit Manjushri on the head with his stirring spoon. He said that even if the Buddha himself had appeared floating above the rice pot he would have hit him too!

During World War II in the village of Le Chambon-sur-Lignon, a group of French Protestants harboured Jewish refugees. In Philip Hallie's book about those events, *Lest Innocent Blood Be Shed*, the Italian wife of the pastor leading the resistance has a central role. Magda Trocmé is described as a quick, forceful person. In the winter of 1940–41 when the first refugee from the Nazis, a German Jewish woman, knocked at the door of the presbytery asking if she could enter, Magda 'gave an abrupt, ungrudging, raucous command issued through a wide-open door: "Naturally, come in, and come in."'

These two stories may appear antithetical: one about driving someone away, the other about bidding someone to enter. Yet both speak to a particular type of goodness: one that it based on simply doing what needs to be done.

Discussion on the nature of this kind of spontaneous moral action is difficult. When asked about the rationale for her actions many years after the war Magda answered: 'I try not to hunt around to find things to do. I do not hunt around to find people to help. But I never close my door, never refuse to help somebody who comes to me and asks for something. This, I think, is my kind of religion. You see, it is a way of handling myself. When things happen, not things that I plan, but things sent by God or by chance, when people come to my door, I feel responsible.'

> *"...Ethics emanating from this way of being, this openness to whatever presents itself, look easy. But such a nature is hard to cultivate.."*

For moral philosophers these statements pose a problem. How did Magda choose where her responsibilities lay? Were they to the unknown German Jew knocking on her door or to her own four children endangered by the refugee's presence? What general principles, philosophers ask, allow us to perceive what is right in a particular situation? When Hallie tried to ask Magda such questions she would become impatient and turn back to her cooking or sewing or cleaning.

Perhaps the source of Magda's ethical discrimination can be found in her comment 'it is a way of handling myself'; that is, it flows from a way of being rather than a set of established beliefs about right and wrong. At the beginning of his second book of *Ethics* Aristotle refers to the term as having its origin in the Greek word for an individual's character. For Aristotle, reason is the central force in the relationship between character and morality, aligning the passions in accordance with the golden mean that constitutes right action. Magda's goodness, in contrast, is founded not on the rational intellect but in a fundamental orientation towards others: 'When people come to my door, I feel responsible.'

When philosophers have tried to talk about that kind of connection—Hume's 'sympathy' or John Stuart Mill's 'benevolence'—their peers grow uncomfortable. How do we prove such ideas? How can we define them? But Magda's goodness is beyond the reach of such questions. To be able to call out without thinking as she did, 'Naturally, come in, and come in,' requires the collapse of our self-centred desires. Spiritual practice can aid in this, but Magda did not share her husband's religiosity and was actively opposed to its mysticism. Indeed, as the story of the Zen cook shows, attachment to religious or philosophical ideas about right and wrong can even get in the way of goodness.

The cook had a tangible job to do—he was preparing a meal for his community. In the Zen framework, taking care of everyday life is more important than worrying about esoteric religious matters. Meditating on a cushion, stirring a pot of rice—each moment of being is essential and each must be given wholehearted attention and care. This taking care of needs as they arise shouldn't be confused with the kind of fretting and worrying that consumes Martha in Luke: 10, and it has nothing to do with complaint. It does, however, have much in common with the story that precedes it, that of the Samaritan who sees a man wounded on the road and helps him without thought or theology. If there had appeared floating above the injured Jew a vision of Yahweh, I think the Good Samaritan would have hit him with his sandal: 'Get away from here! I'm busy bandaging!'

Ethics emanating from this way of being, this openness to whatever presents itself, look easy, natural. But such a nature is hard to cultivate, and all the philosophical and theological talk in the world won't create it. It takes work to be able to operate from that place—the same work done in the church and on the street, in the meditation hall and at the rice pot. ■

Sarah Kanowski is a broadcast journalist and freelance writer. This was one of two essays she submitted to win last year's inaugural Margaret Dooley Young Writers' Award.

Michele Gierck

700 days in El Salvador

MELBOURNE, 1989. José was the first Salvadorean refugee to tell me his story. José's father had been tipped off by a friend that his son's name was on 'the list', so they acted swiftly. Within hours José had packed his things, left his family, and was on a bus bound for the border. Although he didn't know it then, his life as a refugee would last more than a decade.

He had been forced to flee his homeland because his name was on a death-squad list—simply because he was affiliated with a trade union. In El Salvador that was all it took to make someone a military target. Many of his co-workers had already been rounded up and taken away. (They became the *desaparecidos*, the disappeared.) Many were tortured. The military had absolute power over ordinary people's lives and they exercised this brutally. José escaped with his life, but was scarred none the less ...

Michele Gierck with Ana Ortiz in El Salvador.

Two months into my second year of Spanish classes at university, we were assigned a play to read, *Pedro y el Capitán*. It is a short work of only four scenes—a long conversation between torturer and tortured. Although torture does not figure physically in any part, author Mario Benedetti explains its presence as a great shadow that weighs on the dialogue. This is not the drama of a monster and a saint. It is about two human beings, two men, each with their own vulnerabilities. The major difference between them is ideological.

Imprisoned and tortured, Pedro drifts in and out of consciousness. The Captain has the upper hand but Pedro uses his silence, and his words, wisely. It becomes apparent that the Captain is captive too, a weak man caught in a brutal system. Escape for him is just as impossible. Pedro, a courageous character, dies loyal to his *compañeros* and his cause, and in the process he breaks the Captain.

Pedro y el Capitán is a simple, evocative drama about the reality of life in Latin America. Yet after reading it, I found the issue of torture casting shadows on my own life ...

For class purposes students were required to write an essay on the play, but each of my attempts finished with a blank page. The expectation was that we would detach ourselves, write as if the drama were fiction. Yet, for me, who through Benedetti's imagery had glimpsed another reality, it wasn't fiction. As we planned and wrote our essays, numerous Pedros were being tortured. A question started gnawing at me: what was the point of a banal essay? Wouldn't it be better to focus energy on the real Pedros of this world?

It was while considering this dilemma that I had met José. Not only had he read Benedetti's book, he offered to discuss it. Coming from El Salvador he was able to open up that world, bring it to life by telling real stories. And he was aghast to think that another human being—even a foreigner, an outsider, an essay writer—could even contemplate feeling sorry for the Captain. José's perspective sprang from *conocer*ing.

I need to explain *conocer*ing. English, rich in so many ways, has its limitations. Take, for example the English verb 'to know'. One cannot deduce from its usage the mode of acquisition of the knowledge. By contrast, Spanish makes an important distinction: it has two infinitives for the verb 'to know'. The first, *saber*, refers to taking in data from a book or a computer—a more intellectual, often detached approach. Then there's *conocer*. It's a knowing rooted in experience. To know a place or a person *conocer*-style means you have touched them, felt their spirit.

José had *conocer*ed. He'd had first-hand experience of the world in which Pedro and the Captain lived. His understanding of Benedetti's book and Central American politics came from *conocer*ing, while I could only *saber* it through words on a page.

THERE WAS A KNOCK on the front door. José. He looked worried, the furrows along his brow pronounced. We headed to the kitchen for a *cafecito*. Two months had passed since we first met, yet our conversations, like the war in El Salvador, continued steadily.

José had a document—a fax from El Salvador, needing urgent translation. The usual volunteer translators were unavailable. Could I help? The fax, a dictionary, pens, paper, José and I were spread out around the kitchen table. We pored over the document, flicking through the dictionary searching for clues, slowly filling the gaps, adding single words, then phrases. The process was time-consuming and, at times, frustrating. José was not fluent in written English and I was scarcely literate in Spanish, yet the result, after much effort, was accurate and the style free-flowing in a Salvadorean way ...

This was the first of our joint translations. More followed. We became a regular team. The texts rendered into English were first-hand accounts of the suffering endured by communities in El Salvador; a history of war written by those on the receiving end. Anyone reading it would

have to conclude that bombing, rape and torture had become a part of Salvadorean life. And you'd have to ask, as I often did, had the Salvadorean military gone mad?

Translating the stories of *el pueblo* was challenging, not only because of my limited linguistic abilities but because it brought my world view into question. I had grown up in Bulleen, a Melbourne suburb as neighbourly as it was tranquil. In my world, 'attack' meant swooping magpies, protecting their young during breeding season: the victims—luckless pedestrians. During my childhood this had been a frightening experience. But in El Salvador 'attack' meant the engagement of weaponry with deadly intent: the targets often the civilian population. It was very unsettling. I thought I had seen the world, I thought I was very adventurous, perhaps a little brave when, at nineteen, I bought a round-the-world airline ticket. But neither travel, corporate work in the tourism industry, nor my current university studies were preparation for the orbit into which I was being drawn as I continued the translations ...

We had been translating for five months when the tension in El Salvador heightened dramatically. I could feel it pulsing through the language of the faxes, even from where we sat thousands of kilometres away. The guerrillas, the FMLN, had an audacious plan—to take control of the capital. 'Impossible', according to the military. And they should have known—many of their senior officers having been trained in the USA.

The guerrilla offensive, when it came, was as swift as it was decisive. It caught the Salvadorean military off guard. The guerrillas first took over the poor neighbourhoods of San Salvador, where they had some support. Then in a daring move, they took control of the wealthy parts of the capital.

What was the military to do—the same military which had assured its major funder, the US government, that the situation was under control? It was in trouble. So there was only one option, apart from capitulation: to throw everything available at the guerrillas, and those the government perceived to be guerrilla sympathisers—the urban poor. Indiscriminate aerial bombing of poor neighbourhoods began immediately. Scores were killed. The military would not even allow the Red Cross access to the wounded. Blood flowed literally along the gutters. Bodies lay untidily in the streets, the colour of life gone, so they looked like scattered bundles and discarded cloth.

Our fax machine barely stopped ...

José found me sitting at the desk, staring out the window, tears in my eyes. The awareness of so much suffering and desperation, and the world taking no notice, overwhelmed me.

'José, I'm not going to just keep sitting in this back room, translating stories about people being bombed. I'm going to do something.'

But in reality what could I do, apart from helping as an emergency translator?

On 16 November 1989 the military panicked. They entered the grounds of the University of Central America, the UCA, the Jesuit University in San Salvador, and literally blew the brains out of six Jesuit priests, their cook and her daughter: suddenly our translations were no longer about the anonymous. The killing of seventy thousand Salvadorean people might not have made world news, nor the massacre at El Mozote. But the cold-blooded shooting of six Jesuit priests did. Suddenly this slaughter was a new story, even in Australia. It sent reverberations around the world and, importantly, to Washington. The Salvadorean military had made a serious miscalculation. Their actions on 16 November 1989 would affect their lines of resupply from the US government, the government that trained and armed them. If the USA hadn't been sensitive to the human cost, it was always sensitive to the potential political cost.

In Melbourne, the bluestone Church of Saint Ignatius was packed for the mass commemorating the six Jesuits, Julia Elba and her daughter Celina. No event in nine years of war in El Salvador had affected people around the world the way this did.

There was shock—disbelief. If Jesuit priests could be targeted in their private university, what hope was there for the people on the streets, or in the mountains?

I had not been inside a church for years, but on this occasion, I sat down the back, head in hands, and cried. ■

This is an edited extract of *700 Days in El Salvador*, by **Michele Gierck**, published by Coretext (ISBN 0 977 50290 2, RRP $22.95).

A writer's journey

For Michele Gierck, the publication of her first book, *700 Days in El Salvador*, is the culmination of a writing journey that began about seven years ago and was nurtured along the way by *Eureka Street*.

In 1999 she was interviewed by *Age* journalist Martin Flanagan about her life, and found the interview experience, which touched upon her work in El Salvador in the early 1990s, 'incredibly cathartic'.

Six weeks later, despite severe pain caused by a spinal injury, she picked up a pen 'and just didn't stop writing for two months, over a thousand words a day ... when my right arm stopped after a hundred pages my left arm took over. This thing was so powerful that it was going to override any physical incapacity.'

In 2001, when she didn't know if her book would ever be published, and when it had become clear that she would have to endure ongoing pain from her back injury, *Eureka Street* editor Morag Fraser, who had seen two of Gierck's unpublished articles, commissioned her to write three pieces for the magazine. She soon became a regular contributor.

'Morag saw something in me that I hadn't recognised,' Gierck recalls. 'A year and a half later I was awarded a mentorship from the Victorian Writers' Centre to work on the manuscript, and the editor I got was Morag. It was brilliant! She believed in it. She has an eye.'

As did Brad Collis, of Melbourne publications company Coretext, who helped with the first edit of the book and decided eventually to publish it.

The result, according to author Michael McGirr, is 'a powerful account of a woman's awakening. Michele Gierck gave up a career to find a life. She left middle-class Australia to live in an El Salvador racked by violence, a story she tells with insight and a delightful sense of colour. Gierck is a traveller in the deepest and truest sense, one who knows how to be still. She was changed by her experiences and her readers will be too. This is one of those rare books which makes you see the world with fresh eyes. It is a work of tender beauty.'

—Robert Hefner

Sara Dowse

How far *have* you come, baby?

Despite some gains, no one can really question that, as a group, women have been and still are discriminated against by the mere fact of being women

CHERCHEZ LA FEMME. In his March 1 speech to the National Press Club, Treasurer Peter Costello announced: 'We ought to be looking to make this the most female-friendly place on Earth.'

What a fabulous thought.

Of course, there are questions to be asked. Which females, I wonder, does Costello have in mind? Students? Working mothers? Women over 65? Or maybe he's thinking of women with disabilities, or breast cancer patients, or women seeking abortions or about to give birth. What about female artists and writers, indigenous women, women asylum seekers or Muslim women? I've certainly not exhausted the range, but I hope I've made my point, that half the population is as varied as the other half, and providing for the needs of one group among us may well detract from those of another. The first thing anyone involved with women's policy learns is that we women are a diverse, contradictory, often refractory bunch.

Thirty years ago, when I was involved in developing policy myself, the government conducted annual pre-budget consultations. Essentially a public relations exercise (the budget had already been decided when they were held), the consultations exemplified the relative innocence of those days, when ordinary citizens met with Cabinet ministers and face-to-face delivered their demands. It was early in the Fraser government and a round of consultations with women's organisations had been arranged. But before the women met with the ministers, we in the department brought them together to discuss the issues among themselves, and with skilful manoeuvring enabled them to present a more or less common front.

Separately, however, each had a concern about the others. 'Sara,' said one migrant women's representative, 'do you actually believe that the Aborigines are ... what do you say ... *redeemable*?' When she left the room and her indigenous counterpart returned, *she* expressed her disgust for the 'Eyeties'. The Country Women's Association delegate clearly disliked them both. By the end of the day the entire procedure had taken on the character of farce, with one woman coming in a door immediately after another had gone out, to voice her distrust of the actor offstage, just as that woman had done only the minute before. And so it went. We had conservatives and social democrats, single mothers and 'family' champions, businesswomen and housing advocates; a variety of perspectives not altogether conducive to mounting a unified case.

It would be easy enough to interpret this story as evidence of the legendary cattiness of women, and it was indeed the fear of giving that impression to Cabinet that made us work so hard to smooth over the differences. And in those days, too, the media pounced on any disagreement as positive proof of the notorious female tendency to squabble. Yes, it was sexism at its worst. But I risk reporting the experience because of how deeply, if hilariously, it was impressed upon me through those meetings that, in policy terms, there is, in reality, no single group called women, and how difficult it is to negotiate our differing demands.

Yet, despite it all, no one can really question that, as a group, women have been and still are discriminated against by the mere fact of being women. For nearly 60 years it was entrenched in the wage-fixing system of our country that a woman was only worth three-quarters of a man. In the post-war period women paid a 22 per cent luxury tax on contraceptives. Not until the 1970s was a woman able to buy a house or take out a loan without a male guarantor, and a woman was considered a deserter if she left a marriage, no matter how dangerous or difficult it was. Apart from these ridiculous examples, an arguably more insidious systemic discrimination has continued to operate, with the result that in spite of arbitration commission judgments of the '70s and legislation enacted in the '80s, women still earn, on average and over a lifetime, less than men doing comparable jobs. And the mere fact of this has consequences all the way down the line, from today's purchasing power to tomorrow's superannuation.

Recently I've had reason to revisit women's policy for a paper on oral history I was asked to write. In the early '90s I was approached by the National Library of Australia to begin recording conversations with feminist activists for their oral-history archives. I'm still conducting the interviews, which document the resurgence of Australian feminism in the late 1960s and its influence on governance from that time. Those I interviewed include academics, consultants, journalists and writers, but the largest group by far have been former 'femocrats', women who went into government in order to improve conditions for women and advance their status in society.

FEMOCRATS ARE A peculiarly Australian phenomenon. Their appearance on the scene in the 1970s and '80s can be attributed to what the historian Keith Hancock once observed was a traditional Australian reliance on state support for individual endeavour, plus the happy coinciding of feminism's resurgence with the election of the Whitlam Labor government. This serendipitous combination of forces, arguably unique at the time in the Western world, had repercussions long after Whitlam's dismissal and influenced the movement's direction throughout the Fraser, Hawke and Keating years.

By 1991, when *Eureka Street* was born, feminists had found positions in all our parliaments, local councils, bureaucracies and universities, and had made an appreciable impact. In the cultural arena, too, a

feminist sensibility had taken hold. The Hawke-Keating government had enacted federal sex discrimination legislation in 1984, and two years later its affirmative action act was passed. Changes to legislation and practices surrounding rape, sexual harassment and domestic violence made Australians more conscious and condemning of these abuses, if they did not entirely eradicate them. Almost 45 per cent of women aged 15–65 were in the workforce, a significantly higher figure than that of preceding decades. Women comprised 50 per cent of tertiary education students as well. What had changed most of all were women's self-perceptions and the higher expectations we had for our lives.

And yet, and yet ... all was not well. The biggest unmet demand, and arguably the most crucial, then as now and right back to the '70s, was child care. As women's workforce participation rose (today it's at 56 per cent), the need was so keen that in 1992, when Anne Summers was appointed to Keating's staff, she advised the then prime minister to double the number of child-care places available. It was enough to swing the election in his favour, but now, 14 years later, the situation is even worse than it was then.

It was back in the '70s, I've been recently reminded, that feminists in government decided to put our greatest energies into the push for child care. There was a contradiction here, for just as we acknowledged the diversity of women and our differing needs, so did we recognise that at the heart of all discrimination lies the incontrovertible fact that women can become mothers. In virtually every society studied, throughout history and across cultures, this single possibility has put us at a disadvantage, whether we actually have children or not. We called it the sexual division of labour then, and we came to understand that the only way to ameliorate its harshest aspects in a modern society was by offering a wide range of affordable, accessible services for enabling women to provide for themselves and their families on a more equal footing with men, and give them peace of mind while they did. I still believe this is the case, which is why it's so disturbing to me that what was once one of the best children's services programs in the world has become the shambles it now is. It's far too cumbersome and expensive, operating on a complicated system of rebates, and the quality of care has deteriorated as more and more government funds are diverted from community-based centres to corporate operators.

Though the siphoning of funds into the commercial sector began under Labor, it has gathered furious momentum during the Howard decade, to accord with the Prime Minister's philosophies about the worth of private enterprise and the proper role of women. The child-care debacle, combined with a cluster of other policies such as the baby bonus and regressive tax breaks for single income families with children, have put serious barriers in the way of mothers seeking employment outside the home, and there are signs, indeed, that their numbers are declining. Equally disturbing is the signal this may give to coming generations, the girls who could grow up believing that complete fulfilment is to be found in home and family, just like we did back in the '50s and '60s.

WHAT AN IRONY, then, to find our white knight in Peter Costello, the country's premier free-marketeer. Costello has been worrying about the labour shortage arising from our ageing population and, to counteract it, has pushed for measures to get women, even older and disabled women, back into the workforce at the very time that Howard has washed his hands of us, dropping the Office of the Status of Women (now the Office for Women) out of his department and presumably out of his mind. It was Costello who argued that recipients of the supporting parents' benefit (the bulk of them women) must return to work once their youngest child turns six. But, as many women in his own party have argued, to make this possible we need more child care. And, ironically enough, getting women to pull up the slack was exactly why a coalition government enacted the first child-care act back in 1972, to deal with the labour shortage that had built up during the '60s.

I suppose it's up to us to keep up the pressure, now that it's on record that the Treasurer hopes Australia will become the world's best place for females. Which, come to think of it, does put him in a rather odd position. It was Vladimir Ilyich Ulanov, that barbaric Bolshevik, who argued that you could measure how advanced a democracy was by the way it treated its women. Poor Peter Costello, resigned it would seem to play a perpetual second fiddle to Howard, has found a way to distinguish himself only by joining Lenin's company. And knowing the pitfalls of women's policy as I do, I guess that's going to be the least of our saviour's troubles. ■

Sara Dowse is a novelist and essayist. Under her leadership the first women's affairs section of the Prime Minister's Department, established in 1974, became the Office of Women's Affairs, now the Office for Women. She lives in Sydney.

Robert Hefner

The *Eureka* moment

After fifteen years, *Eureka Street* has reached the end of its print run. It's a time to look back, but also to look ahead

Morag Fraser recalls sitting in a friend's house on a hot day in Sydney with a handful of faxes that had just arrived from poet Seamus Heaney in Ireland. Heaney had recently given a talk at the Melbourne Writers' Festival and Fraser, editor of *Eureka Street*, had asked him if the magazine could publish the talk.

'He said sure, but let me see what you're going to publish. So I dutifully transcribed every impeccable word—he's a great rhetorician—and faxed it to him. When I got it back he had not left a single sentence untouched. This is the poet/control freak/maniac. It was a great privilege to be sitting there editing the editing.'

An earlier *Eureka* moment that Fraser recalls is more personal. Her father died between the first issue of the magazine going to press and coming back from the printer. 'I was at my father's funeral in Adelaide when Michael Kelly and Adrian Lyons walked down the aisle carrying the first issue, and I thought my father would've really loved that.'

That first issue, published in March 1991, began a 15-year print history that comes to a close with this final May–June 2006 issue. Along the way the magazine has published some of the finest writers working in Australia and overseas, and has covered issues that were often ignored or glossed over by the mainstream media. The masthead of the March 1991 issue listed Michael Kelly SJ as publisher, Adrian Lyons SJ as editor and Morag Fraser as associate editor. To introduce the new magazine, its editors wrote:

> But why launch a new publication at a time of recession and international conflict? We believe that with the mass media now in fewer hands than they have been for decades, the range of perspectives offered to Australian readers is too few. And the right questions—the questions behind the questions—are not being pursued vigorously enough. *Eureka Street* aims to pinpoint issues of importance to Australia, in the context of the region and the wider world. We are enlisting writers who report accurately, analyse perceptively and who are capable of making their own contribution to the questions at hand ... Above all, we want *Eureka Street* to be a 'good read' for thoughtful people.

By the third issue, May 1991, Fraser was editor, a role that she filled with distinction until 2003. ('I came in with one Gulf War and went out with another,' she observes wryly.) Fraser's impact on *Eureka Street* was enormous, but she acknowledges a lot of support: 'It was always a group exercise. If I hadn't had extraordinarily good proofreaders, if I hadn't had a series of assistant editors and production editors who were very good at their job, I simply couldn't have done it. It's interesting that a lot of them have gone on to write elsewhere and do other things. They were very good.'

Fraser recalls having lunch with Peter Steele SJ, who was the Provincial Superior of the Australian Jesuits when *Eureka Street* started, and getting his full endorsement for the magazine: 'I asked him just what it was the Jesuits were looking for, and he said, "Just publish the best writing that you get." He knew that our notions of the best writing would coincide.'

Steele says that when he made the decision to start *Eureka Street* he had one main hope: 'This was that it should provide an opportunity for lively, intelligent, and courteous conversation between (mainly) Christian believers and the Australian community at large.

'I did not see any publication with which I was acquainted as providing a model for this one. I believed, and still do, that the Australian experience of both the secular and the sacred is distinctive, indeed unique: and I thought that it was up to all who would be seriously involved in the magazine to find an original voice for original matters. I have been gratified and heartened to see the extent to which this has in fact taken place.'

From the beginning the magazine strived for a style and a look that Fraser says was 'somewhere between *Harper's* and *The New Yorker*. The hallmark of those two magazines was the quality of the writing. That was always what I wanted, and what I was very much encouraged to do, first by Peter and then by Bill Uren, who was the next Provincial.

'We'd had a lot of set-up help from a Jesuit called Michael Harter who'd worked for *America* magazine. I visited Michael in his lair on Staten Island and I'd seen a lot of what both *America* and *Commonweal* had produced. Mike did the initial layout design.'

It was a design that won numerous awards over the years in the Australian Catholic Press Association and the Australasian Religious Press Association, but the true distinction of *Eureka Street* lay in its coverage of issues of social justice, politics and contemporary life, and in the quality of its writing.

'It was a privilege to be able to give writers, thinkers and people who were interested in public policy and politics genuine space, not just sound-bite space, in order to develop arguments about how we might live,' says Fraser. 'Dealing with writers of great quality was marvellous—writers who were still endowed with a genuine humility, always anxious about whether what they had done was as good as what they could do.

'And of course we had an interest in

theology. It said so, didn't it: "A magazine of public affairs, the arts and theology". I always thought theology was the bit that intrigued people. It was satisfying, for slightly perverse reasons, when people would say things like, "It's a religious magazine, are you allowed to say what you think?" And I'd say, "Well I've never been censored," which is true. It could have been a real deadener having "theology" in the masthead, so such theology or religious affairs that we published had to be pretty sharp to keep people reading.

'Once you get involved with a large international organisation like the Jesuits, and if you've got good connections—and for a variety of reasons I did, and we did—you do run across people who can really write. And so if it was South Africa there was always someone who was there or who'd been there, or who knew about it. I can remember the April 1994 issue with its cover photo of Nelson Mandela and words that said simply, "South Africa votes."

'Because of that network it meant that connections continued with people who had worked in the place. Jon Greenaway, for example, was my assistant editor for quite a number of years. When Jon left *Eureka Street* he was travelling a lot and because he was working with Jesuit Refugee Service his travel took him to Sri Lanka. So when the Tamil Tigers were at their absolute worst, John was actually there.'

Fraser says that she has always been horrified by how long it took the Australian government to act over East Timor, 'because the information that we were getting back from reporters on the ground was that if the independence vote went through, the whole place would blow. And it did.'

East Timor was just one of the major events that *Eureka Street* covered during its 15-year print history. There was also Tampa, the elections of the 1990s that brought down Labor and brought in John Howard, the children-overboard affair, the terrorist attacks on New York and Washington, and the ongoing asylum-seekers' crisis.

'The danger with a magazine like *Eureka Street* was that it would be worthy,' says Fraser. 'That was one of the adjectives often used, and sometimes it was. Sometimes some things would've attracted only a few readers, but I know I'd do it all again. There are a few readers who really wanted to know about it. And you know the rule of thumb with magazines: if you read two good articles you think it's a brilliant magazine.'

Producing the magazine was not always smooth sailing. Fraser recalls the night before press day that the entire magazine completely disassembled itself: 'It literally threw itself across the screen. It looked as though a kid had been playing paintball on the screen. We went back to the proof sets of ten o'clock that morning and painstakingly tried to remember what finely judged decisions we'd made—not just proofing but the last little bits of editing. We got through it on extremely good Chinese back massages!'

For Fraser, it was the people that made the magazine, and some of them, she recalls, were 'real characters. Michael McGirr was one. You'd have to be blind, deaf and dumb not to understand that Michael is certifiable. But he's one of the most eccentric and interesting people I've ever worked with.

'I worked with Andy Hamilton for a long period of time. He's so smart, so human, and yet so tough-minded—intellectually absolutely reliable. I didn't always have to agree with the judgment but I knew that I would always get a comment that I could respect, and he'd turn the work around so fast it was terrific.

'We had some extremely good cartoon-

ists. In Dean Moore we still have. He's got one of the blackest minds I've ever come across, and I love that. It was a magazine that let irony have full play within a context that wasn't cynical.'

Fraser says she was enormously grateful for the initial connections set up by Michael Kelly, and for the contributions of Ray Cassin, 'a terrific writer who wrote a wonderful column', and Jack Waterford, 'enormously well connected, but also a journalist's journalist.

'The networks were good, and we had in those initial stages an enormous amount of support from extremely good and influential writers. Ed Campion and Gerard Windsor were two of them who did put us in touch with a lot of people who kept an eye on things.

'Part of the brief was for us to get writing that showed people who weren't necessarily card-carrying Catholics just how public affairs and theology intersected where they did, how religious and theological issues bore in on public life and vice versa. Frank Brennan's a name that comes to mind ... and Peter Steele.

'The things that got me into trouble—if one ever bothers about that sort of thing— were the things I'd published from the head of the Dominicans in Australia or Victoria, and the then Jesuit provincial, Bill Uren. I'm very proud of having published those. They were fine, theologically informed, critical pieces, and that criticism was part of the loyal opposition that I think any church neglects at its peril.'

So now the final print issue of *Eureka Street* goes forth into the world. A new version of the magazine is about to emerge online. There have been inklings of it in the fortnightly editorials that have been sent to subscribers and posted on our web site since last October.

At this moment of transition, Peter Steele speaks for all of us who have been involved in *Eureka Street*: 'Many things, for good and for ill, have happened in Australia and in the world since *Eureka Street*'s beginning. What has remained a constant has been the judiciousness, the vivacity, and the lack of pretentiousness with which the magazine has been edited, and the corresponding virtues in the great majority of its contributors. I can only hope that, in its electronic version, the same admirable traits will be there for all to see.' ■

Robert Hefner is the acting editor of *Eureka Street*.

Making a magazine

In the beginning, before there was *Eureka Street* and before anyone had heard of the internet, we invented Jesuit Publications.

Its home was not the shiny, tidy, professional suite it now occupies in Victoria Street, Richmond, but a trio of disused schoolrooms hired out by the parish of St Brigid, North Fitzroy. One served as the business office, one as a mail-order bookshop, and the other as the production room, which I occupied.

Most of this room was empty. There was a new Macintosh computer on a desk at one end, and there I spent my days unravelling the mysteries of desktop publishing, then a newfangled thing, and negotiating with the editors of the existing Jesuit magazines, *The Messenger*, *Madonna*, *News from India* and *Jesuit Bulletin*. And, in between all this, I talked to Michael Kelly and Adrian Lyons about a new project that would eventually become *Eureka Street*.

There were lots of arguments. And lots of people came to work at Jesuit Publications but stayed only a short time. Both these things continued after we moved to Richmond. But some people came and stayed: they included Morag Fraser, and Mike Harter, an American Jesuit who had been managing editor of *America* magazine, one of the models for *Eureka Street*.

At least, it was one of the intended models. What emerged from all the arguments and a year and a half of planning was not like *America* or *The Month*. It was not like *The Tablet* or *Commonweal*, either, and it did not owe much to earlier Australian attempts to publish a magazine of ideas and debate with a Catholic base, such as *Catholic Worker*. It had a distinctive look—which, I am pleased to see, mostly survived—and its pool of contributors was not confined to the usual ecclesiastical suspects. That drew readers who would not normally pick up a Catholic magazine on the stands, and it attracted the attention of the mainstream media, which began to quote *Eureka Street* and to interview its editor and writers. All of this is what we hoped would happen.

The circulation and the advertising revenues never approached the point of self-sufficiency, let alone profitability, but that point never does arrive for magazines of ideas in Australia. The available readership is simply too small. They do not survive without hefty subsidy, and it was a noble work of the Jesuits and the magazine's other benefactors to have subsidised the print edition of *Eureka Street* for as long as they did.

The arguments continued all the while the magazine grew. Some of them were scarifying for all concerned. But they should be remembered and recorded because they are part of what made the magazine take the course that it did.

Yet when I think back on those experiences now, even the scarifying ones, it is not the emotions of conflict that stand out. It was the excitement of being involved in creating something new, which has justly left its mark on the Church and on Australia's media. It would have been worth it all just for that, although those years transformed my life in other ways as well.

For one thing, while working in that office at Richmond I met Leonie Purcival, who became the mother of my children. For that gift alone, I am grateful to have been part of the *Eureka Street* project. I am grateful, too, to all the people I worked with, on all the publications, and whom I shall not attempt to name here lest I unintentionally omit someone from the list and give offence. As to what I may have given, others must judge. ■

Ray Cassin worked at Jesuit Publications from 1989–95. He was *Eureka Street*'s production editor, its 'Quixote' columnist, a regular reviewer of films and books, and the obituarist of Yves Congar OP. He was also the founding editor of *Eureka Street*'s sister publication, *Australian Catholics*.

In 1994 he won the Walkley Award for best three headlines, for entries published in *Eureka Street*. They were: 'The Rite Stuff', 'The odd angry Schacht' and 'Shakin' All Over'. The citation read: 'Derived from book, film or song titles, the judges considered Ray Cassin's sharp, clever headings to be far and away the best submitted.'

Brian Doyle

A song of believing

As a fan's notes for grace, and quavery chant against the dark, I sing a song of things that make us grin and bow, that just for an instant let us see sometimes the web and weave of merciful, the endless possible, the incomprehensible inexhaustible inexplicable *yes*.

Such as, to name a few:

The way the sun crawls over the rim of the world every morning like a child's face rising beaming from a pool all fresh from the womb of the dark, and the way jays hop and damselflies do that geometric acroamazing thing and bees inspect and birds probe and swifts chitter.

And the way the young mother at the bus-stop has her infant swaddled and huddled against her chest like a blinking extra heart, and the way a very large woman wears the tiniest miniskirt with a careless airy pride that makes me so happy I can hardly squeak.

And the way seals peer at me owlishly from the surf like rubbery grandfathers, and the way cormorants in the ocean never *ever* get caught by onrushing waves but disappear casually at the last possible second so you see their headlong black stories written on the wet walls of the sea like moist petroglyphs.

And the way no pavement asphalt macadam concrete cement thing can ultimately defeat a tiny relentless green thing.

And the way people sometimes lean eagerly face-first into the future, and the way infants finally discover to their absolute agogishment that those fists swooping by like tiny fleshy comets are *theirs!*

And the way when my mom gets caught unawares by a joke she barks with laughter so infectious that people grin two towns over, and the way one of my sons sleeps every night with his right leg hanging over the side of his bed like an oar no matter how many times I fold him back into the boat of the bed.

And the way the refrigerator hums to itself in two different keys, and the way the new puppy noses through hayfields like a headlong exuberant hairy tractor.

And the way my daughter always makes one immense final cookie the size of a door when she makes cookies, and the way one son hasn't had a haircut since Napoleon was emperor.

And the way crows arrange themselves sometimes on the fence like the notes of a song I don't know yet, and the way car engines sigh for a few minutes after you turn them off, and the way your arm goes all totally nonchalant when you are driving through summer with the window down, and the way people touch each other's forearms when they are scared.

And the way every once in a while someone you hardly know says something so piercingly honest that you want to just kneel down right there in the grocery store near the pears.

And the way little children fall asleep with their mouths open like fish, and the way sometimes just a sidelong glance from someone you love makes you all shaky for a second before you can get your mask back on.

And the way some people when they laugh tilt their heads way back like they need more room for all the hilarity in their mouths.

And the way hawks and eagles always look so *annoyed*, and the way people shuffle daintily on icy pavements, and the way churches smell dense with hope, and the way that men's pants bunch up at the knees when they stand after kneeling in church.

And the way knees are gnarled, and the way faces curve around the mouth and eyes according to how many times you smiled over the years.

And the way people fall asleep in chairs by the fire and snap awake startled and amazed, unsure, just for a second, what planet exactly they are on, which is a question we should probably all ask far more often than we do.

Look, I know all too well that the story of the world is entropy, things fly apart, we sicken, we fail, we grow weary, we divorce, we are hammered and hounded by loss and accidents and tragedies, we slide away into the dark oceans behind the stars.

But I also know that we are carved of immense confusing holiness; that the whole point for us is grace under duress; and that you either take a flying leap at nonsensical illogical unreasonable ideas like marriage and marathons and democracy and divinity, or you huddle behind the brooding wall.

I believe that the coolest things cannot be measured, calibrated, calculated, gauged, weighed, or understood except sometimes by having a child patiently explain it to you, which is another thing that should happen far more often than it does.

In short, I believe in believing, which doesn't make sense, which gives me hope.

... I also know that we are carved of immense confusing holinesss; that the whole point for us is grace under duress ....

Brian Doyle (bdoyle@up.edu) is the editor of *Portland Magazine* at the University of Portland, in the USA, and the author mostly recently of *The Wet Engine*, about 'the muddle & mangle & music & miracle of hearts'. His new book, *The Grail*, about a year in the life of an Oregon vineyard, will be published this year by One Day Hill Publishers in Victoria.

Peter Davis

Aceh moving slowly forward

THE EARTH SHOOK, the sea swelled and lives were destroyed—tens of thousands of them.

The media arrived even before the emergency services. The emergency services did a good job because, contrary to early fears, no major diseases took hold. The media also did a good job because the story got out and the aid poured in—billions of dollars' worth—from distant communities, from NGOs and from governments.

Along with the aid dollars, hundreds of personnel arrived—sanitation experts, construction engineers, risk assessors, communications consultants, community workers, counsellors and aid advisers.

Mountains of debris were bulldozed into landfill. Bodies were recovered and buried, temporary shelters mushroomed and the bewildered survivors did—and are still doing—what survivors everywhere do: they struggle to rebuild their lives.

So where is it all at now, nearly 18 months down the track? According to Banda Aceh Reconstruction and Rehabilitation (BRR), only 20,000 houses out of a required 120,000 have been built. Most of the survivors are still living in temporary accommodation. This has been the focus of much criticism. Why haven't more people been relocated into permanent rather than temporary housing?

Allegations of corruption don't help, and the fact that one leading aid agency has recently suspended operations pending an inquiry into missing funds does little to enhance faith in the reconstruction process.

But red tape and corruption aside, there is a very credible reason why permanent housing is taking so long. The fact is that the land needs to be remapped. The devastation altered the topography and destroyed the landmarks along with many of the land records. Because so many people perished, so too did much of the memory of the land. Survivors have difficulty stating exactly where their houses were, and nobody wants to rebuild on land that may be contested later on.

Land-mapping can be painstakingly slow. It certainly isn't a sexy media story, yet it is essential to the reconstruction process and it does explain, in part, why things take so long.

'The community land mapping project provides details of where the village house sites are,' said Nick Mawdsley, governance adviser to the Australia Indonesia Partnership for Rehabilitation and Development (AIPRD). 'This means that survivors can rebuild knowing that their location will not be in dispute. It also means that the Indonesian National Land Agency can then issue a certificate of ownership to each mapped household.'

So far about 23,000 parcels of land have been mapped in 172 villages. Based on these

maps, Indonesian planning authorities have issued titles to about 5000 plots of land in Aceh Besar district and the city of Banda Aceh. One hundred and twenty-nine community land-mappers have been trained and employed in this process.

I journeyed with Mawdsley and his team of mapmakers to a handover ceremony at Lhoong subdistrict, about 90 minutes' drive from Banda Aceh, through the mountains and back down the coast. Twenty-eight village heads gathered to receive their maps and accompanying data. Each village head also received a large framed map for public display.

It was there that I met Mahyuddin, head of Kruang village, where only 136 of the 508 residents survived. After the ceremony I travelled with Mahyuddin back to his village, where he showed me the plans for reconstruction. 'We had a lot of discussions among our community and with the mapping people,' he said. 'We are keen to move forward and these maps will help us with our future plans.'

The words *moving forward* are echoed throughout the region. In the temporary barracks housing some of survivors from Kahju village there's a colourful billboard erected by the Indonesian Red Cross and Red Crescent. *Move Forward Aceh*, it says.

Only 2600 of Kahju's 13,000 people survived. 'We will move forward because our spirit is strong,' said Nadia, a schoolteacher who also works as a community cadre in Kahju village. 'My role is to motivate survivors and to help them meet their needs.'

The cadres are volunteers, selected by the survivors to work alongside a village facilitator employed by the governance program.

Edwar, a young agricultural science graduate, is one of the facilitators for Kahju village. He lost his twin brother, his parents and his house in the tsunami.

'People need activity to survive,' he said. 'It's important that they don't just sit about and wallow in their grief. That is why the mapping is good. Now we know who owns what, we can begin building more permanent housing.'

The contours of post-disaster development are never easy. In a region blighted by war, poverty and fragile governance, they can be particularly complex. But there are signs that people are moving forward.

On my final day in the province I saw a truckload of exuberant graduates in academic gowns driving around Banda Aceh. They happened to be the first batch of engineering graduates from UNSYIAH University since the tsunami, and no doubt many of them will be snapped up in the rebuilding of their communities. I had to move quickly to photograph the truck. It was moving at a cracking pace. ■

Peter Davis is a Melbourne-based freelance writer.

Above left: Village heads from Lhoong district meet staff from AIPRD Land Mapping Office and BRR officials for official hand-over of village maps. Maps are used to establish land ownership and to secure title—a necessary step before permanent reconstruction. Community engagement for village development is a significant part of the mapping project.

Below left: The first engineering graduates from UNSYIAH University since the tsunami parade through town on an open truck.

Below: Survivors from Lamkruet village contribute to strengthening the infrastructure before permanent housing can be established. AusAID is supporting the work of the Australian Red Cross in providing water and sanitation.

Right: Civil engineer Chut Yusner advises on drainage and other issues in Lamkruet village.

Photos: Peter Davis

Anthony Ham

'Mad dog' with a mighty bite

In impoverished Burkina Faso, the 'land of the incorruptible', President Blaise Compaoré clings to power and wealth

In Burkina Faso, the world's third poorest country, President Blaise Compaoré just can't let go of power.

The story of Burkina Faso and its president is a familiar African tale. President Compaoré has ruled Burkina Faso for almost two decades, first as a military ruler. Then, when the winds of change swept Africa, he reinvented himself as a champion of democracy in order to cling to power.

He won Burkina Faso's first democratic elections in 1991 as the only candidate. Two weeks after the polls, Clement Ouédraogo, the main opposition leader, was assassinated, a crime for which no one has ever been charged.

In 1998, President Compaoré won another resounding victory, but only after opposition leaders boycotted the polls, alleging that the rules had been drafted to make the president's re-election inevitable.

The widespread suspicion of electoral fraud notwithstanding, few doubted that President Compaoré would have won free and fair elections against a deeply divided opposition, and the president remained popular for bringing stability, if nothing else, to the country.

However, not long after the 1998 elections, Norbert Zongo, a journalist and prominent government critic, was murdered while investigating the death of a driver employed by the president's brother. An independent, internationally sanctioned inquiry found that Zongo's killers had strong links to the government. Public anger spilled onto the streets and Ouagadougou was the scene of massive strikes and demonstrations on a scale that Burkina Faso had never before witnessed.

A shaken government introduced a reform to the electoral law whereby presidents were limited to two terms.

In November last year, however, President Compaoré pulled a master stroke that would have made any lawyer proud. He announced that the law did not apply retroactively and that he was free to stand in November's presidential elections, not to mention the following ones scheduled for 2012. The Constitutional Court, all of whose judges are Compaoré appointees, agreed.

Salif Diallo, director of the president's re-election campaign, justified Compaoré's creative legal interpretation in the following terms: 'Legally, President Compaoré can be a candidate. A constitutional revision brings a new constitution with it and the old formula no longer holds.'

Rival presidential candidate of the opposition Union for Renewal Party, Benewende Sankara, was blunt in his assessment: 'Compaoré's candidacy is improper not only in legal terms ... it is improper because after 18 years of his rule, Burkina Faso is one of the poorest countries on the planet even though there's no war and politically things are stable.'

The opposition has a point.

President Compaoré presides over a country where almost 50 per cent of the population survives on less than US$1 a day. Adult literacy stands at 13 per cent and one in every five Burkinabés is malnourished. Just two per cent of the government's budget is spent on health. Over one-third of the president's countrymen will not live to age 40. In a year when one million Burkinabés were in need of food assistance and 90 per cent of the country's harvest was lost to droughts and locusts, President Compaoré spent millions of euros on his re-election campaign.

Not surprisingly, the president won in what a presidential spokesman described as 'an electoral spanking', taking more than 80 per cent of the vote. Not one of the other 11 candidates reached the five per cent threshold.

When I ask Joseph, a taxi driver in Ouagadougou who refuses to give his full name, whether President Compaoré is popular, he says, 'Those who are eating with him, they are happy. Those who do not eat, they are nothing.'

The tragedy is that, like in much of Africa, it didn't have to be like this.

President Compaoré seized power in 1987 by ousting the popular Thomas Sankara in a bloody coup d'état.

'Thom Sank'—as he is still affectionately known by Burkinabés—was no ordinary African leader. He had himself seized power in a military putsch in 1982, but his governing People's Salvation Council decided that it was time to put the needs of ordinary citizens first and end the country's reliance on handouts from the rest of the world.

He swapped the presidential limousine for a modest Renault 5, cut government salaries by a quarter and sent his entire cabinet to work in agricultural co-operatives. He also changed the country's name from Upper Volta to Burkina Faso (which means 'land of the incorruptible' or 'country of honest men').

But Thomas Sankara's populism owed as much to substance as it did to symbolism.

He waged war on corruption, oversaw a mass immunisation drive that UNICEF described as 'one of the major successes in Africa'—during one 15-day period, his government vaccinated 60 per cent of Burkina Faso's children against measles, meningitis and yellow fever—and built 350 schools and medical dispensaries in every village, all in just four years. Under Sankara, school attendance rose by 30 per cent and Burkina Faso was one of the few African countries to consistently record increases in per capita income during the years of his rule.

As if tackling poverty was not enough

of a challenge, Thom Sank also had little time for the superpowers of the day, turning slogans such as 'A people, however small, can conquer the most powerful imperialism in the world' into national catchcries. He declared war on what he called 'the enemies of the people both at home and abroad' and stripped the wealthy—whom he called thieves—of privileges and landholdings.

Policies such as these endeared him to ordinary Africans across a region which is the poorest in the world, and Sankara became a charismatic figure of hope who offered real solutions to the disappointments of Africa's post-independence misrule. Even in Mali, with whom he waged a five-day war in 1985, Thom Sank is still known as the Che Guevara of Africa, a tribute as much to his iconic personality and radical policies as to his cosy relationship with Fidel Castro.

SANKARA'S CHARISMA and blunt honesty may have been popular with ordinary Africans, but he quickly acquired powerful enemies. Within the country, landlords, tribal chiefs and trade union leaders, angry at the assault on their vested interests, began to plot his downfall. Sankara also suffered from the fact that during the Cold War of the 1980s, radical policies were far more likely to attract the attention of France (the former colonial power in Upper Volta) and the United States than were the statistics of dire poverty.

On 15 October 1987, the Sankara-inspired dream that a different kind of Africa was possible came to an end. Blaise Compaoré, a former friend of Sankara, seized power. Thom Sank was taken outside Ouagadougou and shot.

On the rubbish-strewn outskirts of the capital, Thom Sank's grave is a place of furtive pilgrimage. Flowers are left by Burkinabés who remember how people's power flourished under his rule far more than it ever has in the sham democracy that followed his death. They scurry away, lest they be seen. Alongside his tombstone is a rudimentary grave belonging to a small child, a moving symbol of the death that stalks the Burkina Faso of President Compaoré.

Although the president is a friend of the West, he is a pariah in his own neighbourhood, and the allegations of his involvement in illegal diamond-trading and his meddling in the conflicts in Sierra Leone, Liberia and Ivory Coast just won't go away. A political analyst in neighbouring Mali—who also refused to give his name—could barely conceal his scorn when asked about Burkina Faso's ruler. 'Blaise Compaoré? He is a mad dog. He bites everyone.'

Sankara's revolution died with him. Opposition politicians squabbled over his legacy, eager to be the next Sankara but more concerned with lining their own pockets. People in Ouagadougou tell the story of how Madame Sankara, Thom Sank's exiled wife, summoned opposition figures to Paris to give money to the cause of defeating President Compaoré. On the plane that carried them back to Ouagadougou, the opposition leaders fought in the aisles over the money.

Joseph, the taxi driver, hurries me from Thom Sank's grave and drives me through the capital. We pass vast wastelands where Ouagadougou's shanty towns were bulldozed by the government. Dozens of entire city blocks have disappeared and the vibrant street life of central Ouagadougou has gone, perhaps forever. Desolate, overgrown fields littered with concrete blocks now stretch to the horizon. Although the former residents who lost their homes were compensated, the figures were small, even by African standards, and most have been rehoused more than 10km away from the city centre.

We leave behind this ghost town, where vultures circle overhead and open sewers line the roadside, and continue south to Ouaga 2000, a custom-built district of ordered streets, five-star hotels and high-walled luxury mansions owned by African presidents, royalty and Burkina Faso's politicians. Ouaga 2000 is home to the new presidential palace that is larger than the White House. It is the ultimate escape for African élites who no longer have to look Africa in the eye.

'This is for rich people,' says Joseph.

I ask him how you become rich in Burkina Faso. His reply is immediate.

'Politics.' ■

Anthony Ham has written extensively on Africa for *Eureka Street* for the past several years.

Keith Shipton

No cheap shots

Michael Coyne. Contemporary Photographers: Australia series. WriteLight Pty Ltd, 2005. ISBN 0 975 24507 4, RRP $27.95

MICHAEL COYNE ISN'T a flash photographer, in any sense of the term.

Getting to the truth of the matter always takes precedence over the impulse to startle or shock, the stock-in-trade of quotidian newspaper photographers. Shock sells.

The most distinguishing characteristic of Coyne's photography is a palpable respect for his subjects—even the dead ones.

A case in point is his 1995 image of skeletal corpses in a church in Rwanda, following the massacres. The scene is sufficiently awful not to require the kind of compositional gimcrackery that a less sensitive eye might have enlisted. We feel the eerie silence and ineffable sorrow of the scene in muted monochrome. Coyne refuses to use these poor souls as horror show props.

There are no cheap shots in his canon. They have all been achieved through a combination of technical skill, a clear empathy with humanity and a willingness to get to the heart of the matter, rather than skim over the surface.

(Coyne himself has said it's as much about having the required combination of qualities—equal parts nous, charm and determination—to get to the place where the photo actually is, unaided by photo agency helicopters, or Faustian deals. He is one of the last of the genuinely independent photojournalists.)

Coyne's work is featured in the most recent of the *Contemporary Photographers: Australia* series of monographs, joining the distinguished company of Lewis Morley, Wolfgang Sievers, David Moore and Graham McCarter.

Opposite page: Michael Coyne photographed this man standing at the edge of the crowd while waiting for the pope to appear at an outdoor service in New Guinea in 1984; left, Fr Brian McCoy SJ enjoys a swim with some Aboriginal friends at a waterhole in Central Australia in 1993.

This series is not for coffee-table ornamentation, but rather for lovers and students of great photography, and in Coyne's case, humanist fellow travellers. It's modestly priced, soft-covered, and slightly under A4 format. Non-glossy paper stock and pleasing reproduction, especially of the black-and-white work, complete the photo-friendly presentation.

Coyne is no less distinguished than the other photographers in the series, but rather less well known in Australia than he is in the world of international photojournalism. In his early twenties he went directly from the arcane challenges of photographing ice-cream in suburban Melbourne in summer to being embedded with the Moro Liberation Army in the Philippines.

He is one of an élite group of photojournalists invited to join the renowned New York-based Black Star photo agency.

Early in his career he was commissioned by *National Geographic* to cover the Iran–Iraq War, the outcome being an unprecedented 28-page picture spread—and 'please explains' to the publisher from the United States government.

His simple image of a row of callipers parked under a portrait of Ayatollah Khomeini at a rehabilitation centre tells a complex story about tyrants and loyalty, and the inglorious nature of war, but more subversively it informs us that they look after their fallen soldiers over at the Axis of Evil. Who would have thought?

Coyne spent seven years travelling back and forth from the Iran–Iraq conflict. Later he was accepted into Yasser Arafat's inner sanctum for an assignment for *Life* magazine. His access to 'the other side of the story' during these years was unmatched by other photographers from the West. Needless to say, his life was at acute risk many times.

For his work in the Middle East he was recognised with awards from the American National Press Photographers Association and the Overseas Press Club of Australia.

But this publication bears testament to the fact that Coyne's work is more than a relentless regime of shooting—and being shot at—in conflict zones. In the early '90s he produced a wonderful volume, *A World of Australians*, featuring 70 large environmental portraits of first-generation Australians, accompanied by short biographies. There is probably no other single document that better underscores the reciprocal value of migration to Australia, and Australia to migrants.

At a time when our prime minister finds himself affronted by exotic forms of clothing, we are sorely in need of a reprint!

Another of his major assignments to feature here is *Second Spring: The Story of the Jesuits*, documenting the extraordinary diversity and value of the work of the Jesuit order around the world. He spent four years living with Jesuit communities 'quietly working away in the slums, deserts and jungles of the world', as he describes them. The Rwandan massacre image referred to earlier is from this series.

The day to that image's grim night is a shot of Fr Brian McCoy sj enjoying a swim with some Aboriginal kids in central Australia.

'This project was not just about the Jesuits,' he explains. 'It is my attempt to capture and document ... the human struggle to affirm life, to live it to the full.'

The text Coyne adds to his images is a real bonus. He is almost as literate with words as he is with images. His short essay 'Their stories are my stories' is as fine an insight into the world of a socially committed photographer as you are likely to encounter in 3000 words or less.

There is more: the playful portraits of colourful behind-the-scenes characters at the Sydney Olympics, for instance, or the somewhat otherworldly series in East Timor, captured with a $50 'toy' camera.

It's a book of pictures that rewards multiple visits. Familiarity breeds not contempt, but even greater respect for a fine photographer, whose signature is a love of humanity. ■

Keith Shipton has been immersed in the world of photography and photographers for over two decades as an editor and contributor to magazines such as *Australian Photography, Australian Art Review* and *Photo Review*. For the past four years he has also curated Australia's largest annual photographic exhibition, this year held at the Sydney Exhibition Centre in April.

Nicholas Gruen

Cut from the same cloth

The lives of Ned Kelly and Oscar Wilde bear uncanny symmetries

THROUGHOUT LAST YEAR we commemorated the 125th anniversary of the climax and end game of Ned Kelly's life, from the bizarre siege of Glenrowan to his hanging at Old Melbourne Gaol four and a half months later. Kelly was hanged on 11 November, a date we remember as the end of two other great moments of defiance, grand vision and grand folly.

We should also have spared a thought for another November death. After surviving two years' hard labour which nearly killed him, Oscar Wilde left England for the Continent, where he died just a few years later, on 30 November 1900.

The contrasts between Kelly and Wilde could not be more obvious. But their lives bear uncanny symmetries from the trivial to the profound.

Both counted themselves sons of Ireland, and shared both the month of their deaths and year of their birth, 1854.

The generous and unsuspecting nature of each was central to his downfall—Ned in his trust of the schoolteacher Curnow who flagged down the train, and Oscar in his extravagant gifts to rent-boys that so incriminated him in court.

Both were innovators never successfully imitated.

Wilde's jokes were and often still are regarded as stilted, sitting uneasily with the content of his plays. Yet they are like depth charges, unsettling established meanings, and doing what religious texts often do—prompting new understanding through contradiction and paradox. Kelly was an innovator with his own criminal escapades, turning bank robberies, remarkably enough, into weekend social events—occasions for improvised partying and propaganda.

As recent scholarship illustrates, there was a much stronger political undercurrent to the events surrounding both Ned and Oscar's triumphs and tragedies than is often supposed.

McKenna's recent biography of Wilde draws out the political radicalism of Wilde's leadership of 'the cause' for the liberation of men who loved men, uncovering plenty of evidence both of Wilde's brazen subversiveness and of real concern at the highest levels of society about the outbreak of 'Greek love' of which Wilde was the figurehead.

So too, the 'Kelly outbreak' was no simple matter of four outlaws in the hills. Born in the aftermath of the Eureka Stockade, Kelly became an inchoate republican revolutionary. And the authorities had so mishandled the situation that Kelly had enough sympathisers to have created a bloodbath in Northern Victoria of grander scale than Eureka. While our heart goes out to Ned as the underdog, our head reminds us to be grateful that Glenrowan was the fiasco it was.

But Oscar and Ned share something much deeper.

Each engineered his own demise, moving with a heedless, dreamlike courage towards the doom he had so assiduously courted. They are mythic for that courage and for the elemental nature of their story.

As they took one ineluctable step after another towards their doom, what on earth were they thinking? Given so many chances and the many warnings of their inner voices and their brothers in arms to turn back, what did they think they were doing? If we tried to envisage their lives in 'real time' unfolding to themselves, rather than in the mythic hindsight to which we are continually drawn, we'd conclude that they didn't know themselves.

Picture Ned emerging from the fog of dawn walking into a hail of bullets in his terrifying and ridiculous suit of armour, walking into a trap that he had carefully and absurdly set for himself, and there you have Oscar.

Having primed himself before he met its object, Wilde's grand passion was Bosie, son of the violent Marquis of Queensberry (today most famous for 'Queensberry's Rules' in boxing), and known to be somewhat unhinged.

As Wilde knew, Queensberry was beside himself with anxiety, hostility and grief, having just lost another son, very likely from suicide, in the throes of a 'Greek' love affair with Lord Rosebery—the then prime minister. Oscar's outrageous behaviour with Bosie provoked Queensberry to publicly defame him after endless warnings.

Though the words on the card Queensberry left for Wilde at his club were hard to decipher, Queensberry's lawyers were able to argue that it said: 'Oscar Wilde: posing as a sodomite.' That was precisely what Oscar had been doing with Bosie.

But, becoming the vehicle for Bosie's passionate hatred of his father, Wilde sued Queensberry for criminal libel. Like a string of ridiculous lies in Ned's various explanations of his conduct, Oscar swore to his attorney, quite falsely, that the defamation was baseless. Yet he had been the model of indiscretion all around London for years.

Oscar's armour against Queensberry was about as secure against counterattack as Ned's against the police. Kelly seems to have conceived what became his last stand as an act of rebellion and possibly mass murder. But his innovations of armour and of the robbery as town party now played their part in his downfall. Like a baddie in a bad movie, Kelly didn't properly supervise the arrival of the train. He was partying in the pub!

Wilde was cross-examined by fel-

low Irishman Edward Carson QC—an acquaintance in childhood and a good friend of Wilde's at Trinity College, Dublin. Carson sighed to his wife after Wilde's case against Queensberry had collapsed: 'I have ruined the most brilliant man in London.' Like Christ and Socrates, Oscar was begged by his friends to flee. But he seemed caught in indecision. Shortly before his arrest at 6.20pm he resigned himself to his fate, observing: 'The train has gone.' There were four more trains to Paris yet to depart that evening.

Ned, too, embraced the heroism of his last stand, though what happened that night is murky and surreal. He was shot several times early on in the siege of the inn. Joe Byrne was overheard telling Ned, as he'd told him before, that the armour was always going to bring them to grief.

Even with the lifeblood having poured from his best friend Joe Byrne, with his brother and Steve Hart inside the inn, the story told by Kelly's biographer Ian Jones suggests that Kelly could have won the siege of Glenrowan. A cadre of sympathisers were waiting in the wings for the prompt for a north-east Victorian republican uprising. If that were so they could surely have slaughtered the police surrounding the inn, picking them off from the dark by the light of the full moon. Jones claims that Kelly told them to desist and go home—that it had now become the gang's fight.

In Jones's retelling, Kelly also passed up several opportunities to escape. Having bled badly for most of the night, with multiple bullet wounds through his arm and foot, Kelly put his helmet back on, walked into a hail of bullets uttering defiant and murderous abuse, apparently intending to rescue Steve and Dan in the inn.

Both Oscar and Ned's trials were irregular in various respects, reflecting likely political interference from the highest levels to secure conviction. But both rose above their anxiety and pain to speak with courage, clarity and feeling.

Oscar had been deteriorating physically and psychologically throughout his month-long remand before his first trial. But when asked about the 'love that dare not speak its name', he gave us a glimpse of his legendary eloquence and of his defiance—though his words spoke more to fantasy than to the tawdry reality with which the trial was concerned. He survived his first trial with a hung jury, but, following much murmuring in the corridors of power, his second trial secured a conviction.

Kelly, in pain and disablement throughout his trial, affected a dignified stance clutching his lapel with his wounded hand. In contrast to the attorneys he had had in earlier hearings, his attorney in his murder trial was an incompetent novice.

Kelly was told the jury's guilty decision, and Judge Redmond Barry's inevitable death sentence was only a moment away. (Barry, an establishment Irishman, was a notorious 'hanging judge'. Years earlier he had asserted the protection of the rule of law on Ned's behalf by condemning a man to death for trying to burn down Ned's family home in a fit of drunken rage. The arsonist was Ned's uncle and his sentence was later commuted.)

After Justice Barry pronounced the death sentence, an extraordinary exchange ensued between Kelly and Barry, the latter concluding with a pompous but sincere lecture on social harmony and much else besides and Kelly responding again and again with fearless simplicity, and ultimately with his famous defiance.

After Barry's incantation 'May the Lord have mercy upon your soul', Kelly responded, 'I will go a little further than that and say I will see you there, where I go.' He turned and blew a kiss to his friend Kate Lloyd, saying, 'Goodbye, you'll see me there,' then turned and left the dock 'appearing quite unconcerned'.

Both Ned and Oscar were acting in the service of their own myths and understood themselves to be doing so. As Oscar said, he put his talent into his work, his genius into his life. One might add that though his work was comedic, his life was grand tragedy. All this is true also of Ned.

Wilde was caught between indecision and funk, courage and mythmaking. The social disgrace that he brought down upon his own head looms like a shadow within all his successful comedies. Whatever the variations between them, their theme remains the same: social downfall and disgrace narrowly averted.

Like Wilde, Kelly too was driven to publicly justify himself, his Jerilderie letter being the most famous example. But though, as with Wilde, it was ultimately a reflection of the great dénouement of his life, Kelly's most eloquent statement about his life's betrayal of better hopes was not in words. As he prepared for the madness of Glenrowan, Kelly's thoughts turned to a time in his short life when his courage and strength, both of body and of character, had been turned to better ends. When he was eleven he had saved another boy from drowning in a swollen river and was rewarded with a green sash by the boy's grateful family. When the police removed Kelly's armour they found the sash around his body, stained in his own blood.

...Ned and Oscar were acting in the service of their own myths and understood themselves to be doing so...

The last word is Oscar's, though perhaps he could be speaking for Ned.

> All trials are trials for one's life, just as all sentences are sentences of death, and three times I have been tried ... Society as we have constituted it, will have no place for me, has none to offer; but Nature, whose sweet rains fall on just and unjust alike, will have clefts in the rocks where I may hide, and secret valleys in whose silence I may weep undisturbed. She will hang with stars so that I may walk abroad in the darkness without stumbling, and send the wind over my footprints so that none may track me to my hurt: she will cleanse me in great waters, and with bitter herbs make me whole.

Oscar has my pity and my awe. So too, despite his flaws and his criminality, does Ned. ■

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Jenny Stewart

In praise of teaching

It's the best of jobs and the worst of jobs, and it's time we all took it a lot more seriously

Most of us remember our teachers, particularly those who taught us in primary school. They remain imprinted on our memories, their foibles forever illuminated by that limited but merciless clarity that all children possess.

The teachers I remember were characters, in a way that is probably less common now, when any form of eccentricity seems to be frowned upon. There was Mrs Westwood, a feisty lady almost as wide as she was high, who kept a bucket of water on the classroom verandah and, like Betsy Trotwood in *David Copperfield* (although I seem to remember Betsy was on the lookout for donkeys, rather than canines), would rush outside every time an errant dog padded past the classroom, to douse the offending mongrel with water.

Because I grew up in the 1960s, before teaching as an occupation became almost completely feminised, I remember, too, a number of male primary school teachers, including Mr Rogers, an Englishman, formidable in his grey dustcoat, who taught us our multiplication tables and kept the boys in line with a natural authority that I suspect remains as mysterious now as it was then.

My memories of high school tend to be greyer and more detached. At my state girls' school, I recall a succession of competent women teachers, although then as now, there was neither the time nor the inclination to give individual attention to students, whether they were conspicuously bright or not. You either swam or you sank, and many sank. It remains the dubious gift of the public school—a kind of prophylactic neglect that proofs those who survive it against the vicissitudes of university life.

I did not think then that I would become a teacher—I fancied I would be a journalist, or possibly an electronics engineer—but when I became an academic, I found that I had to learn how to teach. That meant, in turn, that I had to relearn just about everything I thought I knew about my subjects: policy analysis and public administration. Until then, my knowledge had been implicit, the result of steeping myself in these subjects over a number of years. Now I had to externalise my knowledge, to present a generally accepted picture that could be justified and rationalised. I reviewed textbooks, I created stepping stones and building blocks.

> *...Like all partly closed communities, educational institutions breed a strange infantilism....*

Then came the hard part. Having decided what I thought I knew, I then had to try to impart it to my students—or at least that is what I thought I had to do. But it's much more complicated than that, because few people, even by the time they come to university, know how to learn. And so the job becomes one of constantly seeking balance—between teaching content and teaching skills, between 'teaching the test' and really exploring the subject, between going too fast for some and too slow for others, between assuming too much, and assuming too little.

Despite the current concern with pedagogical technique, no teacher can succeed for long without a sound grounding in the subject he or she is teaching. The basic knowledge is crucial, because students will quickly 'suss' a teacher who does not know his or her stuff. 'Knowing your subject is really the beginning of discipline,' an experienced teacher told me. 'Kids are like dogs; they know if you are uncertain.'

But there is something else about teaching; I call it the Mr Chips syndrome. The kids move on, but we are left behind, growing older, a bit more frayed around the edges, a little more set in our ways. We develop a kind of defensive bravado, a clannishness that binds us to our colleagues, but also distances us from them. In some sense, no matter how jolly the community, we are alone; the teaching room is our domain, but if we have a bad day, the situation is difficult to retrieve tomorrow. Somehow our world, whether school or uni or college, is not the same as the one our students will inhabit. The real business, the making of money, the forging of reputations, takes place elsewhere.

Over time, we gradually lose touch with the world outside, and settle into the cyclical routines of the community that is our school or university. The year has a certain rhythm, as changeless in some ways as the seasons it still follows. The productivity-boosters would have us all work through the summer, but only the most zealous students, and the most cash-strapped academics, can keep it up on a regular basis.

Like all partly closed communities, educational institutions breed a strange infantilism—gossip rockets around at the speed of light, rumours are not so much spread as diffused through a kind of miasma that floats everywhere, through the school corridors smelling of old lunches and pubescent armpits, or, where the inmates are older and the buildings

newer, the cooler ambience of carpet tile and concrete block.

Chameleon-like, we take on the culture—and the reputation—of our institutions. In general, the status of educational institutions is determined by the status of the people who go to them. I do not know of any other profession where this is true. Hospitals with the sickest patients are not considered low-grade, nor law firms with the guiltiest clients. But schools with the toughest kids, and least-interested parents, are the ones that everyone steers away from.

After a while, status (or the lack of it) begins to eat into the confidence of the staff as well. ('If you were any good, you would not be here.') This is particularly a problem for tertiary institutions, where the best staff are believed to congregate in the best institutions. In reality, there is probably more variation in teaching quality within universities than between them.

Collectively, schoolteachers have little status. Teaching is 'the downstairs maid of professions', as Frank McCourt puts it, and in Australia at least, academics probably rank even less highly. Whether you see this as a healthy manifestation of a robust, no-nonsense culture, or a commentary on our lack of maturity as a nation, probably depends upon the sort of experience you had at uni.

Some academics may emerge, blinking, into the sunlight, as talking heads on news or current affairs programs, but there are no Australian superstars like Simon Schama, presenting or explaining the world to us by hosting shows on TV. Indeed, teaching someone who later becomes famous is one of the few ways of establishing credentials in the real world. 'So, did you really have Wil Anderson in your class?' I remember my young son asking one day. Bashfully, I confessed that this was so. His look of delighted incredulity said it all.

Education remains the public-policy panacea, but there is not much sensible public policy about the management of teaching as a profession. While many excellent teachers stay the course, others, equally good, leave relatively early in the piece. Why? Many leave, not because they dislike teaching, but because they cannot face the thought of doing the same thing for the next 30 years. They fear becoming trapped.

All teachers need a break from teaching, ideally working in the workplaces where they hope their students will end up, but secondments are difficult to organise. There is little rotation, little movement. You cannot swap jobs with anyone else, because no one would work for your salary. And if you try to leave, you find that the skills that you have honed over the years mean nothing in the wider world.

Why this should be so, I do not know, because the skills of good teaching are many: organisation, persistence, selflessness ... the list goes on. Teachers need a highly developed sense of fairness, an ability to spot and to nurture talent, and a good deal of resilience. It takes a certain amount of courage, certainly at tertiary level, to hold the line on assessment, especially where fee-paying students are concerned.

THERE ARE OTHER PROBLEMS TOO. Whereas once students with special needs were given short shrift, now the pendulum, as it usually does, has swung too far the other way. As the semester progresses, the requests for special consideration roll in, each one requiring careful consideration, and raising the further question—am I being fair to the others?

Political correctness makes confident judgment even more difficult. I have invariably found Aboriginal students who look Aboriginal very straightforward people to deal with, and one or two have made memorable students. But those with fair skin who identify as Aboriginal seem to carry extra burdens. I remember one such student threatening to report me because I had given him a pass in a particular subject, where others had routinely given him distinctions. 'Your mark,' I told him, 'is your mark.' And that was that.

Looking back, I can understand his confusion. Thinking they were being helpful, or perhaps fearing they would be thought prejudiced if they applied the normal standard, others had led him to believe he was performing much better than was actually the case.

After 15 years, the act of learning is as mysterious to me now as when I started. And there are as many shapes and forms of minds as there are people. I remember the doggedness of many of my male students, and the sheer insouciance of others so laid back it was a miracle they could stand up—but they got by. And then the women students, often more talented, who gave up because they lost babies, or mothers, or husbands, or because they thought they were not good enough, and nothing I could say to them would make any difference.

What is the future of teaching as a career, considered from an institutional perspective? I am more pessimistic about the fate of university teaching than I am about school teaching. At least schoolteachers work in financially stable schools or systems, and, having done the hard yards in one place, they can look forward to a more rewarding posting next time around. Just as students can choose between public and private schools, so can teachers.

The fate of university teachers is more variable, and more dependent upon the fortunes of the particular institution they find themselves in. Unlike schools, universities have sufficient autonomy to get themselves into trouble, and few defences against the terrifying phenomenon of the modern entrepreneurial academic. But more bureaucracy is not the answer. Those who advocate tighter control of schools by the federal government should look at the mess that has been created by 30 years of centralised policymaking. To create a single university system, and then neglect to fund it properly, was a wanton act of fiscal vandalism. It has short-changed students, and also a whole generation of would-be academics. As universities have scoured the globe for fee-paying students in order to meet their payrolls, some of the most heart-breaking fates are reserved for people teaching traditional university subjects in down-market factories, churning out degrees for international students.

At the other end of the scale, it is possible to study, from Australia, at some of the world's best universities. Am I in danger of being superseded? I would still rather have someone real out the front than the best lecturer in the world on the internet. Teaching is about energy, about relationships. It is the worst of jobs, the best of jobs. I just wish the rest of you would take it more seriously. And please, if you feel like saying 'thank you' to one of your teachers, take the trouble to do it. I can't guarantee that they will remember you, but that is not really the point. It is the circle, started so many years before, joining up with itself, that is the point. ■

Jenny Stewart is a Canberra-based writer and academic.

Brooke Davis

Sounding the syllables

A new Australian film examines the powerful role of poetry in times of oppression

THE WORD, GEELONG: it even *sounds* slow, doesn't it? The elongated vowels; the way your tongue sticks in the 'l'; the sauntering, circular nature of it. Long touted Sleepy Hollow, Geelong *is* a meandering kind of a place: pacing itself out from the waterfront, overlooking industry and the misty, sloping You Yangs; rolling back over the hills to the quiet reaches of suburbia. It's a place that's very much *on the way*: to Melbourne, to the Great Ocean Road, to coastal holidays filled with sandy feet and lazy days.

But underneath the Sandy Stonesque facade, it's also a place thick with a passionate arts and cultural scene, surrounded by vibrant coastal areas, and home to names like Chrissie Amphlett, Helen Garner and Xavier Rudd.

Not to mention Grant Fraser: a towering, gentle fellow with one of those storytelling voices that makes you think of crackling fires, jackets with elbow patches and the curling smoke of a pipe.

Poet, lawyer, teacher, actor (with a tiny part in *Alvin Purple*—'If you look very carefully, I'm sitting in the court, wearing a suit,' he says, rather sheepishly) and now filmmaker, Fraser arrives at my front door on a crisp Sunday morning to talk to me about his new film on poetry.

Anna Akhmatova and Rupert Brooke, at different stages of their lives. Drawings, by Grant Fraser, appear in *Syllable to Sound*.

Stylishly titled *Syllable to Sound*, the film is more specifically about the role of poetry in times of oppression, and showcases poets Anna Akhmatova, Wilfred Owen, Osip Mandelstam, Emily Dickinson, Marjorie Agosin, Primo Levi, Rupert Brooke and Zbigniew Herbert.

'I suppose it's a personal piece,' Fraser says when probed about his reasons for making the film. 'Sadly these things are locked away, and people don't know about them. How important these people were, in terms of human courage, and the beauty of humanity. I think it's also about acknowledging that the human voice is so wonderfully powerful. That one voice can be raised and heard and have any meaning in that circumstance.'

He talks about the voice of Primo Levi, an Italian poet and survivor of Auschwitz. 'Levi's poems discuss the regard for humanity that survived Auschwitz. Some people were reduced to bestiality, but others were still looking out for one another. There was a sad coda to his life because

he couldn't write about Auschwitz for a number of years. There's a famous quote: "After Auschwitz, there is no poetry." I think, at great cost to himself, he wrote about it, in a beautifully eloquent remembrance of something awful. And then, in about his 50s, he leant over a stairwell and killed himself.'

Then there's Osip Mandelstam. 'He would recite the poem to a few people,' Fraser says, 'because it was too dangerous to have it written down. Or it was buried in the backyard somewhere. And there'd be two or three people in the world who would know the poems. But they remembered them, and they would emerge later on.'

Written during the Russian revolution, Mandelstam's poetry had such an effect on Stalin that Mandelstam was, chillingly, 'isolated, but preserved ... He lived this awful life, was forced to live in the Russian towns where he couldn't work, living off scraps that people would give him at their own peril. And in his lifetime, he thinks, Well, I'm nothing, I'm reduced to this hollow creature. But that voice, the words, people now cherish. And are enlightened by them.'

This power of words—merely sticks on paper—to revolutionise, comfort, threaten, destroy, is so strong as to be fatal. But what about the power of the poetic voice in democratic, dictatorless Australia?

of Eastern Europe give a raw sensibility that poets in Australia 2006 can't have. You get wonderful poems from people who are alert to, say, Alzheimer's, or who lived through other forms of grief. But it doesn't have the sort of cosmic dimension of a tiny voice trying to be raised and heard, against a massive society that wants to crush it.'

A promotional pamphlet describes the film as one 'about voices and faces', and it is. Voices musical and melodious, that you wish were yours; faces malleable and engrossing. Everything is quietly distilled: the actors barely move; the background is always black; the lighting is subtle and varies beautifully according to the mood; the music is elegant without being intrusive. All this—the hypnotic simplicity of it—makes the words, the poetry, dynamic; makes it fly out and write itself on the air around you.

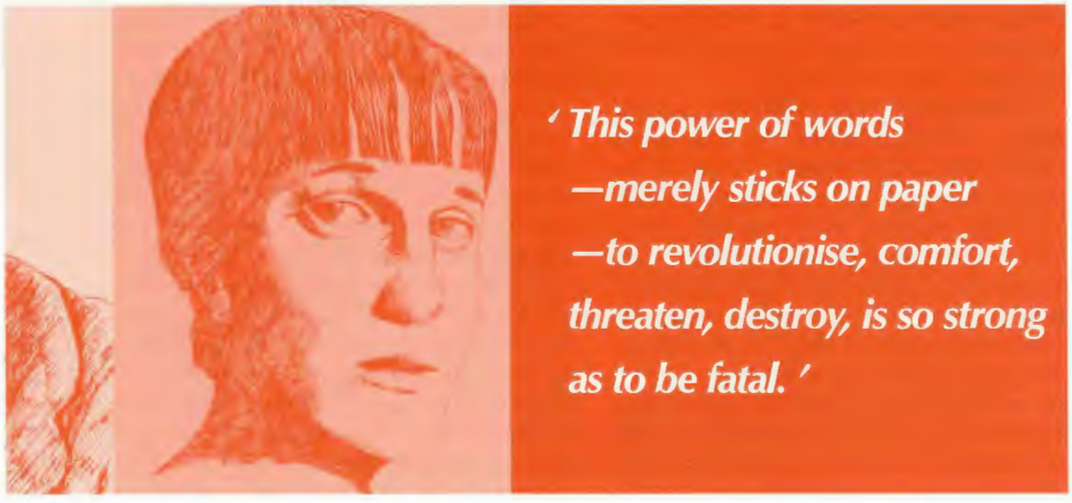
And the idea behind the alliterative title *Syllable to Sound* (from an Emily Dickinson poem) lingers well after the

but don't say it. There's an act of courage involved in most poetry, where once you put this down, people are going to read it and know a lot about you.

'Emily Dickinson talks about the strangeness of poetry and the familiarity. It's different, it's strange, I don't quite understand it, but gee, there's something familiar about it. Something catches. The light bulb goes on in the head. You're not often sure, and you can't even articulate it, but it really leaves a powerful impression.'

Later, having said goodbye to Fraser and sitting down to watch the film for the third time, I'm struck by the power of poetry.

'The people need poetry that will be their own secret,' Mandelstam says in 'Poem 355'. 'To keep them awake forever, and bathe them in the bright-haired wave of its breathing.' Suddenly, something catches. ■



'The tradition of poetry in this country is that it's been private and very personal,' Fraser says.

'But there is also a public voice. Public in the sense that here are real issues that touch all of humanity, in a personal and political way. The traditions born out

credits roll. 'Sometimes we can't quite get the word,' Fraser says. 'We sense there's something that elaborates something we've experienced, but we can't quite get it. And I think what the great poets do is to convert a syllable into a sound. Some people also hold back. Who have the word

Brooke Davis is a Geelong-based writer. *Syllable to Sound* will screen on the ABC on Sunday 28 May at 2.50pm. The film will also be shown continuously as a part of the exhibition *Crisis, Catharsis and Contemplation*, at St Patrick's Cathedral, Melbourne, April 27–May 18, and in St Mary's Cathedral Crypt, Sydney, May 21–26.

Solution to Crossword no. 140, May–June 2006

C	O	L	L	E	C	T	O	R	S	I	T	E	M	
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Juliette Hughes

An ancient culture in peril

George Silberbauer's links with Botswana go back a long way, but his special concern is for Kalahari Bushmen on the verge of losing their ancestral homeland

George Silberbauer is the kind of anthropologist who can tell you everything about rainbows. In a recent email, my Botswana-based cousin Dave, whose wife Ginny is a Tswana chief's granddaughter, wondered just what a rainbow actually was: the rains had come and the country was full of them.

Silberbauer's reply was typical. Here's an extract, edited perforce to remove some lovely forays into the science of rainbows and their faint sisters, moonbows, together with remarks on rainbows in Greek mythology and the Talmud:

Big nostalgia pang there. Bots stole my heart long ago, but it's a wicked thief when it rains. All that dust and yellow-brown dry turns into lush green and flowers of astonishing variety and the thunderstorms are monumental.

Rainbows are to be respected. As you good convent girls all know, after the Flood, God said to Noah, 'This is the token of the covenant I made between me and you and every living creature that is with you.'

Ginny will remind him that the Tswana name is 'pestle-of-the-gods' (a pestle is a big deal—every good wife spends a large part of her day grinding maize to make pap, or sorghum to make beer), or 'space/place-of-the-gods', depending on which part of the country you come from. In Zulu rainbows are less substantial, only 'withies-of-the-queen/goddess', but also translatable as 'fragrance of the queen, or goddess'.

Ask a bloody academic a question and he goes on forever but, as a fellow-teacher, David will appreciate that it would all have been so much simpler were there a blackboard and chalk available. Just as well he didn't ask about other refractive phenomena like haloes around the sun and moon. They're really tricky and we would be here until the crack of doom.

Please pass on my warmest Dumel-Ditumelo-ka-thato (greetings with love) to them.

Silberbauer's love of all Botswana is patent: when his eldest daughter was christened in Melbourne, her middle name was a Kalahari Bushman one: */xade*. (The slash indicates one of the many click-sounds in Bushman languages.) The vicar received careful coaching in click-pronunciation, but on the day his false teeth were unequal to the task and shot into the font. But it would be hard to match Silberbauer's linguistic abilities: watching him talk to Ginny (who was visiting us in Melbourne in January with Dave) in perfect, courtly Setswana was a revelation.

Silberbauer's CV includes several degrees, many publications and many community involvements. There is an abrupt gap in the section dealing with his conference papers, with nothing before 1983: he lost everything when the family home in Upper Beaconsfield burned down in the Ash Wednesday bushfires. Conference papers tended to be fragile, one-off things in pre-internet days. Being an anthropologist probably helped him weather the losses; he was able to use the experience as firsthand research into the effects of catastrophe and loss on communities. Years later, he was asked to help traumatised survivors of January 1997's fires in Victoria's Dandenongs: together they resurrected, with improvements, the bushfire-alert siren system that bureaucrats had scrapped. It was healing to achieve something together out of disaster. He now lives in Gippsland, writing, running some dairy cows and sharing his home with Shima, a huge, gentle Akita, and Poikie, a vocal, pug-faced British Shorthair cat that his daughter rescued from neglectful owners and confidently gave to him.

Lately Silberbauer has been drawn back into his links with the Bushmen—their ancient culture and heritage are in peril. In the last year he has been testifying as an expert on their behalf in a legal action brought against the Botswana government by 243 Bushmen who seek restoration of the essential educational and medical services and water supply that the government withdrew from the Central Kalahari Game Reserve (CKGR). Stakes are high—the reserve has the misfortune to be in part of a vast desert that is as full of diamonds and oil as wildlife.

The still-running case is the longest in Botswana's history: in September 2005 Silberbauer went there for a long, delicate wrangle to establish just what could be preserved for the Bushmen. Things had been better for them until relatively recently: Botswana's first president, Sir Seretse Khama, was benign in his attitudes towards the Bushmen, as was his successor, Sir Ketumule Masire. But under the current leadership of President Festus Mogae, the government maintains that Bushmen and the reserve's wildlife do not mix, and that it is too expensive to maintain water supplies and services there.

Silberbauer returned to Australia two months later with much still to do, but is not alone in his desire to help. In March of this year, the UN's Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) in Geneva had some unusually

tough words for the Botswanan government's treatment of Africa's oldest people and their culture, expressing concern at 'persistent allegations that [Bushmen] were forcibly removed, through, in particular, such measures as the termination of basic and essential services inside the Reserve, the dismantling of existing infrastructures, the confiscation of livestock, harassment and ill-treatment of some residents by police and wildlife officers, as well as the prohibition of hunting and restrictions on freedom of movement inside the Reserve'.

The committee urged Botswana's government to 'pay particular attention to the close cultural ties that bind the [Bushmen] to their ancestral land' and condemned the government's removal of some indigenous rights from the constitution.

This has particular relevance to the case in which Silberbauer was called to give evidence. The UN committee noted that the removal of these rights 'may impact on the ongoing court case brought by some residents of the Central Kalahari Game Reserve against the Government to challenge their relocation from the Reserve'.

Silberbauer knows the task is difficult, but his understanding of dislocated communities will be invaluable. Sitting and listening are indispensable, he says.

'You can't jump from hunter-gatherer to Collins Street in a single bound; the intermediate changes should be coherent, with none causing damage or dislocation. I advocated that each community should have its 'Listener' (preferably a culturally relativistic anthropologist) to give them an interpretation and understanding of other people's modes of thought in the rest of the nation. Sit with them and listen; explain feasible courses of action and their consequences, then wait for their decision and set to work facilitating it.'

He says it may be a slow way of doing things and certainly costly. But, he adds, it's more effective, and 'in the not-very-long run, cheaper and more humanitarian than bureaucratic impositions from afar'.

Silberbauer says that forcing views on any culture only produces the opposite of what one wants to achieve. His links with Botswana go back a long way. Before the then British Protectorate of Bechuanaland became independent in 1966, he wrote the CKGR's policy to assist the new incoming government, aiming to empower Bushmen to take their place in modern Botswana without losing the integrity of their culture and social organisation. The haven he recommended was enshrined in legislation in 1961, forming what was then the world's largest game reserve: 52,800 square kilometres—almost the size of Tasmania. Botswana is about the size of Texas, now with a population of 1.3 million, about 50,000 of whom are Bushmen.

Silberbauer was born in Pretoria, South Africa, in 1931. He served as an SAAF pilot and navigator and fought for Britain in the Korean War. Afterwards, in 1952, he joined the British Colonial Service. After cadetship and a spell as District Commissioner of Ngamiland, followed by further study, he was put in charge of the Bushman Survey. It was 1958 and he was 27—an unimaginable responsibility for the next ten years.

'My main feeling at the start was unrelenting terror that I would screw up,' he recalls. 'I was the weakest link on which their fate depended.'

In 1967, with the CKGR established, Silberbauer wanted to do his PhD. The question of where to do it was solved suddenly when Monash University offered him a senior lectureship in anthropology and sociology. He stayed in the job for 30 years and became an Australian citizen.

In Australia he has worked and studied with remote Western Desert Aboriginal communities. He is active in the CFA as a firefighter. He has an instinct for what can be salvaged from catastrophe and dislocation and hopes to be able to help the Bushmen in that way. Official estimates place them in the Kalahari for 20,000 years, but Silberbauer thinks they have been there far longer. They once inhabited the whole of the southern third of Africa.

'When I was in the Seacow Valley in the Northern Cape, I was standing on ground that was as thickly strewn with artefacts as the pile of this carpet,' he says, pointing down. He looks up. His eyes are steady, full of knowledge. 'And they went back *half a million years*.'

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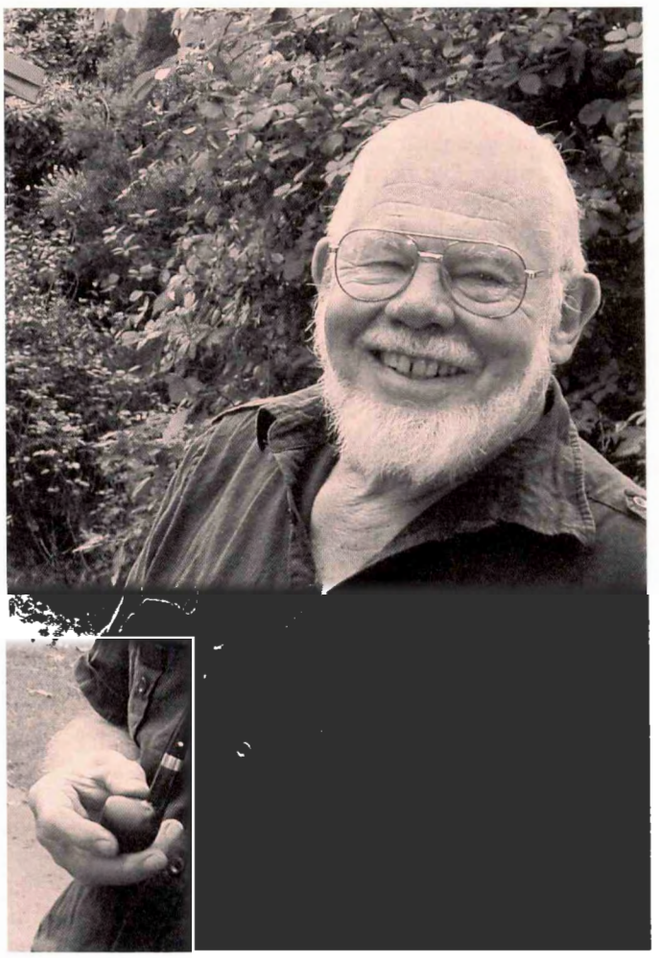

George Silberbauer: 'I advocated that each community should have its "Listener".' Photo: Juliette Hughes

Ian Warden

Confessions of a thinking fogey

Besotted by books and the printed word for his first 55 years, this computer convert now finds himself getting as much pleasure from the screen as from the page

None of us can carry so much as a pair of scissors or our knitting needles on to an aircraft these days, but in recent times I've been carrying with me everywhere, even on aircraft, a loaded, pointed, sharpened dangerous *idea*. It is that the internet, like youth itself, is wasted on the young, the very creatures whose natural habitat it is thought to be.

Every year Edge: The World Question Centre puts a question to members of a flock of fine thinkers. This year's question, put to 119 agile minds (one of them belonging to Australia's Professor Paul Davies), is: What Is Your Dangerous Idea? The resulting socially, morally or emotionally dangerous 75,000 words of their essays make for stimulating reading.

The dangerous idea contributed by David Gelernter, a computer scientist at Yale University and chief scientist at Mirror Worlds Technologies, is that the so-called Information Age isn't dispensing any information.

'What are people well informed *about* in this Information Age?' he asks. He muses that perhaps in this Information Age (beginning in 1982 with the invention of the internet and the personal computer, but really breaking into a gallop in these present times) the only things anyone is better informed about are video games.

He says that while he's not sure what's happening in 'scholarship in general' in his field, science, average folk seem to know less than they did in 1985. He suspects people knew more about science in '65 than they did in '85.

'What if,' he challenges, 'people have been growing steadily more ignorant ever since the so-called Information Age began?'

Professor Gelernter is being polemical—trying to prod our minds. Mine fancies that he may be quite wrong and that this Information Age, perhaps wasted on the young, may be the heyday of the thinking fogey.

Gelernter's point of view is at the intellectual end of the common feeling among unthinking fogeys that the internet is an overwhelmingly anti-intellectual environment and only a kind of global psychic fair or porn supermarket.

But I, being 60 and quite well read and interested in the arts and ideas, begin to find the internet an indispensable tool of the thinking, feeling life. Here is an illustration of what I mean.

Just seven days before sitting down to begin this essay and stumbling about my rented apartment in Melbourne very early one morning, hurrying to get ready for work, I was half-listening to ABC Classic FM.

And so I only half-heard the introduction of a bewitching piece of music. The music involved some songbird-like trillings by what I thought was a clarinet, introducing and then supporting a contralto who warbled the kind of aria (somehow plaintive but somehow brave as well) that I hope will be part of the piped music of Heaven.

I had to know what that music was! But, distracted by shaving, I had missed everything in the presenter's introduction save for the magic word Vivaldi.

Back in Canberra five days later, and with time at last to do some fossicking, I used the magic of the internet to go to ABC Classic FM's web site, a place adjusted to these informative times. There, by clicking on 'archived' I was able to go to the day and rough time on which I'd heard the music. In the listing by time and composer of every recording played that day there was the information that the composer was Vivaldi, the name of the piece was the aria *Come, come and help me* from Vivaldi's oratorio *Juditha triumphans*, and the performers included the contralto Birgit Finnila, warbler of the shaving-arresting aria in question.

Then there was the essential information of the name of the record company and the catalogue number of the recording. Telephoning my CDgrocer with this information and finding that he had the recording in stock, it was in my hand and then strutting its spiritually uplifting stuff from my CD player that very afternoon.

But there's more.

The booklet that came with the CD was irritatingly minimalist in its information about a work about which I was shamefully ignorant and determined to know more. Turning to the internet again I was able to dispel this ignorance with just the few clicks required to take me into the treasure trove of material about the work.

But wait! There's more.

The CD booklet has someone playing the salmoe, and it turned out to be a salmoe, not a clarinet, accompanying Finnila in the aria that first beguiled. What on earth, I asked Google to interrogate the internet for me, is a salmoe?

Google found almost at once (but alas, after taking me on an unsolicited visit to a blush-making pornography site rejoicing in the name of one of the words I'd innocently given Google to search with) the information that a salmoe, or chalumeau, is a 17th-century version of the clarinet, still popular with performers of ancient musick on authentic instruments. At one of the sites a cultivated French voice even told me, when triggered by my click, how to pronounce the word chalumeau. It is chah-LOO-moe.

But there's even more than that.

Needing my memory jogged about the biblical story that Vivaldi illustrates in *Juditha triumphans*, I employed Google again to do that for me. Google obliged, promptly, but while also showing me doors (temptingly ajar) to information, with reproductions of the art works, of great paintings by people like Caravaggio and by Artemi-

sia Gentileschi of the Bible's story. They are paintings of how (in Judith, chapters 12 and 13) on behalf of her besieged people the plucky Judith slew the appalling Assyrian warlord Holofernes, cutting off his head with his own terrible sword.

I read on and on, gathering more and more information as I went, like a snowball enlarging itself into a snowboulder as it rolls down a slope, about the life and work of the fascinating and admirable Gentileschi. It emerged that she was a woman who painted Judith's feat of bravery again and again as though thinking of her as a terrific soul sister displaying valour in an ugly, male world of which Gentileschi, a victim of rape, knew a great deal.

As USUAL WHEN OGLING works of art on the internet I was enabled to turn the paintings into postcards that I could email in a trice ('Look at this, Jennifer!') to anyone anywhere in the online world I wanted to share this information (and my delight in it) with.

This kind of happy, ignorance-dispelling rigmarole is an everyday kind of use of the internet made by this ostensible fogey. I doubt that the young are finding the online life such a godsend. The young are of course far more likely than fogeys to understand the nuts, bolts, cogs, flywheels and carburettors of IT and its contraptions. (Does my little Toshiba laptop have a carburettor? I think it probably does.)

The work I was doing in Melbourne, alluded to above, was in the media room at the Australian Open tennis where I was writing daily reports for a newspaper in Canberra. At the Open this technological miracle (of sending stories across Australia, across the world, instantly and with one or two clicks) is accomplished by a newfangled 'wireless' system (literally without the use of any wires to connect your PC to anything) and in ways which seem to me eerily like witchcraft.

The Open newsroom employs staff to come and sit at your PC first to connect you to this system and then to be there for the whole hectic fortnight to come and deliver you from IT trouble when it arises. This technological dimension of the Information Age is very, very stressful for fogeys, and when one of the Open's young men shimmered to my side when I had my first IT crisis and I saw just *how* young he was, I thought (and told him to his boyish face) how 'reassuringly young' he was.

We like our doctors, psychiatrists, professors, dentists, judges, airline pilots and priests to be reassuringly aged to the point where their gnarled faces betoken a great deal of getting of the wisdom we think their callings require. My darling wife thinks that it is a consolation of the increasing grannyfication of her hair and face that it gives her still more credibility as a therapist.

Somehow, though, with IT matters, the more pubescent (or better still prepubescent) the face of the trouble-shooter who shimmers to his aid, the more relief a fogey feels. It is as though the way IT things work is a field of magic only the very young can understand—just as only pixies can understand pixie lore.

The Information Age pixies, the very young, are good at knowing *how* IT things work, but as I've been arguing here, it's the thinking fogeys who know best (or who ought to learn how to know best) what to use the tools of the Information Age *for*.

From a traditional education and from traditional reading and traditional gallery-going and concert-going I have a smattering of knowledge of stimulating things, and so know enough to be able to give a search engine some intelligent commands as I send it off hunting and gathering. The intellectual loot it brings back to me seems wonderful.

Book-oriented for my first 55 years, thinking it essential to *true* reading to be holding a readable *object* (book, newspaper or journal) in my hands and to be able to listen to the swish of its turned pages, to know the roar of its ink-printed page and the smell of its paper, I now find myself getting as much pleasure from the screen as from the page. I am, loving it, part of the long-overdue decline and fall of the newspaper (now intelligence-insulting and trashy) as we've known it.

Here, greying and tweedy and sitting in my traditional-looking study furnished by traditional bookshelves and by a gently snoring traditional English springer spaniel asleep at my feet, I look like a traditional scholarly fogey of the 1950s save for the little 21st-century laptop on my lap. And now I find I am as easily engrossed by good things on a screen as by good things on a page. The aforementioned 75,000 words of dangerous ideas (like so much information, available online on screens but not yet in books) has engrossed me as much as *Treasure Island* did when I was a little boy and when a science-fiction book about an invention as wondrous as the internet would have seemed too far-fetched to be enjoyable. ■

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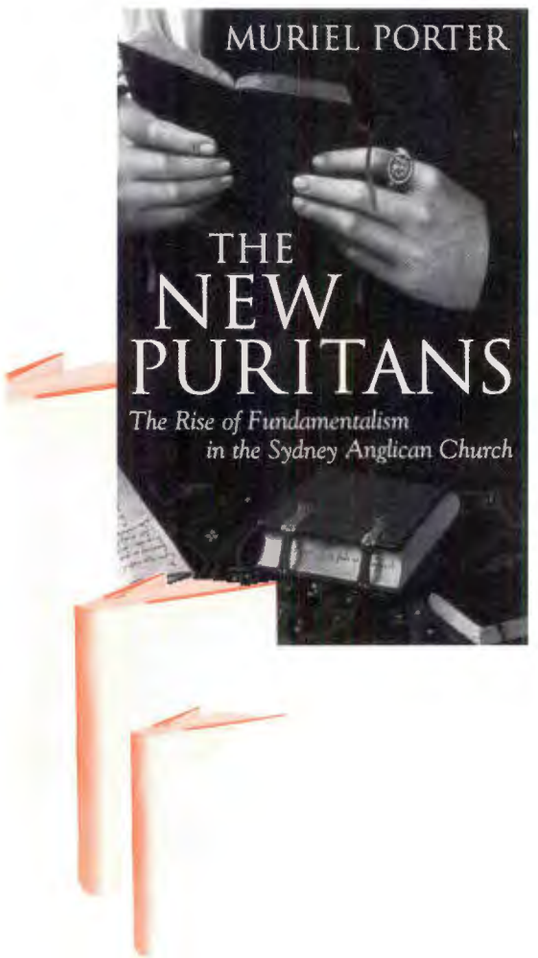
Anglican lines in the sand

The New Puritans: The Rise of Fundamentalism in the Anglican Church, Muriel Porter. Melbourne University Press, 2006. ISBN 0 522 85184 3, RRP $29.95



In the church of St Mary and the Virgin in the Saxon village of Saffron Walden in Essex, one small stained-glass window remained after Oliver Cromwell's men invaded the sanctuary and destroyed all images.

It is a small painted portrait of a local noble lady. The soldiers left it alone, not knowing the secret. It *was* the lady's portrait, but it represented St Anne, grandmother of Jesus.

True iconoclasts, Cromwell's men were determined to destroy all 'Catholic' images. This Puritan movement of the 1640s was determined to cleanse and purify the Church and complete the Reformation.

However, the crowning of Charles II reinstated the monarchy, the established Church and the 'broad-church' diversity of the Elizabethan settlement for which the Anglican Church has been famous ever since.

According to Muriel Porter's new book *The New Puritans*, this slice of history has become very important in understanding the wave of reform thrust upon the Anglican Diocese of Sydney by its archbishop, Peter Jensen.

The genius of Dr Porter's book is that she is not your typical historian—objective and disinterested. She readily admits that she is highly critical of the Anglicans in Sydney and believes that they are an aberration in church history.

This does not make them inconsequential, for as the largest and wealthiest Anglican diocese in the world, they are seeking to influence Anglican identity and core beliefs. They are also seeking to rebadge Christianity in Australia.

'Like the Puritans,' Dr Porter writes, 'Sydney Anglicans want to remove everything they believe distracts from the pure knowledge of God through God's Word, whether it is religious ceremonial, liturgical dress, religious images or anything that appeals primarily to the senses.'

She argues that they display the key markers of fundamentalism: a rationalist mindset, a Calvinist zeal to root out error and preserve doctrinal purity, charismatic and authoritarian leadership, behavioural requirements and a tendency to separatism. She adds another identifying marker not usually listed as fundamentalist: a commitment to male headship.

Now some will say that Dr Porter is obsessed with women's ordination. She has campaigned for this for 30 years within the Anglican Church, right up to the present when she chairs a national Anglican inquiry into women bishops. But she argues her point well, and devotes a whole chapter to what she calls 'the great cause' of women's ordination, tracing the Sydney opposition to it through various legal manoeuvres and synod debates.

Dr Porter reveals, to an extent that no one else has tried to explain, the possible impact of these moves in Sydney on the national church and on the international Anglican Communion of 70 million members. The 'Puritans' of Sydney are funding a strong coalition of conservative national churches, many of them in Africa, to oppose 'liberal' tendencies such as permitting gay bishops, or blessing same sex unions.

Relations with Rome are also affected. Dr Porter argues that the common

con-servative moral agenda has strengthened ties between the Anglican and Roman Catholic leadership in Sydney. She writes: 'Although evangelical Anglicans are generally suspicious of Rome—a reflection of the Reformation confrontation between the Church of Rome and Protestants—and although relationships between Sydney's Anglican and Catholic archbishops in the past have been distant, Peter Jensen and his Catholic counterpart, Cardinal George Pell, have forged a strong friendship.' They are both against women clergy and gay clergy; they are both countercultural; and they are both fiercely proud of their orthodoxy.

Behind the author's judgments is a great puzzlement: why her own brand of Anglicanism—liberal Catholic—is not thriving. She puts it down partly to Generations X and Y wanting certainty, and to the fact that conservative churches seem to connect better with young people. She does not like what is happening, and she cannot understand why her own style of churchmanship is not working.

In the end, this is a telling issue. Evangelicals in all churches have more sense of strategy, adopt outreach programs like Alpha and Encountering God which attract crowds of outsiders, and put energy and zeal into community engagement. The old idea of 'put on a good liturgy and people will come' simply does not work any more.

And now the Anglican Evangelicals—who have always been a 'broad church' themselves, including those who supported women's ordination—are being outgunned by the new Puritans. And it seems to work. The Anglican leadership in Sydney wants to train 1000 ministers to convert as many as 10 per cent of Sydneysiders to 'Bible-believing churches'. It's an amazing aim, and they are on the way towards it, putting vast human resources and money into the enterprise. What if it works? What will Dr Porter do then?

Dr Porter has a curious thesis about fundamental religion—that their leaders develop strong male headship doctrines because they themselves had 'missing fathers'. She writes:

> Regardless of whether any or all of the men involved had fathers away at a war at a crucial time in their childhood, there is documented evidence that fundamentalist church leaders—who share opposition to women in leadership with conservative evangelicals—had largely absent fathers.

The evidence is from the United States. Is it as true in Australia?

Two more insights make this book worth buying and reading. In the first, Dr Porter takes us into the doctrine of the subordination of the Son to the Father, and traces heated debates between recently retired Primate Peter Carnley, theologian Kevin Giles and the Sydney leadership. The subordination of women to men is a corollary of the Son's subordination to the Father. Male headship is thus justified. The public policy consequences follow: homosexuality is outside God's moral law; women should not teach men; de facto relationships are disapproved of; sex outside marriage is a sin; divorce is not an option.

In the second, the question is: why make homosexuality, rather than the ordination of women, or divorce, the test of orthodoxy? Dr Porter makes another of her political judgments: 'Biblical authority alone seems unlikely to be the reason why homosexuality has become the "line in the sand" in world Anglicanism. I suspect it is respectable window-dressing for the exercise of blatant power politics.' There was not the same evangelical unity on women's ordination or divorce, and 'in any case, there are rather too many women and too many divorces, both in the Church and in the wider community, for either issue to have gained the necessary traction.'

THE ULTIMATE GOAL in the Puritan campaign is winning approval for lay presidency—authorising lay people to conduct the Holy Communion service. They easily won the vote in the Sydney synod, but have so far failed in the national synod. Pure Puritanism, says Muriel Porter. And very unnerving for the rest of the Anglican world.

Now let me confess. I trained for the Anglican ministry at Moore College, Sydney, at the crossover between principals Marcus Loane and Broughton Knox. I just cannot remember Dr Knox as the divisive ideologue that Dr Porter describes.

To me, then vice-principal (later Archbishop) Donald Robinson's view were much more radical. He seriously believed that *ekklesia* (church) was only ever real when the local church gathered for worship. Later, as archbishop, he had a lot of trouble exercising diocesan discipline over clergy whom he had trained to believe that only the local manifestation of church mattered.

Jumping forward to 2006, it is becoming evident that there are many sides to Peter Jensen. His ABC Boyer Lectures surprised people with their eirenic language and persuasive style. He wants a genuinely Australian Church which produces a more compassionate and just Australian way of life. And some media profiles of him, such as that by Andrew West in the December–January 2006 issue of *The Monthly*, depict him as generally more a friend of Labor politically. With Cardinal Pell, he challenged the Howard Government on its industrial relations reforms. He meets with ALP frontbencher Lindsay Tanner and with preselected Labor candidate Bill Shorten, and forges new alliances. He is not so easy to pigeonhole.

And while Dr Porter focuses entirely on Sydney's leadership, there is a vast rank and file of about 100,000 regular churchgoing Anglicans there who probably don't know whether they are evangelicals or liberals, let alone Puritans. Some of my best friends live in Sydney, and they are diverse, God-fearing and committed to living out their Christian faith in work, home and community. They probably support Peter Jensen's goal of a manifold increase in church membership and they will put their energy into accomplishing the dream. And why not?

The implications are far-reaching for the national Anglican Church and the international Anglican Communion. How much diversity will be tolerated in the future? Is it conceivable that even the ordination of women could be reversed, as has happened with the Presbyterians in Victoria? And is the hope fading for mutual recognition of ministries with Rome, let alone eventual union? ■

Alan Nichols is a consultant in church strategy, health ethics and refugee policy. He worked with the Jesuit Refugee Service Asia Pacific from 1991 to 1993, and is a Canon of St John's Cathedral, Gahini, in Rwanda.

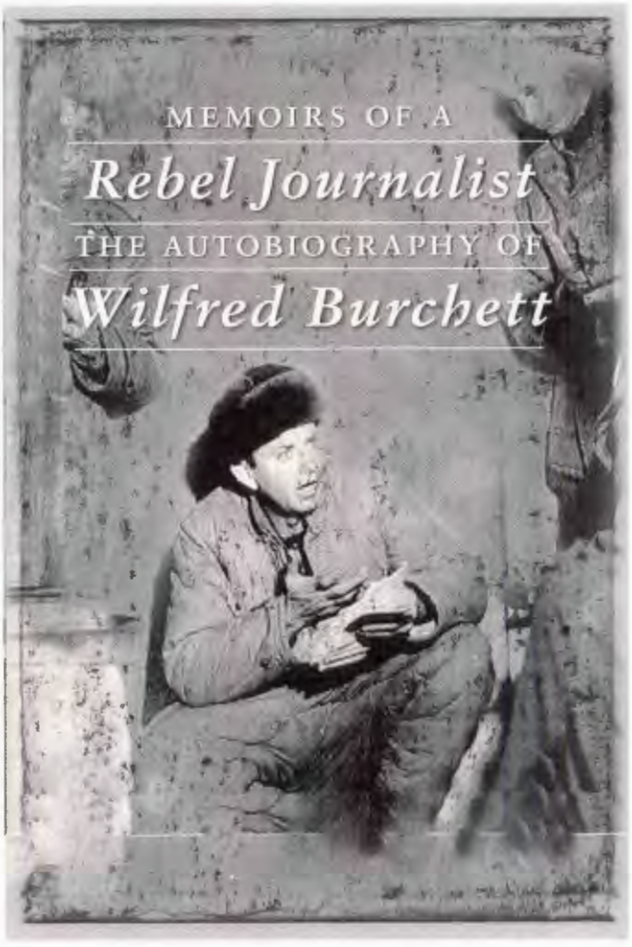
Peter Pierce

Rebel remains a mystery

Memoirs of a Rebel Journalist: The Autobiography of Wilfred Burchett, Wilfred Burchett. University of New South Wales Press, 2005. ISBN 0 868 40842 5, RRP $59.95

In 1982, the year before he died, the autobiography of the Australian journalist and exile Wilfred Burchett was published. Trenchantly titled *At the Barricades*, it placed him as a journalist *engagé*, in the frontline, partisan. More than two decades later, a typescript more than twice that length was brought back from Bulgaria, birthplace of Burchett's second wife, Vessa, by their son George. Edited by the latter and by Nick Shimmin, it has now been published in handsome and massive form by the University of New South Wales Press. Yet the title and subtitle seem more equivocal than the shorter first version, and indeed prove to be so. Now we have *Memoirs of a Rebel Journalist: The Autobiography of Wilfred Burchett*, which intends to give Australians with any knowledge of his remarkable career a fresh means for judgment.

The book's intriguing and provoking cover photograph is simply captioned 'Wilfred Burchett in Korea, 1951'. Crouching, notes in hand, he is speaking to a man who is almost out of the picture. Was this one of the American POWs whom, notoriously, he was alleged to have brainwashed, and whose torture he may have condoned? The image yields only ambiguity. As for the title: was Burchett a rebel in the sense of not conforming to the wishes of press barons and governments? Or was he a political rebel in Western terms, a communist or agent of the KGB, whose real professional mission was masked by his reporting from so many of the world's hot spots for four decades? Moreover, to have done so at a time when their crises were most acute? Finally, what kind of 'autobiography' is this? There can be a preliminary answer: one of the most protean ever written in Australia.



These memoirs begin in the most calculatedly disarming manner. The author poses this question: 'Is heresy an inherited or an acquired characteristic?' The answer comes in deterministic terms. Burchett's first couple of decades shaped the heretic, the enemy of Empire, the friend of collective workers' action. He has written, in the book's first hundred pages, an autobiography in classical Australian mode. After a parody of genealogical inquiry, which leads him briefly back to England, Burchett tells of the honest travails of his parents and extended family—as Melbourne builders, and on a selection at Poowong in Gippsland. Young Wilfred learned the discipline of rural work; was encouraged in his education; was romantically nurtured by the Australian bush with 'the clean pungent smell of gum leaves'.

He was radicalised by the selling up of his parents' property, by work—for instance, cane-cutting—that persuaded him of the perfidies of most employers, and by seeing, at the Sydney Domain in November 1938, Egon Kisch denounce fascism and the Australian government that had tried to deny him free speech.

Gradually Burchett imbibed 'the spirit of internationalism'. Aptly, and in the next stage of what reads like an eloquent parable, Wilfred and his brother Clive went abroad, first to beguiling islands of the Pacific: Noumea and Tahiti. Then Wilfred was summoned by conscience at worsening news of the Spanish Civil War. By 1936 he was in London, working as a tourist clerk for Thomas Cook. Soon, and mysteriously, that job expanded and he secured visas that enabled some European Jews to escape the Nazis.

By a stroke of good fortune that seemed often to attend him, Burchett—who in 40 years 'never worked inside a newspaper office', did, 'to my astonishment and quite unintentionally ... [become] a journalist.' Travelling first to Singapore, he then followed the Burma Road, witnessed the ruin of the Chinese city of Chungking after the Japanese onslaught, and

found himself hired by the conservative *Daily Express* in London. This was notwithstanding his contempt for the British in India where 'the Colonel Blimps and their men were in beetroot-faced retreat'. Burchett despised 'the grotesque inefficiency and rabid racism of the guardians of the Empire'. Yet he also understood that, from now onwards, his destiny was to seek places where war was being fought, or where halting efforts to make peace were being made.

His greatest scoop was to reach Hiroshima before a tame contingent of journalists and identify 'the atomic plague', the radiation sickness that continued to kill. His despatch was published in the *Daily Express* on 6 September 1945: 'I Write This as a Warning to the World'. Then it was back to Europe, 'because I felt that it was there that the shape of the post-war world would be decided.' Although he established 'a base in the European socialist world', Asia soon lured him again, in particular China and Vietnam. Burchett's capacity to sense, or to take advice to be, in the right place continued to serve him. He forged links with Chou en Lai, Ho Chi Minh, Prince Sihanouk, Castro. There is not a critical word about any of them. Such contacts meant that in 1971 the US State Department waived an order restricting Burchett to a 25-mile radius of the United Nations in New York so that he could meet Henry Kissinger in Washington to deliver his insider's judgments.

Sometime earlier my doubts about the book began to surface. *Memoirs of a Rebel Journalist* is written in such an accomplished, plain style, drawing attention only to its author's professional assiduity, that questions about Burchett's 'whole truth' are deferred. But the lacunae are notable. His first marriage is almost ignored. On that personal level there is no address to charges of philandering. In professional terms, Burchett's relations with his Soviet publisher are occluded. Of many controversial accusations about him, some are refuted by impugning the witness, while others—especially regarding Korea—are given only glancing attention. Then there are moments when great historical events are treated with an ideologically programmed indifference. What of the Hungarian uprising of 1956? Burchett blames Radio Free Europe and the 'adventurism' of 'drawing-room revolutionaries'. And what of Mao's Cultural Revolution? Burchettt evidently regarded it as a praiseworthy enterprise. By contrast, he is unreservedly hostile to those who made and implemented American foreign policy during the Cold War.

Some journalists are excepted, but not the Australian correspondent Denis Warner, whom Burchett accuses of working for ASIO and briefing witnesses in the ill-judged defamation action that Burchett launched in 1974 against the ex-DLP Senator John Kane. The editors, Burchett junior and Shimmin, quote Warner in a couple of pages that include encomia from Bertrand Russell and Harrison Salisbury. For Warner he was 'an extremely able man and a first-class newshawk'. He praises Burchett's 'great personal courage', 'great gift for languages', and a success with women whose reason is not apparent to Warner. The source is a 1953 ASIO report. Presumably it came from one of those boxes that Burchett and Shimmin scorn, where 'resides Burchett the communist, the KGB agent, the alcoholic, the womaniser, the brainwasher, torturer, agent of influence'.

Yet how many of these descriptions fit a man of whose redoubtable survival strategies so little is disclosed? Where did his money come from? Surely not only from book royalties and a dwindling freelance income. How did he cope with loneliness, suspicion, physical hardship (including strafing and scorpion bites)? That there is a heroic story to be inferred from these memoirs is never suggested by Burchett. Indeed, this very long book is such a masterly attempt to control inference that it risks defeating its own dark purposes. The demonising of Burchett is well attested here, and—with such honourable exceptions as Tom Heenan—it has been posthumous as well. Shimmin calls Burchett 'the greatest journalist Australia ever produced'. He is certainly the most controversially and best connected, for all that he had to make his way in foreign lands, was censured in Australia and long deprived of a passport. This is an expatriate tale of a most uncommon kind, as well as a political story that will forever be a puzzle, never fully to be unlocked. ■

Peter Pierce is Professor of Australian Literature at James Cook University, Cairns.

Frank O'Shea

Denizen of a disturbed time

Francis De Groot: Irish Fascist, Australian Legend, Andrew Moore. The Federation Press, 2005. ISBN 1 862 87573 1, RRP $39.95

I HAVE RESERVATIONS ABOUT both barrels of this book's title. Such fascism as existed briefly in Ireland in the early 1930s was driven by suspicion of de Valera's conversion from gunman to Taoiseach rather than by corporatist social theory or admiration for a strong leader; it was quickly assimilated into a mainstream political party, Fine Gael, the main opposition party in the current Dail and firmly in the political centre. Likewise, describing De Groot as an Australian legend, in the same league as, say, Les Darcy, Don Bradman or Weary Dunlop, is to exaggerate public knowledge about the man.

The name De Groot may not be conspicuously Irish, but Frank De Groot was as Irish as 300 years of domicile in the country would entitle his family to claim. He was a descendant of Dutch Huguenots who had settled in Dublin in the 17th century to escape persecution by Catholics on the Continent. In time they became so well regarded that every male member of the family was entitled to apply for the hereditary right of Freeman of the City. Moreover, his mother was a Butler, than which there are few surnames more closely associated with Irish aristocracy.

He was in his early twenties when he first came to Australia, settling in Sydney. His initial break came as a result of the shrewd munificence of publisher and bookseller George Robertson, who provided him with the funds to import antique furniture from Ireland. In a short time, he was a dashing, flamboyant figure in the local antiques trade. He returned to Dublin to marry his sweetheart, arriving in time to enlist in the Hussars and serve with distinction in the Great War, retiring with the rank of captain.

Back in Sydney, he continued where he had left off as an antiques dealer, branching into the manufacture of quality reproduction furniture that was said to be indistinguishable from the original Chippendale or Queen Anne. In time, visiting royalty would dine at his tables, literally if not metaphorically. He was also heavily in demand for shopfitting, and was responsible for the original David Jones stores in Sydney. Among the well-heeled and well-bred of 1920s Sydney, Frank De Groot was quite the arbiter of taste.

All of this points up the folly of describing the well-known and highly respected businessman who cut the ribbon to open the Sydney Harbour Bridge as 'a nobody' or 'an eccentric'. In fact, his action was applauded by many as a deserved insult to New South Wales Premier Jack Lang. The impression of an oddball was reinforced when, after his daring intervention, he was briefly incarcerated in what was known as 'the giggle house', a section of Darlinghurst Gaol reserved for the overflow from local asylums.

Interestingly in these nervous days, one of the charges that he briefly faced was for 'seditious conspiracy'. In due course he was given a feather-duster fine of £5, but more significantly the court ruled that the 'plucky cavalry officer' and not the premier of the state had opened the Sydney Harbour Bridge.

It may be that some knowledge of the story of Frank De Groot still exists if only as a trick question on quiz nights. What is less well known is the political background of a time in which there were real fears of a right-wing coup either by the New Guard of which De Groot was a prominent leader or by some splinter group from that organisation. Nor was he the only prominent citizen in sympathy with the thinking of the New Guard; people like Banjo Paterson and Charles Kingsford Smith were at least tolerant of their ideology.

'Bloodshed was not unlikely and a civil war loomed,' according to historian Andrew Moore in this comprehensive account of those disturbed times. He goes to some length to counter the view that De Groot's action was a kind of circuit-breaker, a release valve for the tensions simmering in an economically depressed society. De Groot, he concludes, should not be hailed as an accidental saviour of democracy. Perhaps it says something about the Australian character that today we remember 1932 more for the bodyline cricket series later that year than for the peaceful defeat of a local brand of fascism.

The author brings his story up to today by noting that John Howard was seated on a De Groot chair at the Sydney celebrations for the centenary of Federation in 2001. Unfortunately, he spoils that story by telling us that when the PM was apprised of the provenance of the chair, he was 'disinterested'. Ouch! There are other howlers—a sword 'sheaf', an antique 'fare'—and he has the annoying habit of explaining an initialism the first time it is met and leaving readers to their own devices thereafter. And there were lots of these three-letter groupings, most of them now thankfully obsolete: UAP, AIF, UMM, CPA, CIB, WDC, BEF, IWW.

These quibbles aside, this is one case in which the man and his action are less interesting than the groups of whom he was a member and who were enthusiastic admirers of Mussolini, Franco and their ilk. ■

Frank O'Shea is a Canberra writer and educator.

John Button

Getting to know Billy better

Billy Hughes: Prime Minister and Controversial Founding Father of the Labor Party, Aneurin Hughes. John Wiley & Sons Australia, 2005. ISBN 1 740 31136 1, RRP $29.95

THE HUGHES CLAN is too big. *Billy Hughes: Prime Minister and Controversial Founding Father of the Australian Labor Party* is written by Aneurin Hughes: not a close relation, I believe. He is a former British and European Community diplomat, who has spent a number of years in Canberra. His well-researched and nicely written book has added a new dimension to the understanding of Billy Hughes, giving us a better picture of a man, 'much more complex and perhaps more interesting than the rather stilted and cardboard caricature often described'.

Historian Geoffrey Bolton, in an essay on Billy Hughes, tells of a committee appointed to advise the Bicentennial Authority on the names of 200 Australians who'd made a distinct contribution to our history. In the first list of names Billy was omitted. Later a wise public servant pointed out that his old adversary Archbishop Mannix had been added to the list and that Billy would therefore have to be included. And so he was.

Why was Billy a late entry? After all, at the time of his death he'd been Australia's longest-serving prime minister, and an apparently successful minister in several other governments. He'd punched above Australia's weight in international negotiations, been remarkably prescient about the future role of Japan in the Pacific, and stood up to US President Woodrow Wilson at the Versailles Peace Conference. And for the troops who served in France he'd become an iconic figure, popularly known as 'the little digger'.

Billy Hughes was quick-witted, and a forceful orator. He read widely and qualified as a barrister. Dr Evatt thought him a man of 'matchless courage'. His political skills were widely acclaimed. But nobody seemed to like him very much. At the peak of his career he was a brave mascot, at the end an irascible eccentric.

The problem was that he was seen as a divisive character. He'd split the Labor Party—and, indeed, the nation—over conscription for service in World War I. In his long parliamentary career he'd changed allegiances a number of times and been a member of five different political parties.

There have been several biographies of Billy Hughes, mainly concentrating on his political career. They are generally fair if incomplete accounts of his life. About Billy they use adjectives such as secretive, slippery, authoritarian, volatile, stubborn, bullying, ruthless, shrewd, artful and distrusted. He's rarely accused of kindness, fairness, honesty or generosity of spirit. It makes for an unusual imbalance, a seemingly lopsided picture.

Referring to these earlier biographies Geoffrey Bolton concludes that Billy Hughes 'continues to defy definition'. So Aneurin Hughes's book is timely and enlightening. It deals with the political highlights of Billy's career and then fills in some of the gaps. And there are gaps and errors of fact, often papered over by the great man. Aneurin writes that Billy's records and his reminiscences 'suggest conscious weeding and selectivity'. To Donald Horne Billy was an 'illusionist', determined to establish his own myths about his 'Welshness', his age, his early years in Australia and his first 'marriage'. 'We may,' Horne wrote, 'not know what is true, but what is important about him is the myth.'

Historians are, for example, at odds as to whether in about 1886 Billy actually married his landlord's daughter, Elizabeth Cutts. Aneurin thinks there was no marriage and notes that the birth dates of the six children seem to have been unregistered. Billy gave no help on this issue. In his meticulously kept records and in his writings he reveals nothing.

Whatever the truth, this first family was never 'The First Family'. When Elizabeth died in 1906 Billy put the eldest child Ethel in charge. From then on his relationship with them seems to have been largely aloof, and less than generous.

In 1911 Billy married Mary Campbell, a nurse, who seems to have suited him, although he was given to disparaging remarks about her intellect. Their daughter Helen became 'the apple of his eye'. Their relationship provides the only evidence that he was capable of love. Her death in childbirth at age 22 was the great tragedy of Billy's life.

Andrew Hughes quotes a newspaper columnist saying, 'Mr Hughes, despite his radicalism, is fundamentally a British imperialist.' It was these two elements, radicalism and imperialism, which seem to have provided the impetus of Billy's political life. He remained a radical.

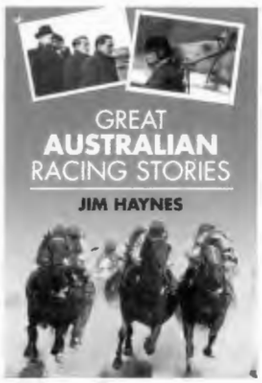
Aneurin writes of 'his persistent radicalism, which remained undimmed throughout the years'. It sometimes led to his crossing the floor to vote with the Labor Party. Dr Evatt shared this view: 'He was not a reactionary, quite the contrary.'

It was his imperialist enthusiasms that brought Billy undone with the Labor Party. As a £5 'Pom' migrant he was susceptible to the blandishments he received about the war in Britain, but he underestimated the strength of the Irish influence in Australian politics and misjudged the mood of the Labor movement on conscription.

What of the 'Labor rat'? Gough Whitlam is quoted as saying that Billy dealt three blows to Labor: he split the party, left a legacy of factionalism that became an addiction, and undermined the party's trust in leadership. Should he be blamed for all these things that appear to be endemic in the Labor Party? Through the mists of retrospect it seems a tough call.

Aneurin Hughes has written a thought-provoking account of an extraordinary figure about whom we now know a great deal more than before. It should be in every collection of Australian political history. ■

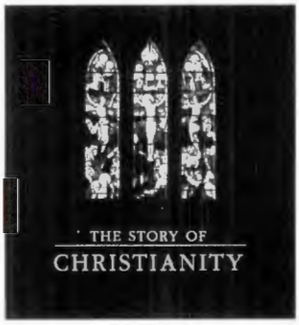
John Button was a minister and senator in the Hawke and Keating governments.



Great Australian Racing Stories, Jim Haynes. ABC Books, 2005. ISBN 0 642 58962 3, RRP $29.95

In this sprightly collection of racing yarns in verse and prose, Jim Haynes does justice to the richest source of pathos and misadventure in our sporting life. Afficionado and punter, he is always ready with a poem or opinion of his own. But here too are the nearly forgotten, but remarkable racing tales of J. C. Bendrodt (one of Haynes's childhood favourites), as well as the once known-by-heart ballads of Banjo Paterson. None of these is more affecting than 'Only a Jockey', Paterson's bitter account of the death of a teenage apprentice, which concluded that 'the horse is luckily uninjured'. There are evocative photographs in the book—of grand surges to the post, and of the grind of stable work. Haynes's sampling is wide and generous. There are memories of champions and of bush chicanery, of the Melbourne Cup—one of the two Australian national days—and of the canny winter slog of jumps racing. The book is animated by love of horses and the people who ride and train them, and of punters too. Let one of Haynes's contributors have the last word: 'Betting and Beer are the basis/Of the only respectable life.'

—Peter Pierce



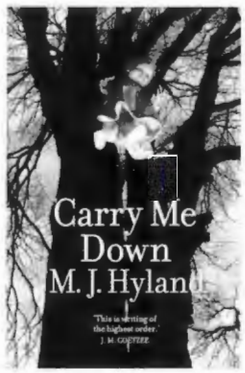
The Story of Christianity, Peter Partner. ABC Books, 2006. ISBN 0 733 31885 1, RRP $75

This is the coffee-table book of the television series. So, the spoken word preceded the written text by five years. But that matters little when the story covers 2000 years, and when it is so judiciously told and so lusciously illustrated. The difficulty of telling the story of Christianity comes out of the fact that it is a living faith. As such, it forms part of the story both of Christians and of those who react to Christianity. Each group will tell the story from its own committed perspective. But to try to tell the story from the outside also distorts the story. It is like taking a lustrous shell from the sea in order to examine it at home.

A public television series of this kind must present the story of Christianity largely from the outside. Peter Partner's narrative does so with great respect. He focuses on what is generally agreed, and reports significant disputes about interpretation. This makes the book a very useful skeleton that can be fleshed out with further reading. This disciplined approach conveys less well what it has been like to see the world through Christian eyes. But the images with which the book is replete encourage wonder about Christianity as a lived faith.

A book under which any coffee table might groan with pleasure.

—Andrew Hamilton



Carry Me Down, M. J. Hyland. Text Publishing, 2006. ISBN 1 921 14509 9, RRP $29.95

M. J. Hyland caused a flurry of excitement with her previous book, *How the Light Gets In*, an impressive, if somewhat uneven, debut, which collected some weighty short-listings.

Her second novel, *Carry Me Down*, is an accomplished first-person narrative in which 11-year-old John speaks with a compelling and disturbing voice about his life in the Irish town of Gorey and, later, in Dublin. John discovers that he can tell when his parents are lying to him. This uncomfortable knowledge meshes with his great passion—*The Guinness Book of Records*—and he determines to be the world's greatest lie detector.

Hyland's own biography is well-enough known from her essay writing and from interviews—her early life in Ireland, her time in Australia, her difficult relationship with her father—and there is the temptation to see echoes of her life in her fiction. She skilfully confounds this presumption by creating fiction that is memorable and a character that captures the reader so that by the time disquiet encroaches—a slight uncomfortableness with John's perspective, a rising horror at the disintegrating family—the reader cannot abandon him, nor forget his fascinating, dysfunctional family.

—Jennifer Moran

Macquarie Atlas of Indigenous Australia, Bill Arthur and Frances Morphy (general editors). The Macquarie Library, 2005. ISBN 1 876 42935 6, RRP $80

Like all good atlases, this one is a smorgasbord of information, both visual and textual, which readers can consume at their own pace, and according to their own tastes.

Open a page at random and you might find an illustration of bamboo smoking pipes from Torres Strait, or a photograph of a bark bucket from the Kimberley region of Western Australia, or a map of legal service sites around Australia, or a graph indicating the places named from indigenous words as a percentage of total place names in Western Australia.

The atlas is organised into three broad sections: the socio-cultural space; the socio-economic space; and the socio-political space. Its timeline runs from 70,000 years ago to the present, and its contributors include many leading experts.

The atlas will be of immense usefulness to students, journalists and others who need a quick and easy-to-use reference work on indigenous Australia.

—Robert Hefner

Keith Harrison

Poet with the gift of friendship

Philip Martin: 23 March 1931–18 October 2005

FOR MORE THAN 50 YEARS Philip Martin has been an essential part of my life and imagination. Notwithstanding a distance of sometimes thousands of miles, his companionship has been one of my constant reference points, and not only in literary matters. Philip had the essential gift of friendship, which is much rarer than we usually think. It goes well beyond, though it includes, camaraderie and mateship. Philip could scan a difficult situation (as well as a poem) with great deftness. He could listen, hold still, empathise, keep his counsel then, if it were needed, give it with a candour and clarity that were often disarming and nearly always liberating. In other words, his friendship was one that paid attention and did not flinch.

Thoroughly Australian in that he felt completely at home in Sydney, Melbourne and Canberra, Philip was a true cosmopolitan. He had a strong pulse of affinity with Italy, Eastern Europe—particularly Hungary—and most especially with Renaissance England. His knowledge of Elizabethan poetry was astonishing in its range and accuracy. He knew by heart hundreds of lines of Spenser, Donne, Shakespeare and many others, and he found occasions to quote them, quite naturally, when they were relevant to what was happening right now. Yeats, too, and A. D. Hope and David Campbell and Bruce Dawe. He also had an almost encyclopaedic knowledge of classical music which he carried lightly, without the slightest fuss or pretension.

Besides his own four volumes of poems, Philip also made some fine translations of a selection of poems from the Swedish of Lars Gustafson, and his book-length study of Shakespeare's sonnets *Self, Love and Art* is one of the best introductions to the sonnets that one could wish for. To pick it up and read it now has a most salutary effect. It rises out of the desert of techno-critical jabber of modern criticism and sounds like a human being speaking to us without the least condescension about some of the important things Philip found in the poems. I regard it as a rare treasure.

All of us who were touched by Philip's companionship, his wide-ranging talk, his hilarious and affectionate mimicry of colleagues and teachers, and his quick generosity are at a loss. We find ourselves walking about in an emptiness where Philip used to be. If we are sustained somewhat in this bleakness it is because the things that Philip stood for, though threatened, are still here. These gifts and qualities are not only personal. They come from a long humane and, in his case, religious tradition for which Philip was one of the outstanding lightning rods of his place and time. They have little to do with the tawdry trappings of 'personality'. They work on a different level. Our mutual friend, the late A. K. Ramanujan, once said, when we were all together in Chicago, that the deeper we go into ourselves the more we find we are alike, and it is in this sense that we should understand the word 'kind'. We are all kin. Kindness is therefore our natural state, though we attain it only intermittently. It is in this sense that I want to call Philip a kind man; he made us aware that we all share whatever we have, and not out of any moral compulsion. It is just the way things are. It was because of this unspoken but clear belief that Philip made so many solid friends in every part of the world where he touched down.

In his own poems Philip made a distinctive contribution to Australian letters. Two fine articles by, respectively, Noel Rowe (*Southerly 1*, 1986) and Gary Catalano (*Quadrant*, Jan–Feb 1998) detail the nature of that contribution. I won't repeat what they both say fully and eloquently but will add only that what some readers might miss is that, although Philip's manner and diction are somewhat reminiscent of earlier lyric and meditative poets such as Herrick and Herbert, this is really a mask. The bones of his poems are distinctly modern.

Peter Porter once said, 'Philip Martin is incapable of writing an inelegant sentence.' That remark gives a clue to much more than his prose and poetry. Although he was by no means a saint, he was incapable of living an inelegant day. He had an unswerving sense of value and style in music, painting, food, architecture, and much else. He was what Yeats called a 'social man' who could set the table on a roar with a beautifully rounded story. But he was also very engaging one-on-one, a skill that one rarely sees among men in Australia or America or, come to think, in most other places.

In his life companion in his mature years Philip was extraordinarily lucky. Before and after his severe stroke in 1987, Jenny brought him so much joy that I think he often believed he was in some kind of reverie. And even after the stroke Philip was a loving and humorous companion. The last time I saw him, all three of us laughed outrageously at some of the madder moments we recalled from *Beyond the Fringe*. I remember that moment vividly: it was as if all of us were, for a moment, completely whole.

So many people sense that we have lost one of our stable co-ordinates, a way of speaking and of thinking. This sense is a strange admixture of sadness and anger that Philip could well understand. Were he here, might say, 'Yes, well it all seems part of the bargain.' And then he might add, 'And I'm afraid you'll have to get used to it as best you can.' ■

Now resident in Canberra, **Keith Harrison** has published a dozen books of poetry and translation.

Overshadowed by the book

Capote, dir. Bennett Miller. 'I thought Mr Clutter was a very nice gentleman. Right up to the moment I cut his throat.' A great and violent line from a nearly great, and violent (emotionally at least) film. Perry Smith (responsible for the above utterance) and Richard Hickock would be remembered by very few were it not for Truman Capote. And while Capote himself would be well remembered for much besides them, his real literary resonance is on account of his strange and extraordinary telling of their story.

In 1959 Capote was drawn to the small town of Holcomb, Kansas, after reading a tiny newspaper article about the violent killing of a family by the name of Clutter. He planned to write an article about the murders for *The New Yorker*. But it wasn't long before Capote realised this material was too big for an essay. It represented something much greater—in both subject and literary potential. This material was worthy of a book—*In Cold Blood*—that would do no less than change the way readers experienced non-fiction.

But that's the book. The movie, *Capote*, is quite another matter. The film is about the experience of writing *In Cold Blood* and its being written (quite a different thing). But the book's existence casts a long and murky shadow over the film. The film mixes (as does the book) the reality of Capote's life and the violent events chronicled in the book. And try as I might, I couldn't help but compare the two accounts. But there is no comparison. The book is genius, the film ... nearly great.

What can be said for the film is that it is full to the brim with extraordinary performances. Needless to say, Philip Seymour Hoffman is breathtaking as the magnificently odd wit we know as Truman Capote. But he is not alone. Chris Cooper does what few actors can manage—a supporting role that defines the very meaning of the term. As the police officer Alvin Dewey he is discreet but essential. Catherine Keener plays Harper Lee with a dry confidence that suits (as well as one can know) the strangely inscrutable novelist.

Capote is Miller's first feature. And as such he should be applauded. He directs this story with an unexpected rhythm that makes it much more than a standard biopic. Most scenes float with an odd grace that many a seasoned director would shy away from. And it works to a point. But ultimately I waited for something that never quite came. It suggested a great deal but didn't quite deliver on its promises.

The script has some great moments and is performed without fault. And as a portrait of the difficult life of art and crime, it delivers enough.

In the words of the script itself—when Harper Lee asks Capote what he thinks of the film version of her Pulitzer Prize-winning novel, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, he mutters to himself, 'I don't see what all the fuss is about.'

—Siobhan Jackson

Strange and wondrous

The March of the Penguins, dir. Luc Jacquet. Years ago I watched a David Attenborough documentary on the subject of emperor penguins. Attenborough portrayed their annual march through the unforgiving elements of Antarctica with such straightforward beauty that it moved me to tears. Jacquet's version of these amazing events is less moving (in fact, I giggled where once I cried), but the penguins are so beautiful and ridiculous that they make any serious film-maker's (and Jacquet is certainly that) effort worth while.

Every year, across miles of ice desert, the emperor penguin waddles and belly-glides to its breeding ground. By scores of thousands, the bird that swims but cannot fly heads to the selfsame blizzard-ridden spot that its ancestors have for thousands of years, to find a mate, lay an egg, hatch an egg and regurgitate for its hatchling—all in temperatures as low as 80 below. It's no life—in fact, if Hell froze over ... you get my snowdrift. Many die, but enough survive. And then it's back to the comparatively balmy waters below the ice. Did I mention the ever-present giant petrels? And the oh-so-friendly sea lions?

Morgan Freeman narrates this tale of icy life and death with a jauntiness that is charming but a little saccharine. The script is not as magnificent as its subject demands. These noble beasts deserved less cutesy anthropomorphising and more straight story.

The Christian Right in America is championing *The March of the Penguins*, and the emperor penguins' 'lifestyle', as an example of healthy living for us human animals. Apparently the penguins' monogamous tendencies (for eight months in a lifetime, at least) and their stoic, egg-bound loyalty are appealing. I wonder what the penguins would make of it all?

Armed with glorious pictures and an extraordinary tale of nature, *The March of the Penguins* defies any human silliness. This film ain't gonna teach ya nothin' about human morality, but it sure does remind you what strange and wondrous things animals can be. And these animals truly are emperors of their breed.

—Siobhan Jackson

Wasted talent

Inside Man, dir. Spike Lee. Denzel Washington, Clive Owen, Willem Dafoe, Jodie Foster, Christopher Plummer—read like an A-team Hollywood wedding list? Well, it may as well be for all the good their presence does *Inside Man*. What a waste!

Denzel Washington and Jodie Foster, left, in *Inside Man*. Natalie Portman and Hugo Weaving, below, in *V for Vendetta*.

Although I'm sure they'd buy excellent wedding booty should Lee choose to reaffirm his wedding vows. This is not Lee's worst film (that honour goes to *The 25th Hour*—a true dog of a film) but I'm pressed to care for it more than a mite.

Inside Man follows the ins and outs of a 'clever' bank heist. Tough cop Keith Frazier (Denzel Washington) pits his streetwise wit against the educated machinations of smart-crim Dalton Russell (Clive Owen). But all is not as it seems, and our bad guy seems like a good guy—or at least an admirable guy. What to do? Both lead protagonists can't end up winning the day, or one is going to end up looking incompetent or complicit. A third party, perhaps? But enough with the plot—that is not the film's problem.

Spike Lee has everything at his fingertips in this bank-robbery genre pic except his own ability to tread with a light cinematic touch. As a director he can certainly assemble a powerful team of great actors and fashion a reasonable piece of film craft. He just can't keep anything on the artistic 'down low'. He tells you how to feel and when to feel without giving you any convincing human reason to feel. Film art is not about giving lectures in human goodness or a class in bad morals. We see enough of that on TV. It's a subtler art than that. It can accommodate questions that drift unanswered and ambiguities that remain just that—ambiguous. And with actors capable of genuine nuance, the only real crime committed in *Inside Man* is not shaping a film worthy of their talent.

The one thing I did enjoy was the bizarre inclusion of the Bollywood-style opening and closing music track. I guess there was an Indian bank teller. Maybe he was more significant than I suspected at first. Guess I'd have to grant that as an unanswered question.

—Siobhan Jackson

Dark days ahead

V for Vendetta, dir. James McTeigue. The setting: Britain, in the near future. A fascist government blacklists books, music and films it deems a threat; it oppresses and persecutes those who do not conform to its dark, tyrannical vision: free thinkers, writers, homosexuals, political dissidents, human-rights campaigners. Secret police and their political masters conspire, and the media is homogenised into a right-wing propaganda machine, with belligerent pundits raving about the dangers of immigration and immorality, with government censors watching carefully and orchestrating what the public hears and sees.

Natalie Portman plays Evey, a young woman working at a popular television station run by her boss Deitrich (Stephen Fry). One night she is caught walking on the streets of London after curfew by several thuggish 'Fingermen' (as the secret police are called), who threaten to rape and assault her. She is saved by the enigmatic Shakespeare-quoting mask-wearing V (Hugo Weaving), who seeks, through what one could describe as a campaign of violence and terrorism, to depose Britain's paranoid and violent chancellor (John Hurt), while simultaneously rousing the frightened population to fight the totalitarian regime that rules them.

'The people should not be afraid of the government,' says V. 'The government should be afraid of the people.' The masked hero/terrorist/madman (take your pick) characterises himself (with no small degree of irony) as a latter-day Count of Monte Cristo, invokes the name of Guy Fawkes often, and seeks to succeed where Fawkes failed. After hijacking a television station, V declares that the people are responsible for their own fate, implying that by their silence and inaction, they are complicit in the travesties inflicted by the despots in charge.

Director James McTeigue (who has served as first assistant director on the *Matrix* movies, among other sci-fi fare) has, with the help of the Wachowski brothers' screenplay (they, of course, wrote and directed *The Matrix*), cast the original story in a contemporary mould, directly criticising the current foreign policy of the United States.

The anti-conservative themes encoded in *V for Vendetta* are, however, essentially the same as those in the complex book of the same name by highly talented writer Alan Moore. Many of his books have been adapted into movies in recent years—*From Hell*, *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen*, and the upcoming *The Watchmen*. To date, they are poor imitations of the original, striking works. *V for Vendetta* will not be the last comic-book adaptation to hit the silver screen—keep an eye out for *The Watchmen* in the next year or so.

V for Vendetta is what I'd call a decent adaptation, but the odd cliché (the 'birth by fire/experimental accident') may obscure the film's intent and annoy some viewers. For a genre adaptation, it's a little risky, but the acting is of a high standard and cinematically it does deliver. Jaded audiences may roll their eyes at the political content, as they are wont to do; perhaps this is a movie that may raise a question or two for some viewers, or simply validate pre-existing ideas.

Now, on the other hand, you can forget that, ignore the allegories and go down to the cinema and enjoy yourself if you like a bit of action and Wachowski movie magic. If the story interests you more than that, sales of the dark, more challenging comic book are on the rise—it's a good read, and can be enjoyed solely on its own merits.

—Gil Maclean

watching brief

Signing off

The best lack all conviction, while the worst
Are full of passionate intensity.
—W. B. Yeats, 'The Second Coming'

WELL, HERE WE ARE, talking like this for the last time. How has it been for you, the last ten years? Actually, *Eureka Street* has been part of my life for 14 of its 15 years: Morag Fraser asked me to help out with the proofing in 1992, and I've sort of stuck to the place like dried Weet-Bix ever since.

March 1996 is so distant now, it was a different cosmos. The Labor government in Canberra was just about to lose the election after deciding to shaft its environmental voters, stop annoying big business and go after the demographic now known as 'Howard's battlers'. (Good move, fellas. You showed us. And where are you now? That's right, say it loud and clear—IN OPPOSITION. FOR TEN YEARS. Just so you know, because we are all thinking that MAYBE YOU HAVEN'T NOTICED.)

What else? Well, a computer hard drive was about half a gig, and mobile phones were about as big as Maxwell Smart's shoe-phone. And no one had heard of that ballroom-dancing chip-shop woman who made racism not respectable but just bloody shameless.

As the first Hughes Watching Brief was being written, John Howard was already telegraphing the future by refusing to go on the ABC to debate the then PM, Keating. He wanted Ray Martin and Kerry Packer's Nine, and he got what he wanted because, as we now know, Howard tends to get what he wants. The events that followed have a curious inevitability about them, as we look back on the decade of wedging, dog-whistling and weasel words. I find myself wondering time and again, 'How the heck did we let *that* happen?' I don't think I'm alone, but we wonderers don't seem as organised, ruthless or determined as the people we are wondering about: Yeats said it all up there at the top of the page.

When Howard was elected he slashed the budget of the national broadcaster that he had so feared as a host for his pre-election debate, and installed as boss Jonathan Shier to run the organisation into the ground. It's all the more credit to ABC employees that news and current affairs have continued at all. And as we now go to press with *Eureka Street's* last print issue, Communications Minister Helen Coonan has announced the abolition of the one and only staff-elected position on the ABC board. Once that would have meant a strike, a nice big fat one, with strong debate in the press. But it was tucked away behind some bloody Commonwealth Games reporting and nobody seemed to notice. In any case, are strikes 'legal' any more under the draconian industrial laws that have just come in?

A rough decade of television stuff that stands out:

The image of the World Trade Center's destruction on 11 September 2001.

The Sydney Olympics Opening Ceremony.

The utter failure of any channel except ABC and SBS to display any sympathy for asylum seekers.

The disappearance from mainstream news/current affairs radar of Aboriginal rights and reconciliation.

Ditto for the environment, particularly this last decade's onslaught on our forests.

The resistless rise of horrible reality programs.

The proliferation of cooking programs in a culture that eats packaged food in front of the telly.

The impregnability and longevity of soap operas.

Good comedies: *Father Ted, Kath & Kim, Absolutely Fabulous, The Vicar of Dibley, Roy and HG, Frontline, Backberner, Good News Week.*

Good series, mini or otherwise: *The Sopranos, The West Wing, Sea Change, Xena, Buffy, Changi.*

Good news: *Media Watch, Four Corners* and the *7.30 Report* with Kerry O'Brien: may they survive to comment on this time as a unique and unfortunate glitch in the long, successful history of the national broadcaster.

TV programs that changed the way we look at the world, whatever you might think of them: *The X-Files, The Sopranos, Friends, Seinfeld, Sex and the City, Buffy the Vampire Slayer, Roy & HG, Big Brother, Jamie's School Dinners, The Simpsons,* Princess Diana's funeral, the September 11 images.

Back then in pre-millennium, pre-9/11, pre-SIEV-X days I began this column by breathlessly informing you all that we were watching less TV than before. It seemed like a good thing at the time—a whole ten minutes less per week than in 1991. Of course, there were only the five network channels then; the big cable rollouts started a bit later. The impact of pay TV has been quiet but profound, and the media pundits are predicting the end of network TV as we know it.

Other media, web-based, are taking over: the single Ed-Murrow-type of audience is splintered into a billion niches, so our 21st-century Joe McCarthys flourish without effective challenge. Murrow had audiences of about 60 million. No one matches that now: the proliferation of channels dilutes such influence, and voters are entertained 24/7 into passivity as billionaire warmongers ravage the Earth and keep us all working so hard for less money that we're too tired to be activists.

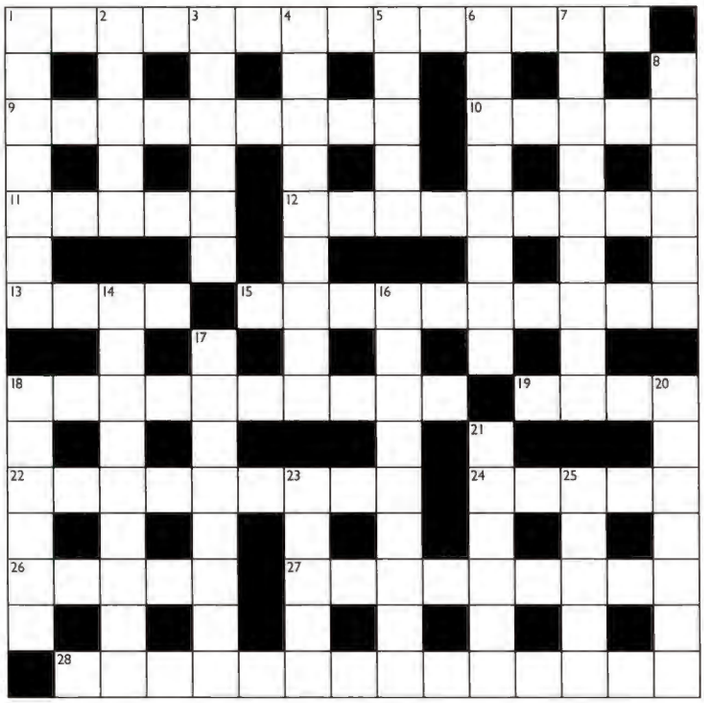
Maybe, as mobiles and the internet grow exponentially, we are seeing the beginnings of Teilhard de Chardin's noösphere, that web of connectedness that leads all evolution to the omega point. Or maybe we are just in for a great big dollop of *Bladerunner*ish dystopia. Whatever happens, we need to remember that there's more to life than watching. *Valete et bona fortuna.* ■

Juliette Hughes is a freelance writer.

puzzled

Devised by
Joan Nowotny IBVM

Eureka Street Cryptic Crossword no. 140, May–June 2006



ACROSS

1. What this edition of *Eureka Street* could be—if it were a rare stamp, for instance. (10,4)
9. Ready? O run, if possible, from January to December. (4,5)
10. Demand something accurate. (5)
11 After a time, gave a feeble jerk. (5)
12. Round 3 o'clock, for instance, she's certainly due! (5,4)
13. Manage to fix the vestment. (4)
15. Modification to publicity for fair-minded people is on time. (10)
18. Are they angry statements or pleasurable pastimes? (10)
19. The status quo? (2,2)
22. One in favour of examiners, but expressing dissent in general. (9)
24. Part of flower on special plate. (5)
26. Large cat reportedly on the golf course. (5)
27. It is of little importance that there isn't an invoice. (2,7)
28. Position of responsibility on a boat? Or in a school? (14)

DOWN

1 & 18-ac. Abstruse problems—the last to be found in 3 & 8. (7,10)
2. Permission for a break. (5)
3 & 8. An exclamation of triumph on the road that leads to this magazine! (6,6)
4. Just like this! Therefore something occurs. (4,3,2)
5. Where cowboys displayed their skills as they trotted round. (5)
6. A well-known person, possibly, with his own distinctiveness. (8)
7. Are they favoured by 22-across? (9)
8. See 3.
14. Process to include part of speech, but do not go on ship to articulate it. (9)
16. Traced run, somehow, using landing gear. (9)
17. Evaluated the schools' short edition in the exam, perhaps. (8)
18. Dome made of copper, polar bear had no right to enter. (6)
20. Go different ways; single people initially illuminated. (5,2)
21. Separator went into orbit, right? (6)
23. Did some scientist, such as Newton, Galileo or other, discover this island? (5)
25. It's no lie that compassion takes time at the start. (5)

Solution to Crossword no. 139, Mar–Apr 2006

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