EUREKA STREET

A MAGAZINE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS, THE ARTS AND THEOLOGY
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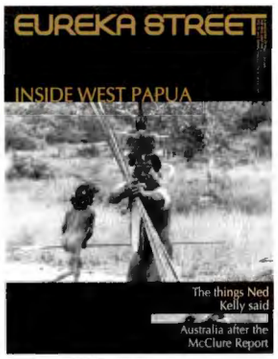
INSIDE WEST PAPUA

The things Ned Kelly said

Australia after the McClure Report



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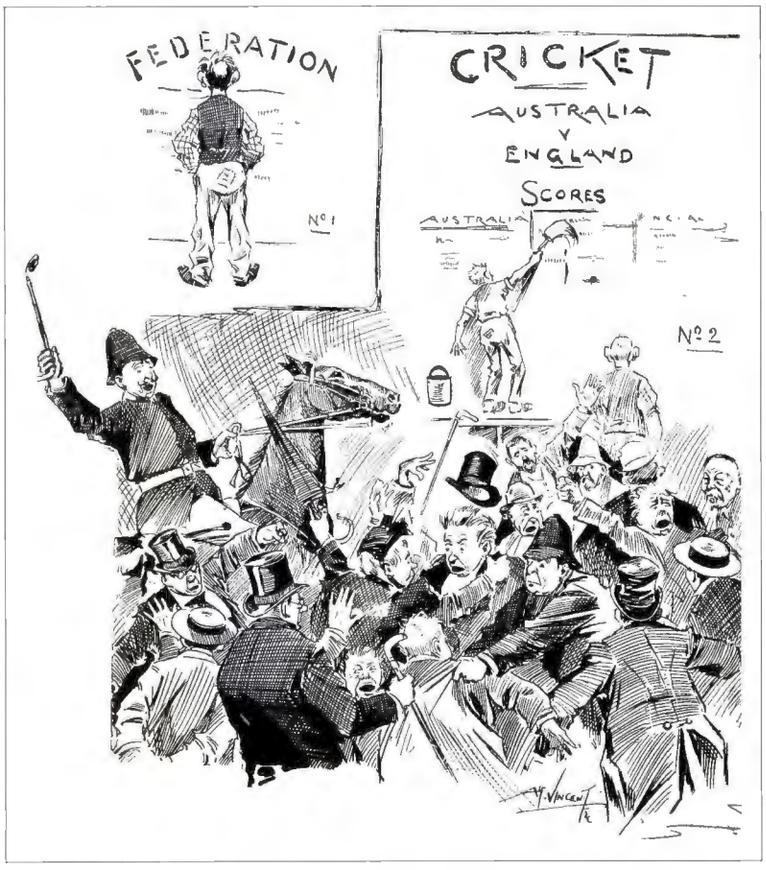


If I had robbed and plundered ravished and murdered everything I met young and old rich and poor. The public could not do any more than take firearms And assisting the police as they have

In sight

THE YOUNG MAN with feathers in his hair looks glum. Well he might, given the stirrings in his homeland of West Papua. In fact he is taking part in a traditional war ceremony in his home valley. But it is a limited war, not the complex, protracted one now playing out between the resistance—the Organisasi Papua Merdeka (OPM, or Free West Papua Movement) and Indonesian forces in West Papua.

Photographer and writer Ashley Gilbertson is the first person ever to photograph the resistance movement on the West Papuan border. His time in the Baliem valley, with the Ndani people, also gave him (and us) a glimpse into their day-by-day lives—working, trading, marketing, fighting a guerrilla war that will not be resolved in the near future. See page 10.

Also on page 10 you'll find Edmund Campion, celebrating the bicentenary of the birth of John Henry Newman, a man for whom the idea of a university was more important than its corporate profile or the number of full-fee-paying overseas students it was able to attract.

The other celebration for 2001 is the anniversary of Federation. In November, Archbishop Peter Carnley, Anglican Primate of Australia, anticipated some of the friction points that Australia will face in 2001. Competitive individualism versus community consensus is one. And in speaking publicly about national issues, the Archbishop also raises the perennial issue of church–state relations. Should an Archbishop have a public voice on affairs of state? Wilson Tuckey thinks not. For what the Archbishop thinks, see page 19.

Political scientist, Francis Castles, puts another perspective on Federation in his critique of the McClure report and Australia's brave new world of welfare. See page 29.

While we are pondering nationhood and celebrating that rare, unifying moment in 1901, the cartoon, left, brings to mind another team sport. The hats have changed but have our attitudes? For some answers, see Tim Stoney, page 7. As for the cartoon itself: it is from historian John Hirst's marvellous book on Federation, *The Sentimental Nation: The Making of the Australian Commonwealth*, which will be reviewed in *Eureka Street* in March.

Still on Australia and our founding myths: Alex McDermott, page 36, takes a new look at what Ned Kelly said in the famous Jerilderie Letter (see left).

Finally, it's back, and worse than ever—the Summer Quiz. But this year we're conceding a clue: read Juliette Hughes' e-hint on page 46 and then boldly go for it. Happy New Year. **—Morag Fraser**

Capital Letter

Jack Waterford

Spring cleaning in summer

Kim Beazley may ultimately have cause to be thankful for the Shepherdson inquiry into vote rorts in Queensland, but there will be a lot of agony and turmoil for the party before it gets to that. At the end of the road, the result may be that Labor, even if prodded by circumstance, becomes the first of the major parties to act against undemocratic, immoral and sometimes downright criminal practices in its party processes. Beazley indeed might claim that the first acts preceded the criminal court cases which led to the Shepherdson inquiry: did not the party at his urging adopt a resolution reforming some of the more obvious practices at its national conference in the middle of last year?

Perhaps, but it was pretty timid stuff, calculated to stop the more outrageous rorts, but not to alienate the factions. He might well add that there is little sign that the Liberals are doing anything about rorting and stacking in their own ranks, and that, by the time the agony is over, they may be the ones more embarrassed about their failure to go through some cleansing fires.

But there is another line of argument altogether. It is that the electorate doesn't worry too much about internal party rorting, branch stacking and backroom deals. The legend of the dead voting in ALP preselections is by now 100 years old, regarded as a larrikin peccadillo by many. Moreover, the voters, already very cynical about politicians, know very well that the others do much the same thing. By this analysis, they will quickly turn their gaze back to more important things—education, health, the GST or petrol prices. All that Labor has to do is to make a few cosmetic changes, as it did at the party conference, and wait until the current fit of public rectitude blows over.

Perhaps, but Beazley has good reasons to move more decisively, even if at great risk to himself. The risk comes from the fact that the ugliest and biggest rorting party factions—starting with the AWU faction in Queensland and the Centre Right in NSW—are closely tied to him. By the time the dust has settled, not a few more Wayne Swans, personally very close to Beazley, will have had their power exploded. Beazley may find himself drawn in, not because he has been a player in the rorting, but because he has been a keen and knowledgeable spectator and beneficiary. Other factions play for keeps as well. Beazley is less at risk from the exposure of their shenanigans. Not so some on his front bench.

The faction system has been letting Labor down for some time, and its weaknesses underline Beazley's own weaknesses. It has been a long time since any of the factions were grouped around ideologies or sets of ideas: they are based around personalities, paymasters and divisions of the spoils.

The leaders and the candidates thrown up by these factions are often not the best that the party has to offer. Just as significantly, the factions, and hence the branches, are no longer engine rooms and debating chambers of ideas and policies: most of what nowadays passes for policy is confected by party secretaries, polling organisations and advertising agencies, without any real reference to the base of the party.

The biggest ulcer in the party comes from the ranks of Young Labor, keenly cultivated by the factions because they have the time and the ambition to do things that more mainstream party members would not do. The next biggest problem comes from the close alliances between factions and particular unions and union chieftains, able both to rort their own unions to provide the resources for rorting the political wing of the party and having a keen, but usually not very pure, interest in what the political wing can do for the industrial wing, particularly in the way of patronage. Witness the number of wives and relatives of senior faction chieftains in safe seats.

Labor may be going some distance towards making it more difficult to stack preselections with mystery members, and perpetrate fraud about member residence, but it has done nothing to reform its sub-branch structure, or to make participation in the party any easier for potential members. It still turns on monthly meetings calculated to keep all but the very dedicated away, making it easier for some organised groups to have the numbers on vital issues. The party does little to cultivate membership by academics and others who might feed ideas into the system; when it does co-opt them, it is not through the usual processes, but from the top.

Against all of this, Beazley has one advantage he has yet to use. He is generally regarded as being a good bloke, perhaps lacking ticker, as John Howard would suggest, but not lacking a heart. The truth is that many of the hard men by whom he is surrounded need him rather more than he needs them. Any party needs people who are willing to organise, to work hard and, sometimes, to do unpleasant things for some higher purpose. But most of the current crop of those espousing lines such as Graham Richardson's about 'whatever it takes', getting off with war stories about how they bluffed, bullied and cheated their way ahead, offer little hope and little reputation to Labor.

A Beazley willing to go over their heads to recreate the party for the second century of Federation might put more wins on the board than the 33 per cent the party achieved in the first century of Federation. ■

Jack Waterford is editor of the *Canberra Times*.

Melbourne memories

From Piero Pagliaro

Reading Edmund Campion's 'At the University of Sydney' (November 2000) brought back nostalgic memories of that era. But my own memories were of Melbourne.

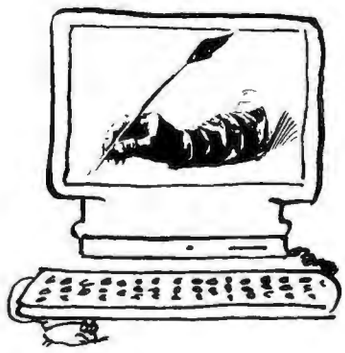
I was a tertiary student from 1953 to 1954, not attached to the University of Melbourne. I belonged to a Catholic student group from the Pharmacy College. We were fortunate to have Father Jerry Golden SJ at Newman College as chaplain. He was a warm and friendly priest with infectious enthusiasm for what we were doing. We were able to deepen our faith through biblically based discussion groups held at Newman with the inspired help of Father Jerry. But we were somewhat on the periphery of things, being outside the University and, as part-time students, not easily able to be involved in Newman Society activities. So my recollections and impressions of the time, such as they are, may be flawed, and somewhat faded. There must surely be many out there who were more central to the events and could give a more accurate picture.

We learned of the Jocists and Canon Cardijn's YCW movement in Belgium and the motto: 'see, judge and act'. I well remember the day that John Dormer visited our discussion group. Our attention was riveted by his vision for the church and his understanding of the student 'milieu' (a word I first learned there!).

Some of our important points of reference were the pastoral letters of Cardinal Suhard and *Radiating Christ* by Raoul Plus SJ. We explored the meaning of the doctrines of The Mystical Body of Christ and of the Incarnation in the context of our apostolate.

I well remember the first UCFA (Universities Catholic Federation of Australia) Conference I ever attended. It was held in Sydney. I was intrigued; but we students from Melbourne were somewhat disappointed that all the keynote speakers were 'PCLs' (prominent Catholic laymen) and that the topics selected were triumphalist in content and style. Castigating words were uttered from the floor of one particular annual conference against the disloyal 'Melbourne' attitude of trespassing on the theological preserves of the hierarchy and theologians. Some said the priority was in overcoming Communism. That was all very well, but it was not enough to be against something; as Christians we had to show and live what we believed in. We had to immerse ourselves in and love our student environment. It involved more than simply possessing a passive belief—like some sort of nominal 'club' membership.

Eureka Street welcomes letters from its readers. Short letters are more likely to be published, and all letters may be edited. Letters must be signed, and should include a contact phone number and the writer's name and address. If submitting by email, a contact phone number is essential. Address: eureka@jespub.jesuit.org.au



These and many other new ideas came into their own at the Melbourne conference in January 1955. Happily I still possess a booklet of the addresses. The theme was 'The Incarnation and the University'. The topics were delivered by a wide range of speakers, each actively involved in his own field of study, within the university. They were: 'The Incarnation', Bishop Simonds; 'The World Awaiting Redemption', Vincent Buckley; 'The Church—The Continuing Incarnation', John Dormer; 'The Condition of our Universities', Maurice Mulcahy; 'The Christian Role of the Intellect', Ian Howells; 'The Church in the University', Brian Buckley; 'The Incarnation and Studies', Terence Mahoney; 'The Student Apostolate', Fr J. Golden; 'The Incarnation Here and Now', William Ginnane. The 'Melbourne' approach was fortified by encouraging letters from the Vatican Secretary of State, and also from His Eminence, Cardinal Pizzardo and lastly from His Excellency, the Apostolic Delegate.

Some of us old students of the '50s in Melbourne likewise took heart from the outcomes of Vatican II, realising that our efforts had not been in vain and that the church could move forward.

Piero Pagliaro
Glen Waverley, VIC

November 2000 Book Offer Winners

M. Carroll, Rosanna, VIC; P. Hadley, Lysterfield, VIC; A. Langlois, Ascot Park, SA; R.C. & G.M. Hallows, Scullin, ACT; J. Lee, Strathfield, NSW; J. Wells, St Peters, SA; G. Kennedy, East Bentleigh, VIC; J. Skinner, Harbord, NSW; S. Tutton, Ormond, VIC; J. Murphy, Warragul, VIC; W.J. Slaven, Glen Forrest, WA; G.S. Bray, Crows Nest, NSW; M. Shelley, Camp Mountain, QLD; R. Pilz, Queanbeyan, NSW; R. Stewart, Bacchus Marsh, VIC.

Keeping it cricket

In the January–February 1992 edition of *Eureka Street*, Philip Derriman speculated about whether Test cricket would survive into the 21st century. Well, here we are and, on the face of it, all forms of cricket in Australia appear healthy.

Our Test team recently broke the West Indies world record for the most consecutive wins; our one-day international side is the reigning World Champion and, at the domestic level, the Pura Cup (the former Sheffield Shield) is the envy of cricketing nations around the world. Add record crowds for the early tests this summer, the highly successful Cricket Academy, the demand for former Australian players to coach other international teams and our first-class players to play English County cricket—and all appears well at the wicket.

Yet despite this success at the top, there's a growing disquiet among the very group that keeps cricket living and breathing.

Every weekend thousands of men, women and children all over the country pull on their whites and carve out their own sporting traditions. It's these people, who buy the bats and pads and gloves and merchandising products and fill the seats of the stadiums to watch their heroes, who are questioning the integrity of the game at the highest level.

I play cricket at an inner suburban club in Melbourne. John is typical of the guys who play for us. He's played in one form or another since he got his first cricket bat at five and, at 31, he still loves the game. He loves the contest, the mateship, and enjoys a beer and chat in the bar after the game.

'You know it's hard not to look back at matches you've been to and wonder whether they were rigged or not,' he said to me after a game one day.

'I mean, even with Brian Lara, there's a bloke who was clearly so good and has struggled and you hope it's not true, but you can't help but wonder about his form slumps. If they can get to someone like Cronje, they can get to anyone.'

'It's just so hard to trust cricket these days. Every time you see someone play a rash shot or drop a catch or bowl a bad ball you wonder—was that deliberate? Is he being paid?'

Several weeks later one of our past players returned to the club after two years working with an overseas Test team. Let's call him Peter.

'So, do you know a good bookie, Pete?' jested a teammate on Peter's first night at training.

'How much do they pay you to keep quiet?' added another.

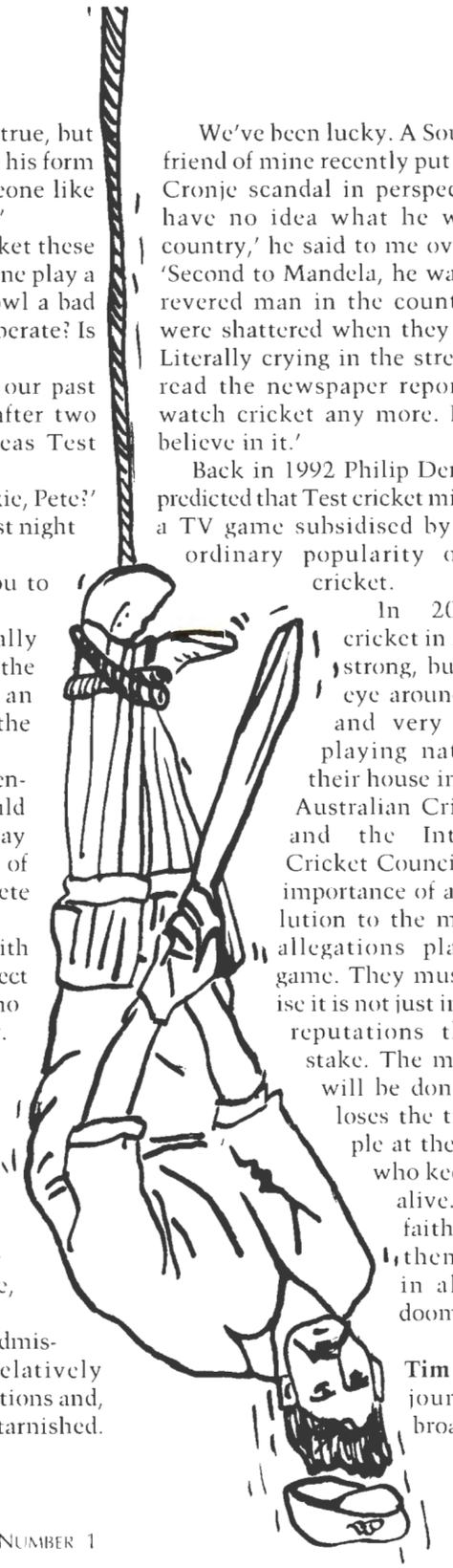
The questions were typically Australian—at one level 'taking the piss', at another revealing an anxiety about the direction of the game.

'I'm pretty sure it's not happening in the current team but I could almost guarantee it happened say about five years ago with some of the current players involved,' Pete said.

His comments were met with the type of awed silence and respect given only to those who are believed absolutely.

On any scale, it's been a tough 12 months for international cricket, with some of the highest profile players caught up in the muck of match-fixing and 'cash-for-conditions' scandals. The more that is scraped from the surface, the deeper the wound appears.

Despite the Waugh-Warne admissions, Australia has been relatively insulated from the worst allegations and, as yet, Test cricket remains untarnished.



We've been lucky. A South African friend of mine recently put the Hansie Cronje scandal in perspective. 'You have no idea what he was in our country,' he said to me over a coffee. 'Second to Mandela, he was the most revered man in the country. People were shattered when they found out. Literally crying in the streets as they read the newspaper reports. I can't watch cricket any more. I just don't believe in it.'

Back in 1992 Philip Derriman also predicted that Test cricket might become a TV game subsidised by the extraordinary popularity of one-day cricket.

In 2001, Test cricket in Australia is strong, but cast your eye around the globe and very few Test-playing nations have their house in order. The Australian Cricket Board and the International Cricket Council know the importance of a swift resolution to the match-fixing allegations plaguing the game. They must also realise it is not just international reputations that are at stake. The most damage will be done if cricket loses the trust of people at the grass roots who keep the game alive. If they lose faith in cricket, then the game in all forms is doomed. ■

Tim Stoney is a journalist and broadcaster.




The Month's Traffic

Old wars, old sores

In 1972, I was a student in a Filipino language school in Mindanao in the southern Philippines and was witness to an ongoing civil war.

The school squatted in a forest of coconut and star-apple trees on the edge of a beautiful bay in a predominantly Christian area looking across the water to a Muslim province.

The sight of boatloads of evacuees fleeing across the bay in motorised outriggers often shattered this idyllic scene. They were escaping from the fighting between government forces and members of the MNLF, or Moro National Liberation Front. This armed wing of the Islamic independence group developed in the late 1960s and these original Muslim inhabitants have not stopped fighting for self-determination since. Smoke sometimes drifted across the bay into the school grounds from the homes and buildings torched by the military or the rebels.

These evacuees were mostly poor subsistence farmers who carried a few household possessions wrapped in straw mats and dragged frightened children by the arms. They crowded into church halls and public buildings, they cooked in the open, or lined up for meals supplied by church groups.

Mindanao was thrust back on to the front pages of world newspapers in April this year when 21 mostly foreign tourists at a Malaysian diving resort were abducted by the Abu Sayaaf, a breakaway group of activists from Mindanao. The media went berserk, embellishing stories with such words as 'terrorist' and 'extremist' to describe the decades-old conflict between the Muslim and predominantly Christian populations of the Philippines. But the story is not as black and white as it seems.

This conflict had already had a long gestation period. Mindanao is one of the largest of the Philippine islands and is rich in natural resources, mining and timber. It boasts a fertile soil and an excellent climate. Islamic principalities settled Mindanao from the beginning of the 15th century. These strongly independent states resisted the Spanish in 1521 and the Americans and Japanese in turn.

The Americans concluded a series of treaties with the Sultans and *Datus* (leaders) of Mindanao, culminating in the treaty of 1899, which allowed Moro leaders to conduct their own affairs. But in 1904, President Roosevelt unilaterally declared the treaty null and void.

When America granted independence to the Philippines in 1946, there was strong opposition from the Islamic population. They inhabited 'Moroland', comprising Mindanao, Sulu, Palawan and Basilan. Their resistance was ignored and Mindanao became part of a predominantly Catholic Philippines.

Post-war development in the Philippines saw a massive colonisation of Mindanao by the largely Christian north (Visayas). Moro (or Maranao) lands were over-run as the new settlers scrambled to find a livelihood. The Moro nation retreated to their own enclaves and consolidated their culture. They became a minority in their own country.

During the Marcos years, especially in the 1970s, resistance became more organised and the MNLF or Moro National Liberation Front doggedly resisted the strong-arm repression of the Marcos government. Under Marcos, the military pursued a 'slash and burn' policy, with bombings and mass arrests. A general state of war developed.

I once saw a family whose house had been strafed with Armalites by government soldiers searching for MNLF sympathisers. I can never forget the sight of the dead father and of a bewildered mother cradling her 15-year-old daughter whose leg was half shot away. One could begin to understand and sympathise with the victims of this war and dispossession.

In 1977 a group calling itself the MILF (Moro Islamic Liberation Front), advocating a more conciliatory approach to government, split from the MNLF. It has in fact developed into a formidable force of resistance and claims an armed force of 20,000 fighters. It is reputed to have an impressive arsenal of weapons, including surface-to-air missiles and rocket-propelled grenades.

The war has had an enormous impact on all areas of Mindanao and the Philippines in general. It is estimated that the government has been spending nearly P50 million (AU$2 million) a day in the war.

According to Fr Paul Oxley, a Catholic priest who has been living in Mindanao for 24 years, as many as half a million people have been displaced from their homes in the current war.

'Since the military destroyed several of the rebel camps recently, there has been even more sympathy for the MNLF. Now they have been scattered and operate as guerrilla groups.'

Mindanao contributes about 22 per cent of the country's annual rice and corn production, and as the war drags on, the Department of Agriculture has warned that the food supply for the entire country is being affected.

Yet the world seems to act as if there were no war going on at all. The press concentrates more on the kidnappings by the Abu Sayyaf than in examining the roots of this conflict. The Abu Sayyaf, which broke away from the MILF in 1991, reputedly has ties with the *mujahadin*, developed while fighting and training in Afghanistan. But Fr Paul Glynn, a Catholic priest who has been living with a Muslim family for two years, says, 'The Abu Sayyaf is just a disorganised group of bandits who have nothing in common with the MILF.'

President Estrada, who seems out of his depth, nonetheless takes a hard-line approach. He recently said, 'I offer peace to those who want peace, but I promise war to those who want war.'

Some would say that the war is in fact benefiting the President because the conflict has sidelined criticisms against his policies and the scandals involving his family, cronies and officials. Glynn says that Estrada adopts a 'monoculture' approach to the problems of Mindanao and 'wants everybody to be united, with Manila as the model.'

To complicate matters, Glynn argues, 'The United States is implicated in the war. It wants to build up the military power of friendly nations in the region of China and is passing off its second-hand army equipment to the Philippines.'

It would be simplistic to call this a religious conflict, but it could be turned into one. A committee of Muslim and Christian leaders recently called the war immoral and is pressuring the government to sue for peace.

The government and military, however, seem determined to provoke the sort of situation that could lead to 'ethnic cleansing'. They seem resolved to crush any movement for self-determination. Some things never change. **—John Bartlett**

Apocalypse know-how

Interest in the Book of the Apocalypse is not usually taken as a sign of spiritual health. It is more often popularly associated with mad right-wing colonels, the millennially anxious, and those for whom the Bible is an inspired crossword.

The Book of Revelation, however, is arousing current interest among mainstream theologians. In *Priests and People* (November 2000), for example, Christopher Rowland sees its importance as lying in the questions that it asks about God and humanity in an oppressive world, and in the rhetoric that it finds for the task. Its imagery unmasks the mechanisms of a totalitarian empire that claims religious allegiance, and also offers a vision of a glorious future with a God who rewards resistance. The power of imagery that combines realism and hope has made the work attractive to people with a large social vision, notably William Blake. It has also attracted those with a paranoid or literal vision.

It poses questions about God and about our hopes for the world, and about how God is related to our hopes, hopes that are central to faith and theology. There, they are treated under the themes of the Trinity and the Kingdom of God. Even the titles, however, suggest the difficulty of relating God to our hopes for the world. The image of the Kingdom of God suggests God's interest in the organisation of the world; the doctrine of the Trinity suggests God's serene inner life untroubled by our predicaments. Both images are elusive, making us ask how much we can know either of Trinity or of the Kingdom of God.

In the Cardinal Knox lecture delivered recently in Melbourne, Kevin Hart explored some of these questions. His theology is attractively modest, with a keen eye for the dangers of making confident claims about what really cannot be said. He argues that both Trinity and the Kingdom of God are elusive, and that we can have experience of neither. In Christian faith we are drawn to the Kingdom which Jesus preached through images, and are committed to seek it. But it remains a vision that always eludes our grasp and cannot be identified with anything we might produce.

Hart insists that our search for the Kingdom of God structures the way we experience the world, and in our ordinary commitments to Jesus' way we find traces of the Kingdom and of the Trinity. But these are traces only. It is not that we find God, but that God finds us in ways for which we must then find words. Hart leaves us with the attractive image of children running madly across fields to the horizon in pursuit of the Kingdom, not knowing that the Trinity is already rushing towards them.

The image leads us back to the Book of Revelation, whose imagery encourages its readers to be attentive to the trace of the God of Jesus Christ under unfavourable circumstances. For it was in a world in which the Christian God and any hope for transformation were treated as alien. Perhaps that is why it is recurrently popular. ■

Andrew Hamilton sj teaches at the United Faculty of Theology, Melbourne.

Ideas man

THERE ARE MANY reasons to notice the bicentenary of the birth of John Henry Newman, on 21 February. High among them is his contribution to the debate about universities in Australia, a contribution he has continued to make for the past 150 years. Newman's *The Idea of a University* came out just as Australia's first universities were getting under way in Sydney and Melbourne, and 400 copies of the first edition were sold in this country.

To this day *The Idea* remains the classic version of what a true university should be about—the enlargement of mind. Elusive, unrealisable, even at times unrealistic (as are all ideals), it nevertheless persists as a vision attracting the best of our university

John Henry Newman in 1845, by Sir William Ross

people. Patrick O'Farrell's history of the University of NSW shows how it energised, but also frustrated, the outstanding Professor Michael Birt (Vice-Chancellor, 1981–1992). Conversely, Tony Coady, in the symposium and book of the same name, *Why Universities Matter*, wondered how modern utilitarians could have failed to meet in their own experiences of university life Newman's 'element of expansion of understanding, or being among people for whom learning, ideas, clarity, criticism and exploration of significant, difficult thinking really matter'. Yes, it is an ideal; and some of it can be, and sometimes is, realised; but not always.

Something of the possibilities, as well as the elusiveness, of the university idea is caught in a single sentence of the late Pope Paul VI, who was a close student of Newman:

> The great modern university is a city of the mind, a vast classroom of instruction, a laboratory of discovery and research, an infinity of small rooms containing solitary scholars and writers, a studio of artistic production, an endless conversation, a meeting place for scholars and a home for its students.

Pope Paul was writing to his friend Father Theodore Hesburgh, who led the University of Notre Dame in the USA over 35 eventful years. Father Hesburgh had more success than Newman in actually making the idea of a university work, for Notre Dame is acclaimed everywhere as a great Catholic university. Not so Newman's stunted little creation in Dublin in the middle of the 19th century.

Newman was swift to see what had gone wrong in Dublin: Irish clericalism would not allow a true university to come into existence. He had looked to the Catholic laity in Ireland and from all the English-speaking world to give life to his idea; but the clergy would not allow it. Suspicious of his appointments, they would not accede authority to laymen nor allow them to control finances. Their idea of a university, as he said, was 'priest-ridden'. So he failed.

The bitterness of these experiences in his creative middle years led him to elucidate a theology of power, wherein God had put a special tax on Catholics for having the benefits of the church. 'While men are men', he wrote in a letter, 'spiritual power will have terrible abuses. It is the price we pay for its benefits.' Long before he wrote that letter he had sat for three hours by the fireside at the Birmingham Oratory with young John Acton and discussed with him, as Acton reported to a friend, the 'natural inclination of men in power to tyrannise'. Thirty years later, Acton would deliver himself of his famous saying, 'power tends to corrupt'. Meanwhile, Newman's letters and diaries were filled with his own observations of the ways in which power corrupts its users.

This tendency for power to spoil the powerful directed his thoughts to the virtues of the open society. There, checks and balances, traditions of courtesy and agreed civilities diffused power and allowed space to the individual. And so he began to change his mind on universities. He would not resile from the Dublin lectures that make up *The Idea of a University* and he kept the book in print, although, when he died, Acton recorded that he had thought less of it than of his other writings. The idea remained, even if it had small hopes of realisation. By 1872 Newman was writing: 'I should not propose a Catholic University, for I think our rulers [ie. the bishops] would not give us a real one.' A few weeks later, he wrote that he was beginning to question proposals for establishing Catholic Colleges in the universities ... 'and I suppose the idea of a Catholic University, pure and simple, is altogether out of the question'. Now he spoke approvingly of open universities with strong chaplaincies, preferably Jesuit.

Born 200 years ago and still with something to say! **—Edmund Campion**

West Papua rumbles

WAR IS RITUALISTIC custom in West Papua. It is a means of appeasing gods, bringing luck, and settling old scores. Ndani elders are quick to point out that tribal warfare is not intended to result in carnage or what they are now learning to call human rights abuses.

The Ndani tribe is the largest in West Papua, Indonesia. They act as the major support base of the Presidium party, headed by Theys Eluay, recently jailed in the lead-up to Independence Day celebrations, held on 1 December. The Presidium party claims to represent the underground militarised resistance, Organisasi Papua Merdeka (OPM), otherwise known as the Free West Papua Movement. Ndani presence and numbers in the OPM is strong. In turn, the Ndani control most of their traditional land, in the Baliem valley in the mountainous central highland region.

Early October 2000, Baliem Valley: the Indonesian army forcibly removes six West Papuan Morning Star independence flags. The result: mass riots and 30 people confirmed dead. Indonesian administration, fearing further unrest, bans all traditional ceremonies until further notice.

The Indonesian bureaucracy does not make travel in this province easy—to say the least. The Indonesian government is anxious to dampen unrest and any resistance to their claim on this resource-rich Melanesian territory. In particular, they take extreme precautions with press cover-

age, and use strategies of media blackout. Travel is not permitted for working journalists. I was arrested while photographing a political riot that erupted after the Independence candidate, Theys Eluay, lost to autonomy supporter, Governor Salossa. The Indonesian Sgt Major who interrogated me whispered, between questions, 'There is no problem [that is, with my being in the province]; it's just [that] this is my Governor's secret.'

opens the proceedings by shooting poison bamboo arrows towards the slowly advancing enemy (see cover photograph). Children, women and men from the village run back and forth behind him, almost in frenzy, gesturing menacingly with spears, bows and arrows.

War ceremonies are usually solely for males, but in this case, where numbers are short, women and children have been allowed to take part. As Ndani warfare

animistic deities which the community reveres.

Men break off and gather materials to initiate flame. For this, dry grass is placed under a small branch and a length of bamboo twine is threaded between. The chief puts pressure on the branch with his feet and pulls the bamboo back and forth until the smoke starts rising. Carefully, he lifts the grass to his face and fuels the ember with a light breath until the grass catches.

Censorship is strong throughout the province, and the Baliem Valley is no exception. After almost a week of waiting, I take a bumpy drive through various OPM checkpoints and a five-hour hike through jungle to a secret location, where a 'prohibited' war ceremony was taking place.

The chief of the nearby village, smeared in reeking black pig fat and wearing only a *koteka* (penis gourd), a thin piece of body armour, and a bird of paradise headdress,

goes, 'war-war' is short-lived, usually ending in 'talk-talk', in which verbal abuse and mediating the issue in question run together.

A resolution in place, the 'victorious' tribe return to their village and there perform further dances, signifying triumph and thanks to the gods. Women stand in a closed group, holding babies and children tight while, around them, warrior men run in circles; a chant led by an elder signals a spiritual connection with the

An ensuing feast of boiled pig signifies the end of the ceremony.

Pigs are hard currency among the Ndani. A medium of exchange, they are seen being traded in marketplaces for goods ranging from TV antennae to wives. Trading streets all through Wamena, regional capital of the Baliem Valley, are lined with old indigenous women vigorously selling local produce, predominantly sweet potatoes. Around them, at a much slower pace, ageing

men amble up and down the street, semi-naked, smoking and strategising war among themselves. They seem oblivious to the Islamic Indonesian transmigrant woman nervously buying supplies nearby; she is more than wary of them. She hurries away from the crowd towards the mosque as afternoon prayer begins.

Sunset in Wamena marks the end of work for most locals and from the distant airport, a C-130 Hercules airlifts today's final load of transmigrants from the tense valley to safety. It passes through a haze of thick black smoke at the end of the airstrip where a crew of Papuans is making the runway longer.

The Papuans produce military-strength bitumen. They work in heat over 60 degrees Celsius. Pouring molten tar on to mountains of crushed rock creates viscous fumes; shovelling it makes more. The bitumen is mixed on oversized steel plates elevated a foot above ground. Underneath, fire rages, keeping the mixture from setting. The workers wear gumboots filled with water. As the water nears boiling point, the men skip off the plate and empty their boots, refilling them with cool water from a nearby puddle. Then they return to work.

Traditionally, these men go barefoot, as do their counterparts waging a guerrilla war against Indonesian forces (TNI) in the dense jungles covering West Papua. Thousands of camps all over the province have shunned the press for years in order to keep operations secret. Training camp HQ, rumoured to be inside PNG territory, has never before been exposed to media. With no precise mapping systems, nobody can be sure where these camps are. Only those who train or teach understand the complex trails and crossings involved in reaching them.

These people are members of the Free West Papua Movement. The OPM was established in 1962 after a long battle against the then colonial power, Holland. Though authority was transferred to Indonesia in 1963, it was not until 1969 that West Papua was formally integrated into Indonesia under a UN-recognised 'Act of Free Choice'. Allegedly corrupt, it is more commonly known among indigenous residents as the 'Act of No Choice'. During the Suharto years, with exception of a series of kidnappings, the OPM were relatively inactive, and under-equipped for major operations.

Now, after East Timorese independence and a 35-year wait, the troops are getting restless. **—Ashley Gilbertson**

This month's contributors: **John Bartlett** worked as a Columban priest in the southern Philippines from 1972–1980. He is currently a freelance writer living in Victoria; **Edmund Campion** teaches at the Catholic Institute of Sydney; **Ashley Gilbertson** is a freelance writer and photographer.

The background photograph is of footprints—the Ndani people are known as 'barefoot warriors'. The gumboot warriors, top, do battle with bitumen. The West Papuan man, above, is kitted out in Indonesian (TNI) fatigues and carries an AK-47 that is as old as he is himself.
Photographs by Ashley Gilbertson.

Knowing your place

Now that the international spotlight has moved on, what needs to be done in East Timor and who is best equipped to do it? **Frank Brennan** reports from Dili.

When I first came to East Timor, it was just before the first anniversary of the 1991 Santa Cruz massacre.

That week, Xanana Gusmao was arrested at a house in Dili. My travelling companion and I were met at Dili airport by an Indonesian Jesuit who took us to lunch and told us that East Timor was no place for well-meaning Australians. He judged it unwise that I stay in a Jesuit house and advised that we stay at the Hotel Turismo.

People in the streets were scared and apprehensive, but they did seem consoled that a couple of foreigners wanted to find their way to the Santa Cruz cemetery. At dusk the flowers were piled high around the black steel cross, and candles melted to the ground in the last heat of the day. People stood in silent prayer.

We had relaxed discussions with Bishop Belo, who drove us up into the hills for a party where key Timorese leaders urged us to return to Australia and agitate, not for independence but for greater autonomy, a reduction in the military presence and greater protection of human rights.

Nowadays Bishop Belo has less time for entertaining well-meaning Australians. Every international delegation wants to meet him. The people are free but do not yet enjoy the development needed to utilise that freedom.

But amid the entire debate about Portuguese language and the cultural future of East Timor, the people have retained their humour and poise. My favourite piece of Timor graffiti is on a plaque celebrating the opening of a bridge by Ali Alatas, the long-time Indonesian Foreign Minister, who told the world until the last minute that the militias were under control and the TNI would do the right thing. The plaque now bears the name 'Vasco da Gama'.

On this ninth anniversary of the Santa Cruz massacre, people felt quite safe being on the streets even late at night. The young people had placed candles around the perimeter fence of the cemetery. The flowers and candles at the foot of the black cross were there as they have been every day these last nine years. Mark Bowling of ABC News was there to cover the event with other members of the international media. No longer any need to hide the tape and smuggle it out later.

Earlier in the day I had attended mass at Viqueque, a problematic place for the return of ex-militia members. But everyone said they were prepared to welcome people home provided they admitted their wrongdoing and provided they were prepared to live peacefully under the new political order. An Indonesian sister helped distribute communion. Her fellow sisters from Java continue to run the only orphanage in the town.

Reconciliation is still a vexed issue in East Timor. There are good grounds for wondering what contribution can be made by well-meaning Australians and other international personnel who want to help. No doubt the UN Security Council thought it was helping with its recent delegation to East and West Timor, reporting that 'reconciliation should not be limited to political leaders'. Encouraging community leaders, they singled out 'the recent joint initiative of Bishop Nascimento of Bacau and Bishop Anton Ratu of Atambua to facilitate contacts between East Timorese in East Timor and refugee groups in West Timor'. The omission of Nobel Peace Prize-winner Bishop Belo was very pointed.

A month before, Belo had spoken at the mass commemorating the Pope's one visit to East Timor. Belo defended himself against the claim by Bishop Ratu that he should have remained with his people rather than gone to Rome at the height of the militia-led devastation. Belo has been rather withdrawn from all the recent Dili politics of the UN and the NGOs which have many international theories on justice and reconciliation. Belo demands that there can be no reconciliation without justice—which includes the punishment of the ringleaders of the 1999 militia-led (and TNI-backed) destruction. The divergent approach of the two East Timorese bishops means that there is no prospect of a Mandela–Tutu-type allegiance providing strong church–state leadership for people perplexed by the relationship between reconciliation and justice. Presumably the Nascimento initiative is on hold while he recovers from heart surgery in Portugal. He hopes to return in February after a three-month absence.

The Timor situation is further complicated by the role of UNTAET, the UN's interim administration which is paving the way for East Timorese independence. Many UN workers are convinced they have the best international advice available to them and they want to clean up as much as possible of the unfinished business from the 1999 destruction before independence is granted. International expertise and money are no substitutes for the people's self-determination and the democratic legitimacy of an elected government. Kofi Annan has published a report on UN peace-keeping which questions 'whether the United Nations should be in this business at all'. His taskforce has stated a difficult dilemma for the UN:

> Although the Security Council may not again direct the United Nations to do transitional civil administration, no-one

expected it to do so with respect to Kosovo or East Timor either. Intra-State conflicts continue and future instability is hard to predict, so that despite evident ambivalence about civil administration among United Nations Member States and within the Secretariat, other such missions may indeed be established in the future and on an equally urgent basis. Thus, the Secretariat faces an unpleasant dilemma: to assume that transitional administration is a transitory responsibility, not prepare for additional missions and do badly if it is once again flung into the breach, or to prepare well and be asked to undertake them more often because it is well prepared.

East Timor came on to the international agenda well after the post-World War II decolonisation and trusteeship arrangements had come to an end. There was no way that Portugal could be entrusted with a belated decolonisation process, though many Australians suspect there are ongoing Portuguese colonising tendencies at play, especially in Dili. The UN had to fill the administration vacuum. The benefit was unlimited funds; the disadvantage was a limited timeframe. The result has been the saturation of Dili with four-wheel drives, computers, mobile phones and people from every nation on earth, many of whom are experts in their field and possessed of the highest humanitarian motivation. They are still foreigners, however, acting in the name of an unelected government and sharing neither the language nor the culture of the ordinary people of East Timor.

The UN has approached its task of civil administration by separating ETTA (the East Timor Transitional Administration) from the rest of the UN machinery. ETTA has to work to a realistic budget such that it will be able to operate once the UN withdraws. ETTA cannot even afford to employ the same number of teachers that the Indonesians employed. Recently a UN district office requested a US$300 donation from the Jesuit Refugee Service for the building of an emergency bridge to a remote village before the onset of the wet season because UNTAET had no more money for infrastructure. Nonetheless, the UN machinery operates with that flourish of international salaries and staff travel which is legendary.

The Oriental Restaurant in Dili, much patronised by UN and NGO personnel. Photograph by Matthias Heng.

A UN Security Council delegation came to review the progress of UNTAET and the refugee situation in the West Timor camps in November 2000. The seven-member delegation expressed strong hopes that 'investigations of parties responsible for violent attacks and intimidation in East and West Timor will move swiftly through the Indonesian justice system'. In the consultations, Malaysian ambassador Hasmy Agam was

adamant that Indonesia should be given time and the benefit of the doubt.

In April 2000, UNTAET and the Republic of Indonesia had concluded a memorandum of understanding regarding co-operation in legal and judicial matters. Though the parties agreed to transfer all persons whom the competent authorities of the requesting party would be prosecuting, they further specified that 'each party will have the right to refuse a request for such transfer if the carrying out of the legal proceedings by authorities of the requesting party would not be in the interests of justice'.

There is no chance that the Indonesian authorities will transfer militia leaders to an East Timorese court where the militia leaders could then be cross-examined about their activities and their relationships with the TNI, under the full scrutiny of the international media. Just as Australians and East Timorese are dubious about the justice of Indonesian courts, so too will Indonesians be dubious about the justice of newly formed East Timorese courts hearing charges against militia leaders.

An UNTAET Regulation establishes panels of District Court judges with exclusive jurisdiction to deal with the serious crimes of genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity, murder, sexual offences and torture committed between 1 January 1999 and 25 October 1999. There is also a Deputy General Prosecutor for Serious Crimes who is in charge of the Department of Prosecution of Serious Crimes. Prior to the Security Council visit in November 2000, the prosecutor announced that, due to a lack of resources, he had to abandon his plans to investigate the ten most serious crimes and confine his attention to the four most serious crimes, namely:

- the Liquicia Church massacre on 6 April 1999 in which at least 25 persons were killed by the Besi Merah Putih (BMP) militia;
- the massacre of 12 persons, including Manuelito Carrascalao, at Manuel Carrascalao's house on 17 April 1999;
- the massacre of up to 47 persons at the Maliana police station on 8 September 1999 by the Dadurus Merah Putih militia;
- the massacre by Tim Alfa militia of nine persons, including two nuns at Los Palos who were returning from delivering food to refugees on 25 September 1999.

Not even the Suai Church massacre was any longer on the list of serious crimes to be investigated for prosecution. The Security Council delegation urged 'UNTAET to consider all available ways of attracting the necessary resources and that decisions on handling serious crimes investigations should, to the extent possible, reflect East Timorese expectations'.

There are over 60 persons still in custody in East Timor awaiting trial for offences committed over a year ago. Despite the strength of UN rhetoric about human rights, the UN administration permits persons to be detained for 72 hours without charge and then for three-month periods without charge provided there is a brief court appearance. Meanwhile there is little prospect that the chief perpetrators and instigators of the 1999 destruction will face trial. The UN has not the resources, competence or political will. And there is no binding obligation on Indonesia to surrender those on the west side of the border. The UN Security Council delegation expressed the strong hope that 'the investigations of parties responsible for violent attacks and intimidation in East and West Timor will move swiftly through the Indonesian justice system'. Marzuki Darusman, the Indonesian Attorney-General, informed the Security Council mission that he 'expected the first trials to begin in January or February 2001'.

Meanwhile the UNTAET Human Rights section is investigating the establishment of a Truth, Reception and Reconciliation Commission. Not being under ETTA, such a commission would not face the same funding constraints as the special crimes unit. While the special prosecutor complains that he has only 1.5 translators available to him, the UN is considering a Truth Commission with 32 commissioners and a staff of 257 costing US$4–6 million over the two years of proposed operation. The hope is that Australia will contribute to the cost of the Commission. An equivalent-sized commission in Australia, which has a population more than 20 times that of East Timor, would have a staff of 5000 and 600 commissioners.

The proposed commission would have the power to compel any person to appear before it and to answer questions about any event occurring between April 1974 and October 1999. This broad power is proposed without the usual safeguards for persons who might seek legal protection from self-incrimination. Such a commission cannot do the work of political parties and community organisations able to agitate and resolve differences with the benefit of a free press and freedom of association. The establishment of such a commission *before* the effective establishment of political parties (which would participate in the electoral process and constitute a law-making national congress able to give democratic legitimacy to such a commission) would be similar to the establishment of an ANC Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa before elections. A commission with such limited legitimacy and partisan affiliations would be counterproductive.

IT IS A MISTAKE for foreigners to assume that the 1999 popular consultation was the trigger for the commencement of the reconciliation process in East Timor. That consultation did not bring the parties to the table. More than 100,000 people are still across the border. The 1999 referendum produced a new list of winners and losers. Reconciliation is possible only if the major players are at the table as equals, not as winners and losers. Some who have committed atrocious crimes will not be welcome at the table (and probably will not want to come) in any circumstances. There is still a need for an initiative (such as that proposed by Bishops Nascimento and Ratu) to bring the parties to the table. Many wrongdoers are Indonesian TNI members who coerced and collaborated with key militia leaders. They will never come to the table. UNTAET is not a neutral player in the eyes of many on the west side of the border. Once all possible future players sit down together, they will have to agree on a reconciliation process which can then be authorised by a government of the people with political legitimacy. The compromise between reconciliation and justice is always imperfect in these circumstances. There is no perfect model which can simply be mandated by an outside agency such as UNTAET.

Presently there are some people who argue that the offer of amnesty is what is

needed to bring people in the west home to the east. But the major disincentives to return are on the west side of the border, not the east. The disincentives in the east are unlikely to be offset by a reconciliation commission that has broader powers than a court to compel admissions and less power than a regular police force to offer protection.

Many people in the West Timor camps want to keep open the option of returning home but they want to wait and see how things unfold in East Timor after the election and independence. Some are in no hurry to return because they can continue to draw an Indonesian salary or pension while remaining in the camps. A promise of amnesty for some militia members may be a critical part of a peace plan but it would require the commitment of all major political parties before the election if the promise were to be made prior to the installation of the first government in East Timor. A peace plan is different from a reconciliation process. The peace plan precedes the players' coming to the table to negotiate the terms of amnesty and reparation.

If noble intentions could build a new nation, East Timor would be assured a great future. But where previous European colonisers have failed, given decades to effect the transfer of power and competencies, it is a very big ask that the UN deliver within two years, especially where there is also a need to achieve some reckoning with the Indonesians for the wrongdoings of 1999.

No matter how well-meaning the UN proposals for a reconciliation commission, there will be no point in trying unless both Bishops Belo and Nascimento are on board. And they must be joined by Xanana Gusmao and those militia leaders in the west who are prepared to lay down arms, accept the result of the 1999 popular consultation and return home to face justice for the most serious crimes.

A false start to national reconciliation before an election will simply poison the well after the election. And the well will be more readily poisoned if the commission is up and running during the election campaign, with commissioners enjoying a broad discretion to question or not to question any political aspirant for anything they are alleged to have done or failed to do between 1974 and 1999.

As a well-meaning Australian, I urge a focused commitment to the building of mainstream political institutions—courts and parliaments—and leaving reconciliation to the leaders of East Timor civil society and those who will be elected in what should be a great New Year for East Timor. The ease with which we can import our own agenda into East Timor is reflected on the four sides of the school bus donated by the Australian teachers. The bus is emblazoned with the message comprehensible only to Australians: 'Public Education: Quality Worth Fighting For'.

National reconciliation through a commission is an admirable international sentiment; local reconciliation between the pro-autonomy minority and the pro-independence majority is happening daily as people return from the camps to their villages. Reconciliation can be enacted nationally only by political and legal processes determined by the people and their leaders.

While I no longer need to stay at the Hotel Turismo, I, and all other well-meaning foreigners, need to acknowledge that this is not our place. There is only so much we can do, whether through the UN or the panoply of NGOs, before the people of East Timor go to the polls to decide their compromised future for justice and reconciliation. ■

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LANGUAGE CULTURE

BRIAN McCOY

Naming rites

THERE IS A SOUND in a number of Aboriginal languages which most of us find difficult to say. It is the sound formed by the two letters 'ng'. It is easy enough to say when it comes in the middle of a word, like the 'ng' in 'singer'. Put it at the beginning of a word and one's tongue has to learn a new acrobatic feat.

Being able to say the sound 'ng' correctly becomes a type of litmus test of how seriously we are prepared to change when we meet a language with this sound in it. Important words can often begin with this sound. In some languages the word for 'father' begins with the letters 'ng'. The potential for misunderstanding, perhaps even offence, becomes even greater when the same word is used to address God.

We can avoid the challenge by avoiding the hard words or preferring to say everything in English. Learning another language is not as easy as it sounds, especially as one gets older. But it is important—the trying, that is.

In the book *The Swallow*, by Mary Doria Russell, the hero, an extremely talented linguist, discovers one time he does not want to learn a new language. His journey to another culture initially went well but he then encounters a new race and a new language and everything starts to get messy and violent. He realises that 'if he didn't learn the language, he wouldn't have to stay'. Is that one reason why we haven't learnt many of our Aboriginal languages? Is it that we are not sure about where we deeply belong or for how long we want to stay?

Aboriginal people have countless names for rivers, waterholes and hills. The songs of the Dreaming figures

describe the various places where they visited, acted and moved on. So many places hold a history, a story, a dramatic event, gathered often in a word. Too often we can get the word wrong.

One instructive learning for me was the meaning of the word 'Balgo', a commonly used name of an ex-mission desert community. When I first came to the community I asked people for the derivation of the word. Someone said it meant 'dirty wind', referring to the cold, south-easterly winds that whip across the desert in winter. Another said the name was really 'Balgo Hills'. But the community itself lay on the rise of break-way country. No hills there. I prefer another explanation. It is the interpretation given by a middle-aged man as he recounted life in an earlier time. In the days of the old mission, before they moved to the present site, the people lived at a place surrounded, in part, by low-lying hills. One day the German priest pointed to these hills and asked their name. Thinking the priest was referring to what grew on the hills someone replied 'parlkurr'. Parlkurr is a type of native grass which grows abundantly in this country. Parlkurr easily became 'Balgo' (in most desert languages 'p's and 'b's, 'g's and 'v's are interchangeable). Balgo then became 'Balgo Hills'.

Learning another language is learning a new way of speaking about and describing the world. It means hearing old things in new ways. The learning, as those of us who try know, can be an occasion of great embarrassment and humility. When even children can correct one's attempts to speak correctly or accurately, one knows there is much still to learn.

Take people's names. In the desert I could call someone by their kinship name (there are eight male and eight female names), their 'bush' or traditional name, their nickname or by the relationship we shared in the kinship system. I had been given a kinship name many years before and hence was related in some way to everyone. I could therefore call a person by that relationship name, as they would me. I could do it in English or in one of the local languages. Then there were names that were associated with people who had died. These names, or more precisely the similar sound of their names, had become taboo. There was another name I could use in that case. After a while I found I was forgetting a person's English name.

Some of the older people have only one English name but most have acquired a first name and surname. A number have ended up with a number of surprising names. Some of them I find embarrassing, some offensive. One old man I knew had, as his only English name, a female kinship name. Sometime, somehow, someone had given it to him. Non-Aboriginal people would refer to him by this female name and, I can only assume, were not meaning to insult him when they did so. Most were probably not even aware of the incongruity and offence. That name, in the traditional Western way, had been handed on to his children and had become their surname. One time I asked one of his daughters, who was signing a document, whether she liked her 'surname'. She thought for a while. She said that not only did she did not like it, but if she was to have a surname she would prefer to use her father's traditional or 'bush' name.

She faced a great challenge. She was known by this surname, as were her sisters, brothers and her children. Centrelink, Family and Community Services, whatever government department there was, knew her in only one way. It would take a great effort on her part just to change her name. The fact that her father had no choice over his name, that it was given to him some 30 or more years ago, did not count for much.

Are people offended by the names we have given them? I think they have got used to some of them, as we have got used to some of the more unusual ones in our culture. Nonetheless, for Aboriginal people names are a good example of where ignorance and paternalism have worked in unkind partnership. Most white people assumed that everyone should have two names; rarely did they consider the names people already had or what they were already calling each other.

People deserve to be called by their own names because that is the best means we have to encounter and remember them. So also for the names for hills, rivers, communities and roads. Uluru not Ayers Rock, Gariwerd not the Grampians, Warmun not Turkey Creek, Wirrumanu not Balgo—the list seems endless. Why is it that we do not prefer to speak the older name of a person or place but rather a new or imposed one? We forget that old names have been tried over time and can be trusted. Using them is the best way to honour a person or place and our relationship with them.

To speak an old name is to begin to learn an original way of seeing the people and world around us and, in many ways, becomes an invitation to a more ancient way of living and belonging to the land. I now prefer to use the name of a person or place which has been their name for much longer than I have known them. I believe they deserve it. But in fact we both need it. ■

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Postscript: In 1788 there were more than 250 Aboriginal languages, spoken in more than 500 dialects. Now over 100 have gone and only about 20 are being learned by the children of today.

Imagining the future

Anglican Primate, ***Peter Carnley****, is upfront about his relations with politics and the press, claiming a citizen's right to speak out. In November, giving the inaugural* Eureka Street *address, he argued for a new Federation spirit and a strategic rethink of Australia's culture of individual rights. This is an edited version of his text.*

Come 26 May next year, I will have been in my present position in Perth for 20 years, and during that long period of time I have always found the press a positively helpful support in relation to the tasks that I am called to do. Only on two or three occasions have I been treated by the secular press in a way that I have considered unnecessarily hostile or unfair.

On the first occasion, in the early 1980s, I wrote an article supporting the banning of tobacco advertising. The *West Australian* published a hostile editorial citing me by name and accusing me of being an enemy of freedom of the press.

Then, just last year, I was subject to a second accusing editorial in the same newspaper, in the context of the lead up to the GST. The *West Australian* had been supporting the GST; I had been among those questioning the desirability of a GST on food. I preached an Easter Sermon, which was really about globalisation and the phenomenon of increasing tribalisation and the social fragmentation that, ironically, was happening around the world, despite the unifying force of increasing globalisation. In the course of the sermon there was a one-line, passing reference to the GST and its possible future capacity to cause increasing divisions between rich and poor, and thus social fragmentation in this country.

This single line was what the newspaper picked up, of course, accusing me in the editorial of being too politically involved and of not preaching a suitably edifying and religiously appropriate (read, pious) Easter sermon. This triggered a number of responses in the letters to the editor column, including one, very predictably, from Wilson Tuckey, who has always been quick to let me know that I should keep out of politics.

I decided that the best thing to do was to send a copy of the actual Easter Sermon to local politicians, and anybody who had offered an opinion in letters to the editor, including Wilson Tuckey, so that they could see what the sermon was really about. I received a letter of reply from Mr Tuckey, addressed to 'Bishop Camley'. In it he said that the sermon would have done a Minister for External Affairs proud. He enclosed a copy of the Ten Commandments, apparently to teach me that my business was religion and not politics. To this I replied: 'Dear Mr Tuckey, I think your letter addressed to Bishop Camley may have been intended for me. Thank you for the copy of the Ten Commandments. I shall read them with interest. I am enclosing for you a copy of the Beatitudes. Furthermore, I note the recent poll that indicates that 60 per cent of Australians do not support the introduction of the GST. I realise that this may be a headache for you. I am therefore enclosing two Aspirin.' The thought did cross my mind that it might be an offence to send drugs through the post, but I hope the Aspirin may have cured more than a headache.

Despite those who think religion and politics should be kept strictly separate, it seems to me that Christian citizens have a right equal to that of every other citizen, if not a positive responsibility, to contribute to public conversation and debate, and even to promote what appears to them to be good, and just and true for the life of the nation.

At five minutes to 4pm Eastern Summer Time on 1 January 2001 church bells will ring out across the nation to herald the beginning of a great parade in

Sydney to celebrate 100 years of the Australian Federation. And the question at hand is: what kind of Australia do we imagine for our future?

The pity is that there are some fundamental forces operating in our kind of society, which, in a hidden and subtle way, undermine and diminish the kind of necessary community conversation and debate, let alone the contribution of religion to it, that seems appropriate right now. Let me explain what I mean.

In a world of moral pluralism of a highly privatised and individualised kind, protest has become the standard way of expressing a political or moral point of view. Strident assertion and marches with placards tend to replace reasoned community conversation and debate, because nobody really believes that conventionally agreed upon community standards are really possible to achieve any more. We end up, not with tolerance, but with a form of intolerance as everybody shouts louder in defence of their respective rights.

As members of a modern Western liberal democratic society, we are all children of the Enlightenment. Generally speaking, as Australians we are not big on political theory or political philosophy. Rather, it is said that our Australian self-understanding and sense of community identity tends to focus on folk culture in which Hills Hoists and Victa lawnmowers are upheld as icons of our shared life together. To the extent that we do work implicitly with some kind of political philosophy, we do value the independence and autonomy of the individual. We value the freedom of the individual—within reasonable limits—to do his or her own thing, which is the outcome of the social and political philosophy of the Enlightenment, with its appeal to natural reason to secure the individual's freedom from controlling authorities.

Individual freedom of choice in turn leads inevitably to an unavoidable diversity of moral and religious viewpoints, and the ensuing pluralism dictates the need for tolerance in our kind of society. So, we are inheritors of a commitment to the tolerance of diversity, the primary virtue of the Enlightenment. You do your thing and I'll do mine, and provided you do not encroach on my space, I leave you the freedom to do your thing in yours. This means that, in our kind of society, religion is tolerated so long as it is contained within the realm of the private and not taken too seriously in public. I suspect that a fundamental commitment to the tolerance of diversity also underpins our talk of a multicultural, polyethnic Australia.

Now, I think there is a sense in which the Enlightenment value of tolerance and the liberal-minded and reasoned acceptance of a diversity of private moral and religious viewpoints gives expression to a form of individualism of a very excessive and troublesome kind. The stress on the freedom of the individual to do his or her own thing means that society itself is often viewed somewhat negatively. It is often seen as a threat to the individual and his or her freedoms and rights. It is the role of government in such societies as ours to secure the minimal conditions for society to hold together, by acting as a kind of umpire to ensure that individual rights and freedoms are not eroded by the aggressive, the selfish and self-interested.

Even though Australians do not spend a great deal of time articulating a social and political philosophy, our kind of society reinforces the kind of competitive individualism which at the same time communicates a negative assessment of society itself. It does so by holding before us what the American sociologist Robert Bellah has called images of 'mythic individualism'. In his book, *Habits of the Heart*, Bellah pointed out that the mythic hero of the last generation was the cowboy.

As a child I grew up in a world in which a cowboy suit was a regular must each Christmas. When we grew out of one, Santa Claus would come with another. This mythic image came from America but we behaved as though it were thoroughly Australian. I thought cowboys lived somewhere in western Queensland. The stereotypical cowboy rides into a community and does something good for the community. He is not selfish, but at the end of the day, he never finds his own destiny as a member of the community. Instead, he rides off into the sunset like the Lone Ranger, leaving the community the better off for his ridding it of cattle rustlers, or stagecoach robbers or hostile Indians or whatever, but also leaving the local schoolteacher looking wistfully after him over her picket fence as he goes. He never becomes a member of the community he serves. Rather, his own destiny is worked out essentially as an individual.

Or take the more recent mythic hero of our own generation. Not the cowboy, but the detective—James Bond, Cliff Hardy, the blind detective, or any number of equivalents. The stereotypical detective takes up a client's problem only to find that it is not the client who has the problem but the community. Society is corrupt to the core, from the local mayor down. The detective survives, heroically resisting being drawn into corruption through offers of drugs or sex or bribes. We rarely find him in settled domestic arrangements. He finds his destiny essentially as an individual, rather than as a member of a community. Indeed, the community is portrayed negatively; society is fundamentally flawed, full of hostile forces that are to be resisted at all costs.

I suspect all this has a more inhibiting and negative impact on the entire enterprise of public conversation and debate of the kind in which Christians might feel moved to contribute, than we may think. In other words, I want to suggest that the excessive individualism implicit in the liberal-minded and tolerant approach to life of our kind of society, along with most other modern Western societies, may be

subversive of any religiously motivated interest in contributing to public conversation and debate about what kind of society Australia might become in the next 100 years.

IF THERE WAS ONE moment in the last 20 years, when I sat up in my bath and shouted 'Eureka!' it was when I read Alastair McIntyre's book *After Virtue*, published in 1981. In it McIntyre pointed out that because of the individualism of modern Western liberal democratic societies, most of our moral debates these days are not about our responsibilities to others in community, or about our growth together in society to moral and spiritual maturity, but about the preservation of individual rights. And they arise out of a fundamental concern that society (once again considered negatively) might be involved in the subtle erosion of those rights. After all, being free to do as I will in modern liberal democratic society means being free of the moral restraints of the conventionally agreed upon values of the community. It simply involves the right to follow, as an autonomous, independent individual, one's own privatised set of values. Thus we must be tolerant of diversity and respect the rights of others, and when somebody encroaches on our space or does not respect our rights, we rely on law to impose limits to protect them.

I think it is clear enough that we have all become intimately involved over the last generation or two in the struggle for human rights, the rights of racial minorities, feminist rights, the rights of women to enjoy equality with men in the workplace, the rights of women to be ordained, or gay and lesbian rights. In society at large there are groups fighting to secure aged persons' rights, taxpayers' rights, consumers' rights, even animal rights. Almost the entire moral agenda is conceived in terms of individual rights. Of course human rights are important, but my point is that over the last generation we have tended to become so absorbed with rights, as to think and talk exclusively about rights.

There is in the kind of individualism involved in the need vigilantly to protect individual rights, a latent and often unexpressed suspicion of society itself. The classic expression of this negative assessment of society at large in our time is Mrs Thatcher's famous statement that there is no such thing as society, only individuals and their families.

The net effect of all this may be more socially disastrous than we think. For starters, we have, unfortunately, to acknowledge that the privatisation of morality has meant that we have become more and more reticent about the teaching of morality to the young. After all, who are you to try to tell me how to live my life? In the 1970s we used to refer to our society as the 'permissive society'. We subliminally feel that we should simply 'butt out' of what are essentially private lives. It has been said that if God had intended us to be liberal individualists he would have given us, not the Ten Commandments, but the Ten Suggestions.

Indeed, it is because one moral viewpoint tends to be regarded as being as good as another (you do your thing and I'll do mine), that just about everything

must be tolerated. The idea of moral truth tends to go out the window in liberal democratic society because we are schooled instead in liberal-minded tolerance of a plethora of alternative viewpoints.

Inevitably, in this kind of intellectual environment there is less and less incentive even to try to work out, by rational conversation and community debate, what the best or most desirable set of agreed or shared values might be for the living of life well in community. It has been said that a liberal is a person who leaves the room when a debate begins because he is too broad-minded even to take his own side in a quarrel. If in liberal democratic societies each individual is free to pursue his or her own religious practices, believe as a matter of private opinion his or her own set of religious doctrines, and adopt his or her own particular lifestyle, then it becomes difficult for us really to engage in public conversation about such matters.

Another outcome, in a world of moral pluralism of a highly privatised and individualised kind, is that protest has become the standard way of expressing a political or moral point of view. Strident assertion and marches with placards tend to replace reasoned community conversation and debate, because nobody really believes that conventionally agreed upon community standards are really possible to achieve any more. We end up, not with tolerance, but with a form of intolerance as everybody shouts louder in defence of their respective rights.

We stand at the brink of a new era in Australian history, and may think it appropriate to engage in a public conversation about the kind of society we might dream of in the next 100 years, yet there are inhibiting forces already in our culture that prevent us from engaging in such matters with any shared commitment or real seriousness. Is it any wonder we revert to the popular culture—the Hills Hoists and Victa lawnmowers—for icons of the cultural values we share? In our inability to move beyond talk of individual rights we are in a kind of moral rut, and the only difference between a rut and the grave is its depth.

But all is not without hope. A concentration of a defensive kind on an ethic of individual rights can be contrasted with a more dynamic and also positively communitarian approach to ethics and moral behaviour, which overcomes something of the tension between the one and the many of which I have been speaking. This approach does not just react negatively to society as a potential threat to individual rights, but speaks instead more positively of the value of the community of friends with whom we live. In communion with them we seek to live life well by supporting one another in pursuit of what we might, in pious language, call a 'virtuous and godly life'. The importance of our belonging together in community, and of contributing as Christian people to the public conversation and debate of society at large, is that our commitment to love and care entails that mutual interdependence, and mutual responsibility and neighbourly care, rather than the Enlightenment values of individual autonomy or complete independence and freedom.

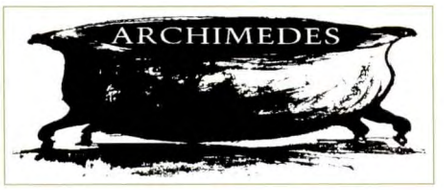
Indeed, we may need to move from mere talk of the Australian 'federation' of independent sovereign States, to talk of mutual interdependence across State boundaries, or in more theological language of our national 'communion' together as friends in one unity of being. It is the non-threatening atmosphere of a society of friends, in which people know and respect one another as interdependent members of the one community, sharing a common life in the unity of one heart and mind, which provides the context for working out together our corporate destiny. We cannot be content just to tolerate a boundless diversity of essentially private moral and religious commitments in a kind of awkward truce. Rather, a process of civilised public conversation and debate seems essential to help us to discern the values which we may then hold up before one another as virtues to live by and to which to aspire.

A pre-Enlightenment or, let us say, Aristotelian approach to ethics taught the importance, for the living of life well, of the virtues to which the community aspired. A person becomes more trustworthy, honest, caring as these virtues are publicly defended and justified, upheld and cherished, commended and passed on in the community. Indeed, it is the virtues, by contrast with a life of defending individual rights, that—as ideals—motivate us to move from where we happen to be to what we might become, both as individuals and as a community. With a little effort, some other-regarding values might be brought to the table of national conversation and debate: more socially cohesive values, values of neighbourly care and friendship, generosity of spirit, courage and self-sacrifice, for example. But it is precisely an ethic of the virtues that has given way to and been eclipsed in our kind of society by a static ethic of the protection of individual rights, and the mere tolerance of a wide diversity of individual standpoints, held together in an uneasy truce.

On 1 January 2001, if we are to celebrate more than the achievement of a purely formal, legal and constitutional arrangement, we shall first need to reflect a little about the tension between the one and the many. We will need to engage in a more communitarian discussion of the kind of society we might begin to imagine for Australia, and ask whether we can any longer afford to be unthinkingly committed to our inherited competitive individualism.

Perhaps the Federation bells of 4pm on 1 January 2001 will be a wake-up call to something creatively new and different. ■

The Most Reverend Dr Peter Carnley AO is Anglican Primate of Australia and Archbishop of Perth.



Time for a climate change

On the basis of the old saw that an optimist is one who views a glass as half full while a pessimist sees it as half empty, there's no doubting into which category the Howard Government falls.

Perhaps times of great change make conservative governments pessimistic. Instead of viewing issues like reconciliation, immigration and education as opportunities in which resources and creative ideas should be invested, the government tends to react by battening down the hatches. This is hardly a recipe for producing a country of excitement and development, or even of wealth. Nothing ventured, nothing gained.

A classic example arises out of the question of climate change. Australia's latest performance, at the abortive Amsterdam conference to hammer out the details of how the 1997 Kyoto Protocol should work, was nothing short of asinine.

There is now little dispute among scientists that climate change is real and that a significant portion of it is human-induced. These days, the arguments tend to be over the speed, degree and distribution of the warming. Of seven articles about climate change in the British weekly, *New Scientist* (November), all assumed it was already happening. They presented evidence of changes in coral reefs, ice sheets, trees and waves.

In the same month, a parliamentary committee on Australia's greenhouse policy noted that the government had endorsed this view of global warming by becoming a signatory to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change—a claim supported in the minority report from the government members on the committee. The report, *The Heat is On: Australia's Greenhouse Future*, lists the potential impacts of global warming on Australia: dramatic changes to rainfall, potentially longer droughts or increased flooding, a loss of biodiversity, severe damage to coral reefs, reduced snowfalls, further aggravation of soil salinity and land degradation, heat stress in humans and the increased incidence of tropical diseases such as malaria. All of which suggests that the sooner we do something the better.

Now there are two ways of greeting this news. The Chicken Little way, to which the Australian government appears to subscribe, is to fear that climate change will bring an end to the world as we know it (true!) so the only thing to do is fight tooth and nail to preserve what little of our current way of life we can. Thus, the initial reaction was to give undue credence to scepticism about global warming. Then Australia successfully demanded outrageous concessions at Kyoto as the price of our agreement to the convention—an eight per cent increase in our greenhouse emissions over 1990 levels by 2008 compared with a five per cent decrease for European countries.

At the time, Archimedes argued that this was about as clever as cheating in school, and that it would let Australian industry off the energy efficiency hook while more environmentally conscious countries were building smarter and more competitive industries. Unfortunately, this has begun to come true. Since 1997, Australia has rocketed to the top of the tree in per capita greenhouse emissions, even outstripping frigid Canada. At our present rate, instead of an eight per cent increase by 2008, we are looking at a 23 per cent increase by 2010.

The figures speak for themselves. And they don't make a lot of sense, given that Australia is one of the countries most likely to be buffeted by climate change, and that its near neighbours in Oceania are some of the most vulnerable nations in the world. Worse, the government's hardline attitudes on greenhouse issues are not only internationally embarrassing, they leave us vulnerable to trade retaliation. Even the US did not go so far as to argue, as Australia did at Amsterdam, that nuclear reactors should be included as a source of clean power.

But there is another way of looking at global warming—as an opportunity to live more rationally. Reducing the emission of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases is a matter of generating and using energy more efficiently and wisely. In business, that means doing more with less, hence becoming more competitive. What's more, those who develop the means to do so can sell them to others. Germany, for example, has already created industries worth hundreds of millions of dollars a year by selling the technology of energy efficiency. Another example: a significant way of absorbing greenhouse gases is by planting trees, which also happily helps to combat erosion, land degradation and salinity. Most anti-greenhouse measures are not only common sense, they make good economic sense too.

In fact, industry is starting to get the message and may well end up dragging a recalcitrant government along with it. The Property Council of Australia, which serves the owners and managers of the nation's large buildings, has recognised that energy efficiency not only makes sense but saves money. It is rewriting its energy guidelines to make them greenhouse conscious. The Business Council of Australia has said that greenhouse science is now certain enough to be the basis for government and business policy. And business in general now increasingly talks of the triple bottom line—referring to economic, social and environmental performance.

Could this be the way of the 21st century—industry dragging recalcitrant governments into line, rather than vice versa? ■

Tim Thwaites is a freelance science writer.

1. What do the rock bands Jars of Clay, Mortification, Newsboys and Mayfair Laundry have in common?
2. From which plays are the following quotes taken?

a) 'Compared to all the marriages I know, what I got is—five months of heaven every year.'

b) 'The owls are hunting. Look, over Bethesda gravestones one hoots and swoops and catches a mouse by Hannah Rees, Beloved Wife.'

c) 'Is there anything I can do, that's what I ask myself, to cheer them up? I have given them bones, I have talked to them about this and that, I have explained the twilight, admittedly.'

d) 'Pardon me, you are not engaged to anyone. When you do become engaged to someone, I, or your father, should his health permit him, will inform you of the fact.'

e) 'A fool, a fool! I met a fool i' the forest,
A motley fool ...'

3. What unusual cultural practice do the Aweikoma people of Brazil have in common with the Sherpas of Nepal?
4. Who were the Russian 'Mighty Five' composers? Get them all for one point.
5. Name the deepest orchestral wind instrument.
6. In 1705, a young composer walked 200 miles to Lübeck to hear a sacred festival of music directed by another composer. Who were the two?
7. Seals' teeth are different from all other mammalian carnivores' teeth. How?

Summertime, and the living is easy ... but not too head down to the beach to Federate with your ne from the internet). Yes, it's that time of year again, Summ

8. Name three major composers who were born in 1685.
9. In 1840 three extraordinary French artists were born. Name them.
10. Name Henry VIII's six wives, in order, and their fates.
11. Name the astronomer who devised the system of classifying stars by examining their spectra.
12. a) Who was the explorer after whom America was named? b) And who was the first to use the name, and when?
13. Define a) a cloud chamber; b) the Star Chamber; c) Chamber of Commerce (extra points given for creative definition of the last).
14. What are a) a chalaza; b) a chalazion?
15. Name four varieties of chalcedony.
16. In which countries are the following languages spoken? a) Papiamento; b) Mahorian; c) Angaur?
17. Who was the first European person to cross the Australian continent, albeit from Adelaide to Arnhem Land?

Our fabulous prize—a clutch of four splendid books—will make you a Federation and constitutional expert without tears.

To enjoy *Big John Forrest* by Frank Crowley, Geoffrey Bolton's *Edmund Barton: The One Man For The Job*, John Hirst's *The Sentimental Nation: The Making of the Australian Commonwealth* and David Headon and John Williams' *Makers of Miracles: The Cast of the Federation Story*, post, fax or email as many answers as you can cook up (even a few will do), by Thursday, 8 February 2001, to:

Eureka Street Summer Quiz
PO Box 553
RICHMOND VIC 3121

email: eureka@jespub.jesuit.org.au

fax: (03) 9428 4450

Please include your name, address and phone number. Winner and answers in our March issue.

18. What is the *second*-highest mountain in Australia?
19. Alexander Nowell was the Dean of St Paul's in the 16th century. He is however more famous for inventing something. What?
20. What do Margaret Atwood, Saul Bellow and Marshall McCluhan have in common?
21. What are: a) a euro; b) a Eurobond; c) a Eurodollar?
22. What figures of speech are these? a) no big deal; b) absolutely fabulous; c) Hel-*lo*! (*Not* the greeting—but 'Hel-*lo*!' as in 'Political ethics? Hel-*lo*!')
23. Giant American corporation General Electric appointed a new chairman/CEO in November 2000, after nearly 20 years under Jack Welch. Name the newcomer.
24. Name the 19-year-old who won the Australian Open Golf tournament two years in a row.
25. From where did the Victorian gold-rush city of Bendigo derive its name?
26. Which two lifts have, over time, been discontinued as part of the Olympic weightlifting competition?
27. What were the *noms de plume* of a) Mary Mackay; b) Józef Korzeniowski; c) Mary Ann Evans; d) Samuel Clemens?
28. Don Bradman devoted an entire chapter of *The Art of Cricket* to methods of dealing with offspin bowling and with one English offspinner in particular. Who was the bowler?
29. In what year did Australia create its own navy?

easy. Grab your beach towel and sunblock and
rdiest friends (the ones who are good at cheating
time for the scorching heat of the stickiest ever

er Quiz

30. The Australian Constitution was passed by which parliament, and when?
31. Where was the significant 1893 Constitution Convention held?
32. What was the population of Australia at the time of Federation?
33. How many parliaments are there in Australia today?
34. Where and when in Australia was women's suffrage first instituted?
35. Name the site of the first Federal Parliament in Australia.
36. The first Prime Minister, Edmund Barton, was appointed to what position after his resignation in 1904?
37. In the context of Federation, who was 'Big John', and with which very familiarly named colonial secretary, later agent-general, did he frequently clash?
38. Which 'forgotten federationist' was known as 'The Republican of Tasmania'?
39. Which prominent Australian feminist advocated self-government for Australia but opposed Federation?
40. Which sporting and literary 'Father of Federation' was also known as a feminist and lobbied for the colony of New South Wales to be called 'Arcadia'?

ROBIN GERSTER

On the war path

At Pearl Harbor, **Robin Gerster** ponders the business of war tourism.

As THE 'Polynesian Adventure Tours' bus swung into the entrance to Pearl Harbor, the voice of the Hawaiian driver came over the intercom. 'Welcome to history, folks, this is the Big Kahuna of battlefields.' A cheerful sunburnt bunch of refugees from Waikiki, about ten miles the other side of Honolulu, we were to prepare ourselves for a 'moving experience' by visiting 'the place where the Second World War began'. En route, the driver had gone to great lengths to identify us as his *ohana*, or extended family, so I resisted introducing a note of dissension by telling him that there had been a bit of fighting elsewhere before the United States was dragged into the conflict on that 'day of infamy', 7 December 1941.

Pearl Harbor is the Hawaiian island of Oahu's most visited tourist site, an impressive fact in a place that is hardly lacking in recreational nautical attractions. Even Hawaii's Great War memorial is a saltwater swimming pool—the 'Natatorium', located at the Diamond Head end of Waikiki Beach, in which the legendary swimmers Johnny Weissmuller and Duke Kahanamoku trained and where Hawaii once hoped to stage the Olympics.

Yet each year over 1.5 million visitors to Oahu drag themselves away from the beaches, shops, *luaus* and various forms of cultural entertainment to visit a place which looms as large in the American consciousness as Gallipoli does in the Australian. By the busload they come, corralled by National Park Service rangers into a theatre to view a documentary film on the infamous Japanese air attack. They board a navy shuttle boat for the short trip to the centrepiece of today's tourist complex, the 184-foot white memorial squatting directly over the sunken battleship the *USS Arizona*, which took a catastrophic hit that day. The remains of more than 1100 crewmen and marines lie entombed beneath the structure, which dramatically spans the Arizona's mid-portion like a floating sarcophagus without touching the ship itself.

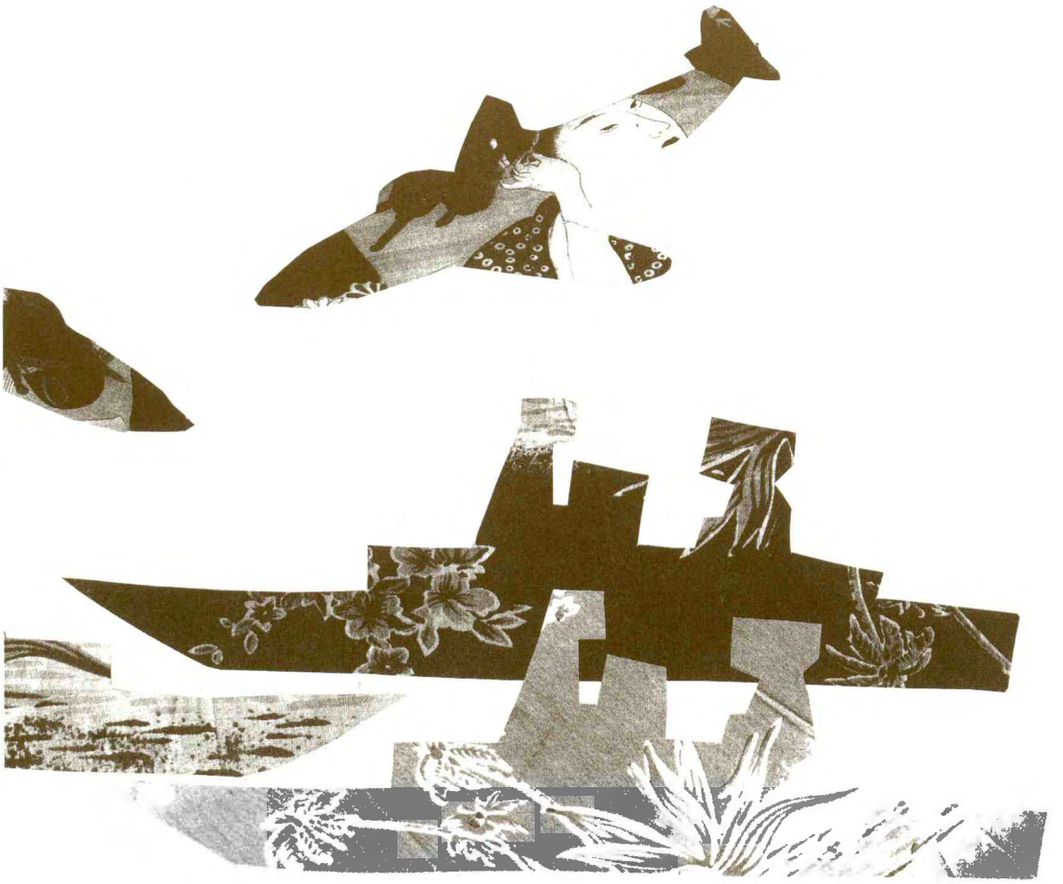
But it is not so much the structure itself that makes the Arizona Memorial impressive, it is its impact on people. Before disembarking from the shuttle boat we were informed that we were entering 'sacred ground' and should keep our conversation low and behave soberly. (As if in church, in other words. Apparently male visitors were once obliged to wear collar and tie—a bit much in steamy Honolulu.) Yet the responses of the tourists in my group, which ranged from the pensive to the emotional, seemed genuine and not confected. Some people deposited Hawaiian *leis* in the memorial's 'shrine room' containing the names of the dead inscribed on a marble wall; others tossed them overboard into the murky waters (the Arizona is still oozing oil to this day). Younger friends and relatives comforted a few quietly weeping elderly women, perhaps the sisters, sweethearts, or wives of the dead men down below. And among the mass, unmistakable and irrepressible, several Japanese.

'Just look at those people, willya!' hissed Larry, a tourist from Dallas who'd been a personable companion up to that point. 'What are *they* doing here?'

'But there are plenty of Americans who visit Hiroshima,' I ventured. This was shocking news. 'Why in hell ...?' Larry asked. Not a bad question, when you think about it.

WAR TOURISM goes back a long way. In Roman times, the fields of Troy teemed with guides and touts, spruiking before the tomb of Achilles and suits of Homeric armour. Within weeks of Waterloo, the famous battlefield buzzed with souvenir sellers, offering helmets, weapons and, for the more avid consumer, human remains, on a sliding scale of prices. Two four-horse mail coaches packed with English and American travellers left from Brussels every morning. War sites played a major role in developing the tourism industry in the 19th century. Organised parties of tourists left England for Waterloo as early as the 1850s. In 1865 Thomas Cook's shipped sightseers across the Atlantic to look over the still-smouldering battlefields of the American Civil War. The most indefatigable of promoters of this new business in human movement, Cook's announced tours of the battlefields of the Boer War before the fighting had even ended.

The Great War was crucial in accelerating war tourism, though with a new twist, as the iconography of that most



mystically commemorated of conflicts turned the battlefield visit into a quasi-religious journey. War sites, as David W. Lloyd observes in his book *Battlefield Tourism*, had suddenly become sacred; tourists become pilgrims. The mythology of Anzac has placed Australian tourists very much in this mould. Significantly, Ken Inglis called his study of the war memorials that dot the Australian landscape *Sacred Places*. In 1999 an *Age* newspaper feature on the phenomenal backpacker invasion of the Gallipoli peninsula come every 25 April, dubbed these young Australians 'the new pilgrims'. Way back in 1921, in one of his idiosyncratic war stories collected as *An Anzac Muster*, William Baylebridge predicted a future time when tourism would succeed where the military endeavour failed. In 'The Apocalypse of Pat McCullough' the eponymous hero—a Digger from Queensland who is 'driven to dreaming queer dreams'—is badly wounded in a landscape in which men 'strove like gods'. He 'awakes' to an Anzac Cove greatly changed, colonised by the paraphernalia of war tourism. Hotels and monuments crowd the old battlefield, now 'treasured' by Australians as 'a national possession'. One of the many tour guides tells the amazed McCullough that they'd had a 'great crowd over last season', before rushing off to meet a further boatload of tourists arriving in a steamer called *Australia Comes*.

The satiric strain of Baylebridge's story (McCullough calls the guide a 'parasite') highlights the sense of moral dubiousness traditionally ascribed to war tourists, as indeed to tourists generally. Old soldiers were not alone in being suspicious. Even Cook's, in a travel magazine published in 1920, advised tourists to view battle areas 'not as a show but as a shrine'. The same year, Muirhead's handbook to the Western Front, like today's Pearl Harbor guides, warned tourists against undue frivolity and reminded them that they were traversing 'holy ground'. Many if not most war tourists do not need to be told. For some, such visits are deeply personal, both symbolic and deadly serious—notably the so-called 'Holocaust tourism' of Jewish travellers to memorialised scenes of racial destruction, such as Auschwitz and Dachau.

War tourism can be motivated by scholarly activity or by simple historical curiosity. Or it can be a vicarious form of patriotic duty, without the risk and hardship of actual war service—what might be called the 'Gallipoli syndrome'. Famous battlefields attract travellers in the way that the monuments of classical and Renaissance Europe compelled British 'Grand Tourists' in the 18th century. Indeed war tourism has much in common with the origins of travel itself—the educative quest, the pilgrimage, and the conviction that travel is morally and culturally 'good' for you.

However, the sense that war tourism is little more than morbid voyeurism is hard to shake. Old battlefields lure the ghoulish in the same way as people gather to gawk at the aftermath of road accidents. Since the early 1990s local tour companies organising parties of Australians to Indochina have cashed in on the notoriety of the 'killing fields' of Cambodia by including side-trips to Khmer Rouge interrogation centres on their itineraries. A quirky if appropriately postmodern form of the industry is atomic tourism. In the United States an organisation called the 'Bureau of Atomic Tourism' has dedicated itself to the promotion of locations around the world that have been the site of atomic explosions. It advertises places like the 'Trinity Site' in the forbidding desert of New Mexico, where the first-ever atomic bomb test took place. From behind a fence you can gaze at the stretch of bare earth otherwise known as 'Ground Zero'. (Hot dogs and sodas are sold in the parking lot—seriously!) The more adventurous—and well-heeled—can take a scuba diving trip, departing from Honolulu, to Bikini Atoll in the Marshall Islands way out in the Western Pacific, to explore the sunken fleet of battleships, destroyers and so on destroyed during 'Operation Crossroads', the numerous nuclear tests conducted by the United States during the late 1940s and the 1950s. (As Bob Hope once quipped, 'As soon as the war ended, [the US] located the one spot on earth that hadn't been touched by the war and blew it to hell.') The Bikini Atoll website tells us without a skerrick of irony that the blasts 'brought enormous hardship to the Bikini people'—who still have yet to resettle their homeland—but opened up 'unique opportunities to outsiders', especially thrill-seeking divers, who are offered 'one of the most exclusive diving experiences in the world!' No worries about radiation, the tour company hastens to add.

Then, of course, there is the must-see on any itinerary of atomic tourism, Hiroshima. 'Hiroshima'—of all place names, does any other, except perhaps Auschwitz, more potently encapsulate the life-and-death struggle of the 20th

century? If war puts some places on the map, then it is paradoxical that Hiroshima's celebrity depends upon its obliteration on 6 August 1945. Since the early 1950s the city fathers have so associated Hiroshima with the Bomb and the anti-nuclear 'peace' movement ('No More Hiroshimas!') as to subsume the identity of today's living city and to deny the place any other function. The word PEACE is splashed across the city's official home page, above a panorama of the cityscape, while its official tourist literature styles the city not as regional Japanese, but as a 'City of International Peace and Culture'.

'Peace' bombards the visitor in Hiroshima, especially on the occasion of 6 August commemoration, when what cynics call the *pikadon shobai*, the 'flash-bang business', is in full swing. Most of the activity takes place in and around the 'Peace Park', located on a delta island across the river from the Atom Bomb Dome (war tourism's answer to the Eiffel Tower). In addition to its large and contentious 'Peace Museum' and commemorative architecture (such as Kenzo's cenotaph to the A-bomb victims and 'Flame of Peace') there is a 'Peace Tower', a 'Stone Lantern of Peace', a 'Peace Bell', a 'Peace Fountain', a 'Statue of Prayer for Peace', a 'Pond of Peace', a 'Prayer Monument for Peace', a 'Peace Cairn', even a 'Prayer Haiku Monument for Peace', along with various monuments and emotive statuary dedicated to those who were killed by the explosion or who were to suffer horribly from its after-effects, particularly children and students. The aesthetic of Peace Park is undeniably overdone: the plethora of peace paraphernalia makes it a Theme Park much like countless theme parks all over Japan. When I visited the city in 1997 at the time of the 6 August services, the commemorative areas were crawling with penitent Americans (ordinary folks just like Larry) who had evidently assumed personal responsibility for the tragedy. Veritable pilgrims of peace, their presence made me think of Ian Buruma's analogy of Hiroshima and Lourdes.

'PEACE' IS championed in Oahu, too. Adjacent to the East-West Center on the campus of the University of Hawaii, the 'Hawaii Peace Memorial', a simple stone monument dedicated in 1986, commemorates the sacrifice of the thousands of Japanese immigrants who made Hawaii their home before the Pearl Harbor attack. It also offers itself as a 'symbol of humanity', which is reduced to 'enduring, peaceful relations between Japan and the United States'. Honolulu and Hiroshima are Sister Cities, a curious semiotic marriage in some respects but historically apposite nonetheless. It is fitting, too, that the *USS Missouri*—the battleship upon which Japan signed the documents of surrender in September 1945—was retired to Pearl Harbor to become a permanent museum in 1999. Its very location, just a couple of hundred metres from the Arizona Memorial, symbolically completes the saga of the war in the Pacific. The publicity material associated with the 'Battleship Missouri Memorial' hails it as 'a celebration of peace', which is true in a literal sense. But is 'peace' really the point of this living memorial? A large souvenir kiosk calling itself the 'Victory Store' located by the gangway suggests that the museum is not merely about 'peace' or 'the celebration of the human spirit', another of the catch-phrases of the publicity. It is about winning and being vindicated. The very location of the 'Mighty Mo'—bow facing the Arizona Memorial, her massive firepower trained triumphantly landwards—gives an impression of might-being-right, of revenge and the big payback.

Conversely, it might be argued that the pacifist message in Hiroshima is neutralised by the Peace Museum's equivocal attempt to contextualise the American dropping of the Bomb. 'Peace', in a military sense at least, is meaningless without reference to 'war'.

Underpinning the high-flown rhetoric of sites of war commemoration is the base matter of national pride. Thus, while the Hiroshima Peace Museum celebrates nuclear victimhood, the US Army Museum at Honolulu's Fort DeRussy curtly notes how the nuclear destruction of the city made a potentially 'costly' invasion of Japan 'unnecessary'. War tourism comes packaged with universalist clichés about 'the human spirit', but provides evidence, sadly, that some people are considered more human than others—which I suppose is why there are wars in the first place. ■

Robin Gerster's latest book is *Legless in Ginza: Orientating Japan* (MUP).

A farewell to the Australian welfare state

The McClure Report completes the process of dismantlement. Now we are in for 'a system of mean, discretionary and moralistically charged benefits', argues **Francis G. Castles**.

When I first took up academic residence in Australia in the early 1980s, I was a fully paid-up adherent of welfare Scandinavian-style. In a book called *The Social Democratic Image of Society* (1978), I had shown that the massive extension of state programs of social welfare was an achievement of almost five decades of Social Democratic dominance in countries like Sweden, Norway and Denmark.

Coming to Australia, which had almost the lowest spending on welfare of any nation in the OECD, and a history in which Labor was only occasionally in control of the national government, I drew what seemed to me the obvious conclusion: that the emergence of a proper welfare state in Australia required a long period of hegemonic Labor rule.

This was at the beginning of the Hawke/Keating era and, while we may not have got hegemony, we did, at least, get five successive election victories and a period of Labor rule unequalled in the English-speaking world except for New Zealand's First Labour Government from 1935 to 1949.

While Australian Labor in the 1980s and 1990s was not in the same welfare pioneering league as the First Labour Government, the Hawke/Keating period did see the reintroduction of a universal healthcare system, a serious attempt to cope with problems of child poverty and the introduction of a mandated second-tier system of superannuation. Indeed, the figures tell us that, in the years 1983–96, Australia was among the leading OECD countries in respect of the extension of the welfare state, with an increase of well over four percentage points of GDP going to social expenditure programs compared to an OECD average of around 2.5 percentage points (calculation from OECD social expenditure database, with 1996 figures kindly supplied by the OECD Secretariat).

During the years of the Hawke/Keating government, my view of the Australian welfare state underwent a sea change. Indeed, over the past 15 or so years, I have frequently argued that overseas criticism of Australian social policy was substantially misplaced. This change of perspective was not so much a function of the growth of welfare spending in Australia under Labor as of a realisation that, on at least two major counts, criticism of Australian welfare development based on European analogies was misplaced. My argument was that Australia had created a welfare state 'by other means' than those utilised in Europe, and that it was far from obvious that Australian welfare outcomes were inferior to those in most European countries.

Now, as the Howard Liberal/National government comes to the end of its second term in office, and as I prepare to return to the United Kingdom I am, sadly, once again, forced to re-evaluate my conclusions. It seems to me that, together with the industrial relations reforms of the 1990s, the adoption of the kind of welfare reforms visualised in the McClure Report will complete the process of tearing down the edifice of Australia's distinctive welfare state. What will remain will be a system of mean, discretionary and moralistically charged benefits, wholly inappropriate to an advanced, democratic nation.

The first reason that past criticism of the Australian welfare state was misplaced was that it failed to recognise a key aspect of Australia's institutional development in the 20th century. The Fathers of Federation included in the Constitution the power to establish a system of compulsory conciliation and arbitration of industrial disputes. In the words of the first Chief Justice of the Court of Arbitration, Mr H.B. Higgins, this created 'a new province for law and

order', where courts decided, on social justice criteria, the wages appropriate for 'the average employee regarded as a human being living in a civilized community'.

Arbitration delivered welfare 'by other means' because, in principle, and later in fact, it meant that those who were waged were able to maintain a decent life for themselves and their dependants without further intervention by the state. Because of arbitration, Australia's wage dispersion was, right through until the 1980s, more equal than in most other countries. Because of arbitration, waged poverty was far rarer in Australia than in other comparable nations and, because of arbitration, Australian workers enjoyed a variety of benefits from their employers, such as sickness leave, which in other countries are counted as part of the welfare state. Because the distinctive focus of social amelioration Australian-style was via regulation of the wage relationship, I called the Australian system a 'wage-earner's welfare state', a term which, for better or worse, has become part of the standard vocabulary of Australian social policy research.

Since the early 1990s, the arbitration system has been under attack from both the Left and Right. What unites this disparate body of opinion is a view that a centralised system of labour regulation reduces labour-market flexibility: in the eyes of the Right, the flexibility to respond to the changing realities of a globalised economy by paying workers strictly according to their contribution to total productivity; in the eyes of the trade unions, the flexibility to permit enterprises to pay wages in excess of award determinations. It was, in fact, Labor under Keating that started the ball rolling, transforming the awards system, first and foremost, into a safety-net device for the lower paid and providing far greater leeway for stronger unions to negotiate productivity increases at the enterprise level.

The government is well on the way to restoring the conditionality of payment which makes welfare a charity rather than a right.

The industrial reforms of the post-1996 Liberal governments have continued the process of deregulation, further restricting the powers of federal arbitration tribunals, limiting the role of trade unions as bargaining agents and further shifting the locus of bargaining to the enterprise level. In its heyday, the awards system protected around 80 per cent of Australian workers; that figure has now been reduced to around 50 per cent of the working population. At the same time as deregulation has been proceeding, wage dispersion has been increasing. The claim that Australia's welfare state 'by other means' was sufficient to protect Australia's workers from waged poverty is no longer tenable, and it seems highly probable that further industrial relations reforms promised for Howard's third term will simply make the situation worse.

A SECOND REASON that much of the criticism of the Australian welfare state was misplaced was that it seriously misconceived the nature of Australia's need-based welfare provision. More than any other country in the Western world, Australia's social security system is based on tests of the incomes and assets of recipients. Indeed, during the course of the Hawke years, the one major exception, the child benefit, became means-tested on much the same basis as other benefits. To many overseas commentators and to some domestic ones, this suggested that the Australian welfare state had not shrugged off the legacy of the European Poor Laws of the 19th century. These laws made sure that benefits were exclusively directed to those in extreme need and attached conditions to the receipt of welfare which made beneficiaries into second- or third-class citizens.

At their Dickensian worst in Victorian England, but also in many other countries of Western Europe, although never in Australia, the Poor Laws locked away the unfortunate in 'Work Houses', where they undertook menial tasks for the pittance handed out by the Poor Law authorities. The whole idea was to make sure that being on welfare would make people 'less eligible', thus ensuring that no-one would choose to be on welfare rather than work. Even when Work Houses had disappeared, receipt of benefit was often at the discretion of local Boards of Guardians, who interrogated applicants in a most degrading manner. To prove you were eligible for benefit, you had to demonstrate that you and your children were without adequate means and that you were unable to support yourself despite your best efforts. Frequently, too, you had to prove that you were 'deserving', having not brought yourself into a state of poverty through moral infraction. Having done that, you were dependent on the discretion and charity of those who heard your case.

My argument was that the Australian system of means-tested benefits was nothing like this. This was for two reasons. First, Australian means-tested benefits were not focused on the very poor, but were designed to exclude only the well-off middle classes and the prosperous. Around 70 per cent get the age pension and few people see it as degrading to be a welfare beneficiary. The same principle applied to Labor's new child benefit, where the income test only kicked in at a combined family income around twice the average weekly wage. Second, the Australian system of benefits was designed to be as non-discretionary as was humanly possible. There was nothing analogous to a Board of Guardians. There was no issue of whether one was 'deserving' or otherwise. To prove one's eligibility one had to demonstrate that one fell into a particular category—old, unemployed, disabled, a single mother and so on—and provide evidence that one's income and/or assets fell below certain stipulated levels. Having done that, there was no major element of administrative discretion, seen by European social commentators as the key weakness of selective social policy systems in social justice terms. In Australia, no-one asked for a demonstration of need beyond the mere fact of a lack of income (except in the case of emergency payments) and the amount received was a simple function of a legally established

formula, with additional supplements for a spouse and other dependants.

This provision for the vast majority of ordinary Australians, and this absence of discretion, were not aspects of the Australian welfare system which had only come into existence in recent times. They were, in fact, an explicit expression of Australia's rejection of the Poor Law tradition and of the idea that welfare was a citizen right rather than an act of charity. Australia's first welfare state legislation, the New South Wales Old-Age Pensions Act of 1900, did not require the exhaustion of previous savings. It allowed individuals to have other income up to a limit and quite substantial holdings of property. As T. H. Kewley pointed out in discussing this Act in 1965: there was 'no scope for the exercise of discretion (or of arbitrary action) on the part of an official in adjusting the rate of pension to individual circumstances. Given that he was eligible in other respects, it would have been within the competence of the applicant, knowing his means, to calculate the rate of pension to which he was entitled'. For the next eight decades, the same principles governed all aspects of Australia's cash benefits system. If means-testing means benefits focused exclusively on the poor and at the administrative discretion of the state, then Australia's system was not means-tested in the same opprobrious sense that term is commonly used in European social policy discourse.

From the time of the Hawke Labor government onwards, the situation of welfare beneficiaries has been changing and changing for the worse. There has been increasingly more policing of benefit eligibility, with the strongest element of forced compliance an unemployment work test which has become increasingly onerous to fulfil. Under the Howard government, the conditions of this test have become extremely strict, with an increasingly explicit moral justification that recipients must return something to society in return for their benefit. This idea is now dignified as a philosophy of 'mutual obligation'. It is not a new philosophy, but an old one. To receive benefit, individuals must be able to prove that they are 'deserving' of society's help. With each new requirement for interview and for demonstrated job applications, the potential for discretion by the officers of the newly privatised Howard employment services increases. Huge numbers of claimants are now fined for infringements of the rules and the efficiency of these services is partly judged by its success in withholding benefits on these grounds. It is highly appropriate that the Howard government has tendered these services out to religious charities, since the government is well on the way to restoring the conditionality of payment which makes welfare a charity rather than a right.

The new prophets of 'mutual obligation' always seem to forget that the vast majority of the clients of the welfare state already have a monstrously unpleasant time.

The unemployed have always been the welfare beneficiaries most vulnerable to public opinion. With the decline of the organised labour movement, there are no longer strong voices objecting to policing of the unemployed, although perceptions could very well change if and when unemployment is, once again, on the rise. This has made it quite natural for the Howard government to try out its 'mutual obligation' ideas in the area of youth unemployment. 'Work for the Dole' was a test run of an idea, which the McClure Report now promises to make the key principle of a new social contract. But what much of public opinion may concede in the area of unemployment, where ordinary workers may feel they have legitimate concerns that others will take advantage of the welfare state to be idle, may be far more objectionable in other areas of social policy.

The McClure Report's argument for 'mutual obligation' for single mothers and, perhaps, the disabled is that it is a mechanism which will assist beneficiaries back into the workplace. The main agency of that assistance appears to be an emphasis on continuous counselling to inform beneficiaries of work and training opportunities and to find other strategies to get them work-ready. That possibly sounds beneficent. Clearly, the increased resources the Review promises for such purposes are intended to sound that way. The trouble is that it also sounds very much as if we are about to reintroduce a massive infusion of administrative discretion by the back-door. Every interview and every counselling session is a hurdle, where the single mother needs to demonstrate incapacity of some kind or find herself forced the next step back into the bottom end of the labour market. In a sanitised form, the stigma of the old Poor Law is introduced by the back door. One thing that the new prophets of 'mutual obligation' always seem to forget is that the vast majority of the clients of the welfare state already have a monstrously unpleasant time. They are by definition without adequate income or assets to live a decent life without assistance from the state. Policing their compliance (burospeak for what is going on here and in so many areas of the interaction of state and citizen) across a wide range of welfare benefits simply makes them 'less eligible' in a new, but no less morally offensive, way.

So exactly 100 years after the New South Wales Old-Age Pensions Act rejected notions of discretion in welfare provision, and after eight or more decades in which the arbitration system struggled to deliver 'fair wages', we now appear to be living in an era in which Australian governments—judging by the pronouncements of both Labor and Liberal—have abandoned both key components of welfare Australian-style. Given that welfare 'by other means' led to a social policy system whose programmatic development was far weaker than that in other comparable nations, it would seem that there is no longer any legitimate way to defend the Australian welfare state from its critics. ■

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ANTHONY HAM

Water wars

Who gains and who loses as the world fights over one of our most precious resources? **Anthony Ham** reports from India.

THERE ARE MANY things rotten in India's state of Gujarat. It can be a place of precise middle-aged men in official positions with a passion only for paperwork, for rules that aren't in the least necessary, for under-the-table inducements to ensure that your request is dealt with sometime in your lifetime. It can be a place where the appalling roads are often rutted tracks which prove no impediment to careering buses and trucks propelled by wild-eyed drivers with a fatalistic approach to road safety. I saw two dead bodies and countless overturned vehicles in two weeks of travel. Pollution has also reached critical levels. A chemical smell hangs heavily over the coastal town of Veraval. In the unbelievably congested capital, Ahmedabad, smog cloaks the grandeur of the city's Indo-Saracenic monuments.

The biggest problem in Gujarat is water—the lack of it. This already barren state has been in the grip of drought for two years. So have swathes of territory stretching from Iran, through Afghanistan and Pakistan to western India. Governments have become uneasy, with good reason. Riots in July over a shortage of drinking water in the Iranian Persian Gulf port of Abadan have found echoes in the increasing desperation of the people of Gujarat. Gujarati farmers have watched their crops wither and die. They face a second year with no seed supplies for next year, no food, and no income to carry them through the coming summer months when few crops can be planted. Wells have dried up. Rivers have run dry. Some towns receive a piped water supply once every three days. Villagers have protested against the government, blocked roads and punctured dam walls in a desperate attempt to publicise their plight. Meanwhile, city authorities redirect waters to placate their thirsty urban constituents. In the city of Vadodara, which exists on the other side of decay, almost two million inhabitants face a daily choice between drinking their water or using it for food preparation and washing clothes and dishes.

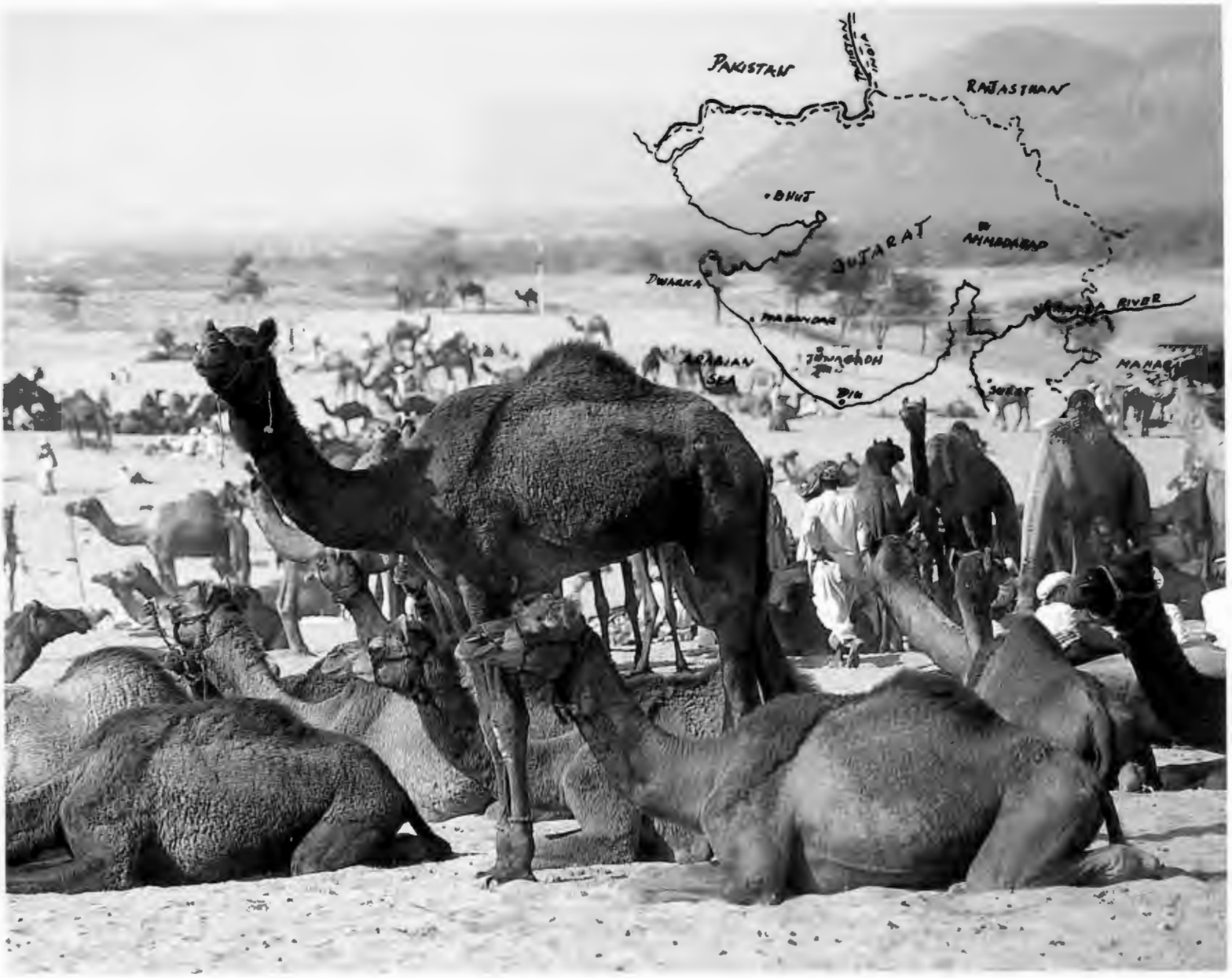
Little wonder, then, that the 18 October Indian Supreme Court decision, which granted permission for the completion of the Narmada Dam, was greeted with an outpouring of relief across the state. The Gujarati government estimates that the dam, which will reach a height of 90 metres, will provide reliable drinking water to 8215 villages and 135 urban centres, halt the insidious process of desertification, stem urban migration and go some way towards alleviating power shortages through hydroelectric output.

The newspapers were euphoric. One writer in the *Times of India* claimed that 'the entire state broke out in spontaneous celebration'. Another had little doubt that 'almost everyone who heard the news reacted with unbridled joy'.

A good news story at last for the people of this water-starved state? Well, yes and no.

The cost of this massive development project is enormous. It includes the displacement of more than 20,000 predominantly tribal villagers uprooted from their ancestral lands, the large-scale destruction of forests in a landscape already scoured by desperate people in search of firewood, the salinisation of rivers further downstream and, according to some experts, a resurgence of malaria. Such concerns were sufficient to cause the World Bank to pull out of the project, although the recent Supreme Court ruling has seen a review of that decision set in motion. Booker Prize-winning author, Arundhati Roy, has been only the most prominent in a coalition of thousands of intellectuals and impoverished villagers who have fought passionately against the project.

Confronted with two such conflicting responses to the Narmada Dam decision, I set out in search of ordinary people's reactions. From Junagadh to Bhuj, Surat to Dwarka, the reaction was the same, encapsulated here by Rajesh of Porbandar: 'You have been in Gujarat. You have seen how much we need water. Of course it is good.' But these reactions were from urbanised Gujaratis for whom the threatened land is not the land their grandfather tilled or the source of their ancestral or spiritual roots.



Camel fair, Pushkar, one of many places in India hard hit by a lack of water. Photograph this page and p33 by Anthony Ham.

Hindu mythology holds that the Narmada was formed when a bead of sweat from the Hindu God Shiva fell to earth. As such it has been worshipped by those who have lived along its banks. For that same river now to sweep away the homes of tens of thousands of devotees is seen by many as a man-made intrusion on the world created by the gods, all in the name of other people's progress.

The day after the Supreme Court ruling, there was no room on the newspapers' front pages for such inconveniences. Amid all the euphoria, the concerns of 20,000-plus seemed trifling alongside the genuine needs of nearly 70 million. The small voices of protest, which had come to sound like the sour grapes of vanquished traitors, were relegated to page four. Some human rights activists spoke up for the soon-to-be displaced and inadequately compensated villagers, voicing their desire 'not to live under the threat of impending submergence'. Mehda Patkar, leader of the Narmada Bachao Andolan (NBA) movement tried, but his simple, damning indictment that 'the court has totally neglected the fundamental rights of the most vulnerable section of society' went almost unheard. All the while, the ruling BJP and opposition Congress parties competed in an unseemly battle for political mileage, basking in the reflected glory of what Gujarat Chief Minister Keshubhai Patel described as 'this golden age in the history of Gujarat'.

THERE ARE, clearly, no easy solutions. Until you have lived under the awful threat of running out of water, it is impossible to understand the willingness to sacrifice the needs of a tiny minority. Until you are threatened with the loss of your home and the severing of your roots, it is difficult to justify your standing in the way of 'progress'.

But there is always another way. The unusual severity of the drought has shifted both attention and credibility away from the alternatives, such as reservoirs of rainwater storage, an integrated system of irrigation canals and the tapping of alternative energy sources. The Indian authorities have seen the destruction wreaked upon the environment by Western countries bent on development, but they have not, it seems, learned from the mistakes. Nor have they harnessed the wisdom of indigenous peoples for whom protection of the land is a sacred duty, necessary for both physical and spiritual survival.

Sabzi (vegetable) market in Diu, southern Gujarat.

Two days after the decision was handed down, I visited the Sabaramati Ashram, Gandhi's home for over a decade on the banks of Ahmedabad's Sabarmati River. The river is now reduced to a fetid trickle. It was from here that the father of Indian Independence launched his famed Salt March in 1931, setting in train the process of freeing India from colonial rule. In the ashram's museum, alongside a letter sent by Gandhi to Hitler in 1938 urging him to pull back from the brink of war, is a quote which crystallises the current struggle:

> I do not believe in the doctrine of the greatest good for the greatest number. It means in its nakedness that in order to achieve the supposed good of fifty-one per cent, the interests of forty-nine per cent may be, or rather should be sacrificed. It is a heartless doctrine which has done harm to humanity. The only real dignified human doctrine is the greatest good of all.

It appears for the moment as though this Gandhian philosophy, like his doomed letter to Hitler, is destined to be seen as an idealistic footnote to history, ignored by those with insufficient imagination to see an alternative path. Mehda Patkar of the NBA put it equally eloquently—'The judgment will become a tool in the hands of those planners, leaders and investors who are for a centralised, gigantic project at the cost of common people and nature.'

THAT THERE *is* always an alternative is amply demonstrated by other organisations in Gujarat, run by people who are the unsung heroes of development. They are adept, even brilliant, at enlisting people as the most enduring and powerful resources in their own development, building from the ground up.

One such organisation is the Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA). Set up in 1972, SEWA is a trade union for women who earn a living through their own labour or small businesses. Otherwise known as day labourers, these women's survival depends not on the security of salary, but on rising before dawn to care for their families before going out to earn a few meagre rupees from small-scale trading and manufacturing. Of the female labour force in India, 94 per cent work in such endeavours, the realities of which demand that they do so every day of their lives.

The groups which come within SEWA's purview are varied, from street vendors to midwives, *bidi* (cigarette) makers to incense rollers. From modest beginnings, SEWA has grown into a large entity representing 147,618 members in Gujarat and 215,234 throughout India in 1999. And yet, they retain their grassroots approach to development.

The results are impressive. SEWA ensures minimum wages for many and effectively lobbies governments to change policy. One of SEWA's recent successes was convincing the city authorities in Ahmedabad to cease the prosecutions of itinerant street vendors and withdraw all legal cases against them.

In a timely counterpoint to the prevailing wisdom on managing water resources, SEWA recently published the

achievements of their Water Campaign, which aims at 'developing, maintaining and managing permanent sources of drinking water'. The list includes: constructing rainwater harvesting tanks and underground water storage facilities; repairing village ponds and plastic-lined ponds for water conservation; training women to repair hand pumps; lobbying governments to ensure piped water supply for outlying villages; forming water committees run by women to manage resources within villages; building awareness of the water needs of neighbouring communities; and participating in international conferences on water sanitation and management.

So many of SEWA's activities adopt a rigorously integrated approach by empowering women to find solutions to their own problems. High infant mortality rates and poor health conditions are addressed through training midwives and providing education on sanitation. Limited power against local and state authorities is challenged through literacy classes and Leadership and Self Reliance Training at the SEWA Academy. Insufficient financial resources are countered with small-scale loans at nominal interest rates, which enable many women to gainfully use their talents—from embroidery to working the small landholdings that would otherwise lie dormant through lack of money to buy a cow or seeds to plant.

SEWA is not alone. In the western region of Kachch, arguably Gujarat's most barren region, co-operatives of village workers have been formed. The Kachch Mahila Vikas Sangathan (KMVS) and the Kala Raksha Trust are two such organisations dedicated to the empowerment of women through the preservation of traditional art, something they achieve by cutting out the middle-men who routinely skimmed profits from the women. From exquisite mirrorwork embroidery to traditional tribal jewellery, these beautiful crafts have been transformed from a low-paying source of income into a sustainable means of ensuring cultural and material survival. As one of these women said: 'The work you buy is not just embroidery, it is an expression of our pride.'

Another of SEWA's successful women spoke in a similar vein: 'One day, SEWA organisers came to my village. I met many women like myself and learned about savings groups. I decided to form one such in my own village. I held a meeting and slowly it took shape. After joining the union, I felt secure. We saved, we joined the insurance scheme. I feel strong today.'

If the women of SEWA, of KMVS, of the Kala Raksha Trust had been running the state of Gujarat, it is difficult to imagine that they would have chosen to build the Narmada Dam. Then again, if they had been in charge there would probably have been no need for it in the first place. ■

Anthony Ham is a *Eureka Street* correspondent.

Chad update

In 'African Pipe Dreams' (May 2000) I discussed the dilemmas facing developers, human rights organisations and the Chadian Government over how best to exploit the huge oil deposit in the Doba Basin in the south of the country. Sadly, fears that the funds would go to programs other than poverty eradication have begun to prove true.

The international consortium (now comprising Exxon, Chevron and Petronas) recently paid to the Chadian Government an 'entrance fee' of US$25 million as the first of many payments for the project. Although some of the money was spent on improving roads, providing electricity and flood relief in N'Djamena, a significant proportion has gone towards arming the Chadian military in their escalating battle with former Defence Minister Youssof Togoimi in northern Chad. The consequence is the reignition of a cycle of war from which the country has only recently begun to recover. As a result, the World Bank, already under pressure from NGOs for its involvement in the controversial project, is unlikely to recommend to the IMF that Chad meets the strict eligibility requirements for debt relief. **—Anthony Ham**

ALEX McDERMOTT

In his own write

True History of The Kelly Gang, Peter Carey (UQP, 2000); **Bandits**, E.J. Hobsbawm (Penguin, 1969); **Ned Kelly: A Short Life**, Ian Jones (Lothian Books, 1995); **The Kelly Outbreak, 1878–1880: The Geographical Dimension of Social Banditry**, J. McQuilton (MUP, 1979); **Selectors, Squatters And Stock Thieves: A Social History of Kelly Country**, Douglas J. Morrissey (PhD thesis submitted to the Department of History, La Trobe University, 1987); **The Outlaw Legend: A Cultural Tradition in Britain, America and Australia**, G. Seal, (CUP, 1996).

In his *True History of the Kelly Gang*, Peter Carey has attempted to do something quite daring: to tell the Kelly saga using the very rhetoric which Kelly himself used in his famous Jerilderie letter. Yet, for an historian at least, the novel that has resulted from Carey's imaginative raid on the sources lacks something vital. For a narrative that purports to follow the Kelly saga in the fashion of Ned's own famous public declarations, written during his time of outlawry, too much is missing. The voice is for the most part right, but the context is wrong, or rather, absent.

No proper study has yet been done on Kelly's two letters—the Cameron and Jerilderie, both written during his time of outlawry. Ned wrote them both with the specific intention of clearing his own name, and to sway public opinion against the police. The first letter was sent to Donald Cameron, a member of Victoria's Legislative Assembly. Kelly's attempt to gain a public hearing, however, came to naught: Cameron immediately handed the letter to Premier Berry, who deemed it prudent not to let the document enter the public domain.

For the second letter, Kelly decided to cut out the legislative middle-man, as it were, and go straight to the tribunal of the people—the press. This, along with the desire to hold up the bank and steal a lot of money, was one of the chief motivating factors behind the bailing up of the town of Jerilderie in early February, 1879. Once again Kelly was unsuccessful. In this case Mr Gill, the editor of the town's newspaper, got wind of Ned's desire to make his acquaintance, and accordingly made himself scarce. By the time Kelly arrived at Gill's residence, Gill was hiding (legend has it) in a suitably remote creek. All attempts to convince Gill's wife to show Kelly how to use the printing press were to no avail, and once again Kelly was unable to get his self-vindications and public proclamations into print.

There is a richness, a ribald energy in the letters themselves that Peter Carey, finally, does not grapple with, just as there are crucial aspects of Kelly's world and personality which in some large measure continue to defy our understanding, especially of the man himself. The novel seems hamstrung by the fact that we are shown only those parts of Kelly that Carey chooses to cope with. We are given the honourable and savoury aspects of the life. But in Kelly, as with anyone, there is so much more than that. And in Kelly's case we are especially lucky, as we have the Cameron and Jerilderie letters themselves, a rich reference source, to demonstrate what more there was.

The fall: a *Sydney Mail* artist's impression of Ned Kelly's capture. This drawing and photographs pp38–39 from Ian Jones' *Ned Kelly: A Short Life*.

For a taste of what might have been in the fiction, there is a good example in Kelly's fracas with Constable Hall, prior to his outlawry. In Carey's *True History*, Hall features as the 'big cowardly policeman'. In the Jerilderie letter, Hall is all that plus more: 'as helpless as a big guano after leaving a dead bullock or horse'. There is also Kelly's response to the police searching his home: 'I would have scattered their blood and brains like rain I would manure the Eleven Mile [Creek] with their bloated carcasses'. Or again, when informing the public as to what he had in store for those who would dare support the police:

> I shall be compelled to make an example of them if they cannot find no other employment. If I had robbed and plundered ravished and murdered everything I met young and old rich and poor, the public could not do any more than take firearms and assisting the police as they have done, but by the light that shines pegged on an ant-bed with their bellies opened their fat taken out rendered and poured down their throat boiling hot will be cool to what pleasure I will give some of them and any person aiding or harbouring or assisting the Police in any way whatever or employing any person whom they know to be a detective or cad or those who would be so deprived as to take blood money will be outlawed and declared unfit to be allowed human buriel [sic] their property either consumed or confiscated and them theirs and all belonging to them exterminated off the face of the earth, the enemy I cannot catch myself I shall give a payable reward for ...

If I had robbed and plundered ravished and murdered everything I met young and old, rich and poor. The public could not do any more than take firearms And assisting the police as they have done, but by the light that shines pegged on an ant-bed with their bellies opened their fat taken out & cooked and poured down their throat boiling hot will be fool to what pleasure I will ~~death~~ some of them And any person aiding or harbouring or assisting the Police in any way whatever or employing any person whom they know to be a detective or dead or those likes would be so deprived as to take blood money will be outlawed and declared unfit to be allowed human burial their property

One finds very little trace of such vitriolic ebullience in Carey's novel. I think a critical reason why this is so lies in Carey's own acknowledged indebtedness to the image of Kelly created in Ian Jones' history, *Ned Kelly: A Short Life*. Both novelist and historian seem to share an implicit need to produce a Kelly who is to our tastes. If the martyr-hero of their conception committed any crimes, they are attributed to class or ethnic oppression. This leaves the reader with a laudable but miserable kind of Kelly, a very put-upon and suffering sort of fellow. It is an image of Kelly which the letters themselves do not confirm.

Carey maladapts, or perhaps simply misunderstands, the basic nature and actual intention of Kelly's rhetoric, while proving himself a proficient mimic of its unpunctuated cadences and rhythm. His ear is tuned to the frequency yet fails to give us a full, thick sense of the social context which gave birth to the rhetoric. This leaves us with a Kelly who never quite becomes three dimensional.

Above: Dan Kelly, Ned's younger brother, at about 16. He lived only to 19.

Right: Aaron Sherritt displays the 'badge' of the Kelly sympathiser—the chinstrap under the nose.

Most Kelly historians of the past 20 years have been reliant on Eric Hobsbawm's theory of social banditry when explaining the Kelly gang's outbreak. The theory sees such traditional folk-heroic figures (the outlaw for example) as emerging from regions or periods of endemic poverty produced by political and economic oppression. This, according to Graham Seal, will 'eventually throw up an individual or number of individuals who ... rebel violently against their circumstances, infringing the laws controlled by the powerful groups in their society.'

This reading was given a Kelly context by John McQuilton with the impressively titled *The Kelly Outbreak, 1878–1880: The Geographical Dimension of Social Banditry*. In it McQuilton argues that the outbreak was the expression of the deep-seated antagonism between rich squatter and poor selector in the region, and that any stock theft which took place was in this way a 'social' crime. It is this tradition of understanding Ned Kelly which, more recently, Jones and now Carey has continued to draw upon.

While I was myself writing a thesis on the nature of the two Kelly letters, and suffering something of a cognitive impasse when it came to figuring just *how* the documents related to Kelly's social environment, I was lucky enough to come across the meticulous study by Douglas Morrissey, *Selectors, Squatters and Stock Thieves: A Social History of Kelly Country*. This work shows conclusively that the wide-scale stock theft then current in the region was largely specific to a close-knit group of people who were not representative of the local selector population. Strangely (or predictably?) enough, this exhaustive study, which cuts right across and undermines the prevailing orthodoxy of Kelly studies, has never been able to find a publisher.

An appreciation of the part that crime played in the Kelly outbreak is vital to a full understanding of Ned Kelly's world: it gives us the social climate which nourished and encouraged the cultural heritage and distinctive identity being articulated in the letters. It also goes a long way to explaining the feelings of persecution being expressed.

On the face of things, it may seem unlikely that an involvement in stock theft could provide the framework for an identity. But this stock theft was not simply a case of nicking some local cocky's loose calf. Stock theft in the region was done through an organised and extensive criminal network, not poverty-stricken selectors struggling to eke out an existence on the land and supplementing their subsistence lives with an occasional cow illicitly obtained. Stock was stolen and moved from regions as far apart as Gippsland and the Western District in Victoria to Dubbo and Tamworth in New South Wales, with Victoria's north-east region—Kelly country—serving as a two-way thoroughfare for the traffic of horses and cattle.

The animals were moved along remote stock routes, and kept for a while in holding paddocks—generally on the large properties of squatters who were in collusion with the thieves—until it was safe to move the beasts across the Murray. There they were usually let loose, impounded by local authorities and then 'redeemed' at public auction at a price well below the actual value of the stock. It was a procedure so organised as to be almost routine, a profession of sorts.

Aside from the sense of common identity which this sort of close-working association could be expected to foster, there is also the high prestige and notoriety value of this stock-stealing life to be taken into account. It was a way of life in direct contrast to the ideals current and being fostered by the selector life. That was a world of industrious labour and the steady accumulation of capital with which to further secure and expand the selection, or perhaps just to purchase another bullock—what with the last one having been nabbed by that larrikin Greta mob ...

In the gradually subsiding excitement of the Gold Rush years, when for an intoxicating historical moment it had seemed that everyone's fortune could be made in a day, those individuals reaching maturity in families already involved in stock theft would have felt little urge to join the ranks of the legally industrious. This no doubt was why Kelly could boast in the Jerilderie letter, 'I never worked on a farm.' A farm was for *them*, those good selector sons, a mug's game.

The sentiment echoes though Kelly's continued refrain in the letters: he had stolen horses and cattle 'innumerable', and he and his stepfather George King were the 'greatest horsestealer[s]' in the region. Compare Kelly's 'I never worked for less than two pound ten a week since I left Pentridge' with Carey's righteously enraged (yet inescapably downtrodden) 'I wished only to be a citizen but the mongrels stole my tongue.'

In contrast to the life of the respectable, the life of the committed stock thief was a glamorous one: a fair bit of money, fast horses to be seen astride and flash clothes to display. The result was a social group with a strong internal cohesion (a direct result of the requirements of their livelihood), and one well-versed in the arts of eluding the police. It is no surprise that after the Kelly gang was outlawed, it was the 'Greta Mob' (from the same district) who became the inner circle of trusted sympathisers, who would serve as scouts, decoys and 'bush telegraphs', ensuring the gang's safety. Significantly, the habit of wearing the chinstrap tucked under the nose—originally part of the Greta mob's public attire—became a public symbol by which one marked oneself as a Kelly sympathiser in the region.

As Douglas Morrissey makes clear, the origins of the Kelly outbreak 'had its roots firmly planted in stock theft'. The conflict with the police in which Kelly, his family and associates were embroiled prior to the outbreak was an inevitable consequence of their success in co-ordinating, as Kelly put it, 'wholesale and retail horse and cattle dealing'.

It is impossible to come to any clear understanding of the nature of Ned Kelly unless this is taken into account. It also makes his rapid ascent in our historical consciousness—from hunted criminal to mythic archetype—all the more breathtaking. And it can only serve to increase our admiration of the manner in which he was able, so aggressively, to utilise certain types of rhetoric—types integral to Australia's collective understanding of itself—in the manner which he saw fit. This is the display we find in the letters themselves.

Once outlawed, Kelly tapped deep reservoirs of defiant oral traditions—Irish rhetoric, convict rhetoric, outlaw rhetoric—and used them masterfully. They clamour through every public display—Ned addressing Judge Redmond Barry at his final trial, Ned addressing the people corralled in the pub at Jerilderie, or in the substantial fashion of the two letters. But it is a mistake to presume that this rhetoric is a reliable analytic instrument applied to the wider social world of the time.

Above: Ned Kelly at 19.
Left: Steve Hart, Dan Kelly's mate.

Carey makes this mistake, as have Jones, Seal and McQuilton before him. The rhetoric of the Jerilderie letter is not the spilling forth of a haunted soul, epitomising the oppression felt by all in the region. It is a stirring and a very public declaration, a warning of the outlaw apocalypse to come for those who do not submit to Kelly's demands. In Carey's novel, Ned's rhetoric is domesticated in intent, made tame, safe and understandable. His narrative is no longer a document declaring absolute justification for his actions. Neither does it contain the magnificent and truly bloodthirsty threats and prophecies with which Kelly sought to lash the authorities and the general public.

In Carey's *True History of the Kelly Gang*, the marvellous self-publicising beast who chilled 19th-century sensibilities has been deprived of tooth and claw. Kelly's rhetoric now takes its place as part of a narrative directed to his (hypothetical) daughter. The words lose much of their power and their nature as threat. They are co-opted for a task they were never originally intended to perform. It's all a family matter now. It falls a little flat.

Mythic rhetoric used to get inside the myth itself—this seems to have been Carey's aim. Yet while in itself an extraordinary technical feat, it brings us no closer to the raw stuff of the Kelly story, especially the aspects historians have tended to shy away from. It is not even as if Carey has been able to replace one myth with another; he has merely embellished the existing myth further, adding another layer on top of the already tottering pile. The Kelly before whom Carey would have us genuflect is too sanitised to be believable: in each and every encounter and situation more sinned against than sinning. The novel tells a moving tale, certainly, but Carey doesn't allow its ground to be as rich and dangerous as it might have been, and as the evidence—Kelly's own letters—suggests that it was.

The challenge is there still, for a great novel, a rendering that encompasses both the light as well as the dark, the shady aspects of Kelly; the true brooding and implacable menace as well as the sense of honour outraged. Carey has taken an easier and well-trodden path, extrapolating further the story of Kelly as victim, a decent, good and loving sensibility cruelly wronged in repeated fashion, a man made rebel by dint of brutal class and ethnic oppression. Anyone familiar with Kelly's own letters, or any reader who desires the truly riveting tale, cannot help but be left unconvinced. ■

Alex McDermott is a Melbourne-based freelance writer.

Page 37, the Jerilderie letter: In November 2000, the Jerilderie letter was acquired by the State Library of Victoria. The extract from the Jerilderie letter on page 37 is from: MS13361. Ned Kelly. Jerilderie Letter, 1879. La Trobe Australian Manuscripts Collection, State Library of Victoria. Courtesy the SLV.

CHRISTOPHER MENZ

By design

The Art Movement in Australia: Design, Taste and Society 1875–1900, Andrew Montana, Melbourne University Press, 2000. ISBN 0 522 84879 6, RRP $88 (hb).

Books like Andrew Montana's fascinating study of late 19th-century Australian interiors, design and decorative arts have one dispiriting aspect: they reveal just to what extent their content must now be drawn from secondary sources. Many furnishings and a few interiors survive, but so much has been destroyed and is now available only through historical photographs, like those of the extraordinary interiors of Melbourne's Tudor Lodge, or through less visually informative references in letters and newspapers.

The Art Movement in Australia examines in detail 'progressive' artistic taste in Australia during the final three decades of the 19th century and places it securely within the context of British and North American influences and the Australian social and cultural scene. Although largely the domain of the privileged classes, progressive artistic concerns and taste infiltrated the aesthetic sensibilities of a much broader population via publications, big exhibitions, increasing commercialisation and aggressive marketing.

Montana dwells in some detail on the large international exhibitions in Sydney and Melbourne of 1879–81. Housed in elaborately decorated pavilions—of these only Melbourne's Exhibition Building survives—the trade fairs lured many European exhibitors eager to tap the colonial market. It was during the late 1870s that the term 'art furniture' was first used in Australia to describe and sell furniture in the current progressive taste—the term 'art' having a marketing cachet much as 'design' has in today's terminology. Of great interest in these exhibitions are the descriptions of the Japanese works exhibited at the Sydney International Exhibition 1879–80 and the Indian Court at the Melbourne International Exhibition of 1880–81. These not only reinforce the exotic taste of artistic interiors but also remind us that the interest in Australia for Asian art and objects has a long history.

Despite its inclusive title, the book focuses on Melbourne and Sydney. Montana acknowledges that the Art Movement was not confined to these cities and that future study might more fully cover other parts of Australia. He does make welcome reference to works and artists outside Melbourne and Sydney. But it is a pity—to give one example—that the dramatic and original Aesthetic Movement japonaiserie dado, including depictions of the Sturt Desert pea and the black swan, in the hallway of The Acacias, Maryatville, Adelaide is neither included as an illustration, nor mentioned in the text. (Suzanne Forge illustrates a section of this striking interior in her pioneering *Victorian Splendour*, 1981.)

Montana's research and references confirm that links with the latest developments in European artistic design were avidly followed in the Antipodes. The chapter on Lyon, Cottier & Co. is a most important one and shows connections between a significant London designer and Australia. Daniel Cottier (1838–91) is not a household name, but he was a leading British

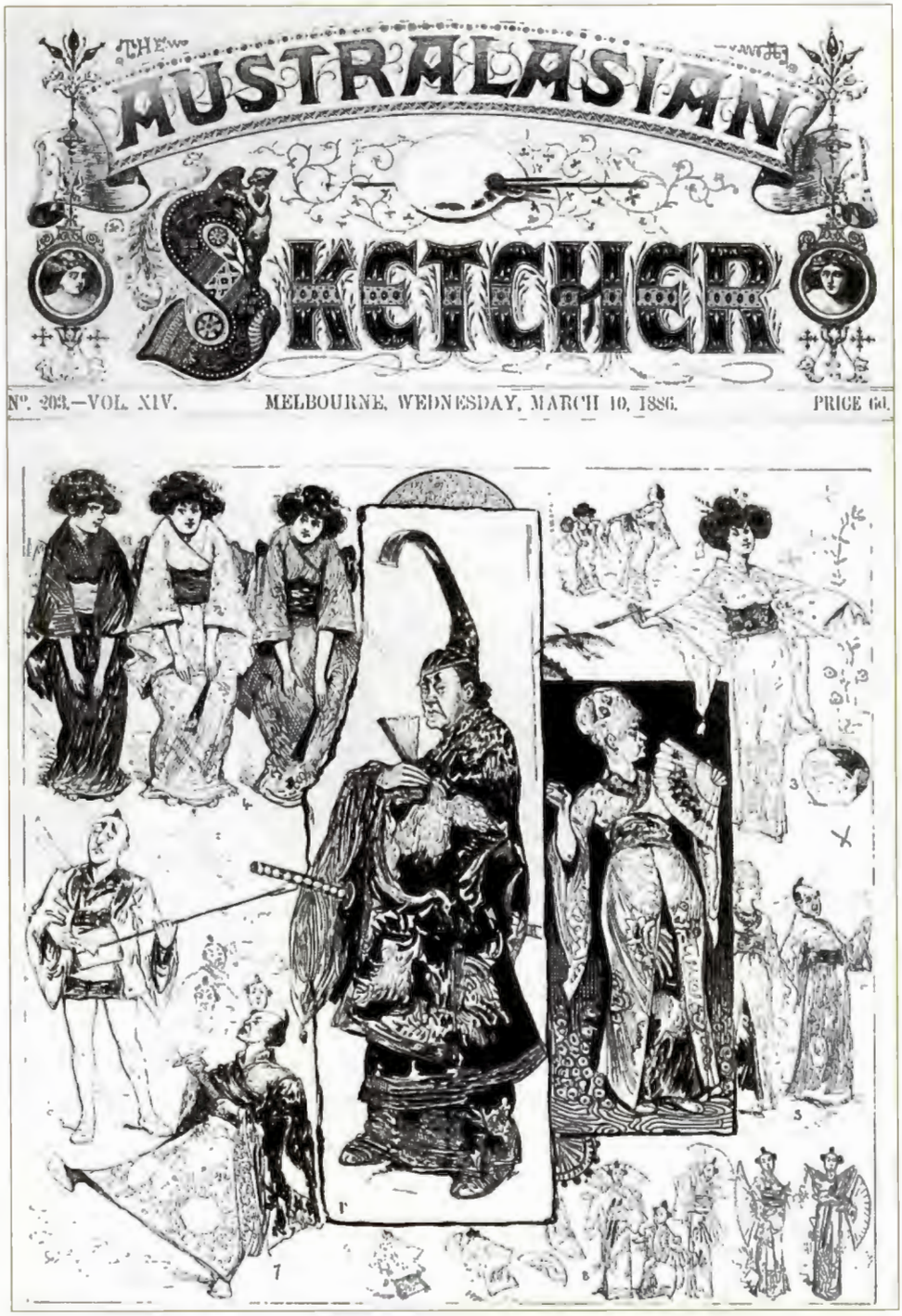
Left: Tudor Lodge, dining room, c. 1890. *Above:* The original design of the Exhibition Building, Melbourne, 1878.

stained glass designer and also designed interiors and furniture. In partnership with Sydney-based John Lamb Lyon he established Lyon, Cottier & Co. in that city in 1873, the same year he opened his branch on Fifth Avenue, New York. Even more interesting is the reference to furniture made by Christopher Dresser making its way to Sydney during the 1870s. Others who worked in Australia and had connections with the leaders of late 19th-century British design included the architect Henry H. Kemp, who was influenced by William Burgess and Norman Shaw, and Walter Vernon Liberty, cousin of the Liberty of London department store fame.

This book, which grew out of a doctoral thesis by the author, covers much new ground and explores the aesthetic and philosophical underpinnings of Australian artists and designers during this dynamic period. Most importantly, it brings together those interrelated but essentially different aspects of late 19th-century design, the Arts and Crafts Movement and the Aesthetic Movement. By integrating foreign and Australian works, Montana gives a greater understanding of the overall taste of the period and of the manner in which Australian artists and designers kept up to date with foreign influences. His compass is broad: art, design, decoration, interiors, decorative arts and architecture, giving a powerful sense of the movement.

It's perhaps unsurprising, given the scope of the work, that some minor technical flaws have crept in. Some of the colour images would have been better served by higher quality photographs, and it is a pity that the publisher has not included page numbers for illustrations referred to in the text. On page 116 the text refers to a sideboard attributed to Cullis Hill & Co., now in the collection of the National Trust of Victoria, and presumably it is the same one illustrated in colour in a different section of the book. A caption on page 38 reads 'Hexagonal salad bowl' for an object which is clearly octagonal; on page 97 the metric equivalent for 54 feet is given as 50 metres; in the Acknowledgements the first name of the ubiquitous Kevan Gosper AO appears as 'Kevin'.

But glitches aside, Montana, already well known for his articles on historic interiors, is admirably qualified for the task. In addition to being a heritage consultant, he is also a research assistant in the School of Fine Arts, Classical Studies and Archaeology at the University of Melbourne. Handsomely designed, attractively produced and generously illustrated, *The Art Movement in Australia* adds greatly to the literature on Australian interiors and design of the late 19th century. I look forward to a future volume that extends the range to the rest of the country. ■



Above: Period japonaiserie—'Sketches from "The Mikado"', *Australasian Sketcher*, 10 March 1886. First performed in Sydney in late 1885, the Gilbert and Sullivan operetta was often revived in Australian cities and continued to popularise the fanciful Japanese craze to a point of mania. At one fashionable Melbourne fancy-dress ball, the Italian artist Signor Catani wore a Japanese doll costume inbuilt with a squeak machine which he used to converse with the female guests. (*Australasian*, 16 November 1889).

Christopher Menz is Curator of European and Australian Decorative Arts at the Art Gallery of South Australia.

GEOFFREY MILNE

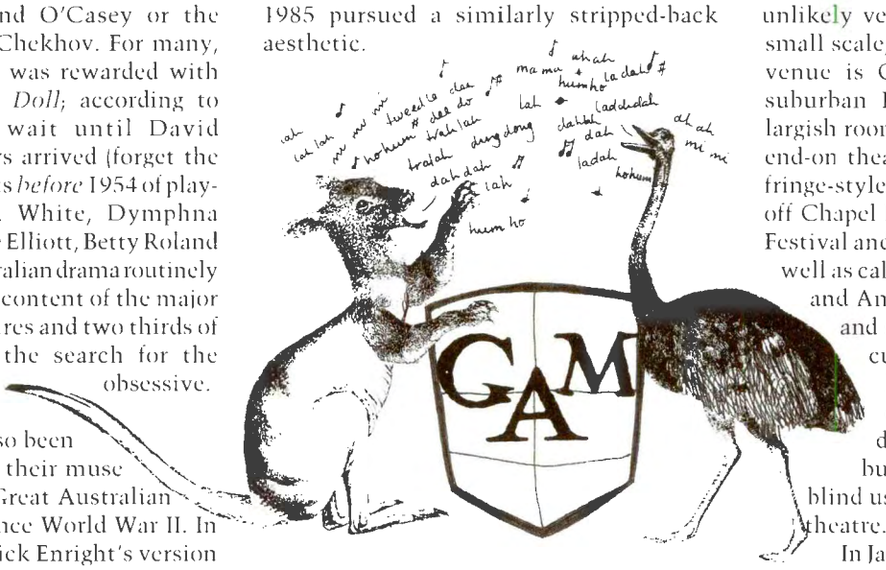
A little right music

The Ziegfeld Follies ain't us. Neither is Chorus Line.
But some irreverent chamber cabaret might be just the ticket.

For most of the early years of this century, people interested in the theatre in this country were besotted with the idea of the Great Australian Play (or 'GAP')—something to rival the great works of the Irishmen Synge, Shaw and O'Casey or the Europeans Ibsen and Chekhov. For many, this holy grail search was rewarded with *Summer of the 17th Doll*; according to others, we had to wait until David Williamson and others arrived (forget the excellent achievements *before* 1954 of playwrights like Patrick White, Dymphna Cusack, Sumner Locke Elliott, Betty Roland et al.). Now, when Australian drama routinely achieves a third of the content of the major organisations' repertoires and two thirds of the total on all stages, the search for the GAP has become less obsessive.

But devotees of music theatre have also been praying at the altar of their muse for the arrival of the Great Australian Musical, especially since World War II. In no uncertain terms, Nick Enright's version of Peter Allen's life—*The Boy from Oz*, for Gannon and Fox—was an answer to their prayers. There's no gainsaying its huge commercial success on a genuine national tour, or its genuine appeal as an all-stops-out, classic example of the GAM. And it still *might* make it to Broadway ...

In the meantime, however, many music-theatre pieces have enjoyed modest and at times even major successes. Boddy and Ellis' *The Legend of King O'Malley* was certainly a hit (albeit not in true 'Broadway' style) in the early 1970s, while Enright's marvellous adaptation (with Terence Clarke) of the commedia dell' arte classic *The Venetian Twins* has thoroughly deserved its many revivals since its premiere for Nimrod in 1979. This was another piece that resisted the luxurious production values and predictable leads-and-chorus structure of the Broadway musical. Rather, it helped develop a typically Australian approach that was as much indebted to Brecht and Weill and British panto and music-hall as to American models. John Romeril's *Jonah* (with Alan John) for the Sydney Theatre Company in 1985 pursued a similarly stripped-back aesthetic.



The *Bulletin*'s reviewer, John Edge, felt that *Jonah* 'may not be the Great Australian Musical ... [but] it was one of the Great Nights at the Theatre.' And so the search for the 'GAM' continued.

But I think it has been the wrong *kind* of search. We shouldn't be hankering after the Australian answer to an *Annie* or a *Chorus Line* or a *42nd St*. The flashy and brassy (and, dare I say, the vacuous and sentimental) are not our go. Our best *drama* is character-driven and it's about ideas as much as it's about crises—and even our crises are rendered with irony and understatement. Why not capitalise then on our strengths when we turn to the *musical*?

I seem to recall someone putting some money into research and development of this idea in the early 1990s; did not Jim Sharman and others devote some energy and imagination to developing ideas for Australian musicals as a result? Not much seems to have come of that.

More recent research into and development of Australian music theatre, I am happy to report, has been happening in an unlikely venue in Melbourne, on a quite small scale, over the past three years. The venue is Chapel off Chapel, in inner-suburban Prahran, with two spaces—a largish room equally suited to cabaret and end-on theatre productions and a smaller fringe-style space called The Loft. Chapel off Chapel has hosted numerous Comedy Festival and Midsumma Festival shows, as well as cabaret, contemporary Australian and American drama, poetry readings and special events. The program is curated by Nancy Cato, whose long career in children's TV and drama education helped her to develop a wide network of show-business contacts and shouldn't blind us to her excellent taste in adult theatre.

In January 2000, a little show called *Prodigal Son* (with a cast of five, plus one musician) opened at the Chapel Loft without much fanfare. After its initial brief season there, it transferred into the larger space and proved to be well worth the expanded re-staging. This is at heart a piece of classic Australian dysfunctional family drama. The Flannery family runs a small fishing fleet at Eden on the south coast of NSW and Dad has fond hopes of passing on the family business to his young son Luke, who leaves home to go to Sydney to study arts. Once in the big smoke, Luke develops new interests and friendships with various arty friends—much to the chagrin of his conservative regional family. (Shades of *The One Day of the Year*.)

Worse follows: Luke makes a big decision to return to the bosom of the family to announce his coming out as a gay man—only to be bashed senseless by former

schoolmates (and even his jealous younger brother). The dialogue of the piece was a bit under-developed but the song lyrics (in a mixture of solos, duets, trios and even a wonderful family quartet) were competent, intimate and understated in their wit and irony. *Prodigal Son* was written by Dean Bryant (book and lyrics) and Matthew Frank (music). Both are graduates of the Western Australian Academy of the Performing Arts' music theatre program.

In November last year, Chapel off Chapel came up with another gem, entitled *Tea With Oscar*, again with a cast of five plus one musician. This was a musical adaptation of four of Oscar Wilde's short stories by the adaptor and lyricist Gary Young and his composer colleague Paul Keelan. Four friends of Oscar Wilde gather a year after Oscar's death for a celebratory tea party; one of their sons asks an elder to read some of Wilde's stories from a large storybook—whereupon the protagonists narrate and enact the stories, with specific character-songs (again solos, duets and quartets) confidently and very competently woven into the narrative.

The cast seamlessly personify dozens of characters, using the barest of means—occasional costume changes, simple choreography, body language. The tunes are a touch Lloyd Webberish, but the piece as a whole reminds us of what a good storyteller Wilde was. The repeated musical refrains in 'The Nightingale and the Rose' and 'The Happy Prince', for example, capture the essence of his often ironic (and sometimes autobiographical) intent.

Given the pleasure and emotional release that Australian music theatre pieces like these can generate, why bother trying to copy the razzamatazz of our American cousins? None of these are ever going to make big money, but they demonstrate a mastery of the craft of music theatre-making which is truly admirable and they suggest that there is a future for the Australian musical—at the chamber level. And what's wrong with that? ■

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FLASH IN THE PAN

Epochal epic

Sunshine, dir. Istvan Szabo. This is a rich and thoughtful film. You'd expect nothing less from a director of Szabo's finesse and track record. The texture is authentic—Szabo knows his Europe and his Hungary in particular. The scope is ambitious: three generations of a Hungarian Jewish family living across the span of history that encompasses the dying glamour of the Austro-Hungarian empire, two world wars and, finally, the disintegration of Communist rule in Hungary.

The cast is international and accomplished. Szabo shuffles a whole pack to get three generations of the family Sonnenschein, with only one actor, Ralph Fiennes, playing multiple roles across the generations. (Fiennes is pictured above, right, with Jennifer Ehle and James Frain as Valerie and Gustave Sonnenschein.) Fiennes' triple incarnation as a Sonnenschein/Sors (the name change, for 'integration' reasons, is a film in itself) is a laudable technical achievement, but more repressed than mercurial. It seems ironic that Steven Spielberg, a softer director than Szabo, could elicit a multi-layered performance from Fiennes (as Amon Goeth, the self-aware Nazi villain in *Schindler's List*), while the grittier European can get from him intensity, but not range. In the wings of expectation, of course, stands the peerless Klaus Maria Brandauer, star of Szabo's earlier triumphs, *Mephisto* and *Colonel Redl*. I kept hoping he'd walk on and make a match for Jennifer Ehle, in the pivotal role of Valerie Sonnenschein as a young woman (the older Valerie is well played by Ehle's mother, Rosemary Harris). Ehle, like Brandauer, acts from the eyes out, with crackling energy. Fiennes' performance seems like a monumental effort of will concentrated in his upper lip. William Hurt, subtle and convincing as the Communist Andor Knorr, makes Fiennes' effort seem even more strenuous by comparison.

But that aside, *Sunshine* is still a formidably good film. Szabo knows how to fix on the image that will conjure period and emotion. His memory, part autobiographical—of cafes, courtyards, Jewish family life, custom, class, terror, self-deception, love—is tenacious and exacting. He is always the thinker, never the mere decorator. And he thinks in epic terms. *Sunshine* is three hours long. I wouldn't have missed a second of it.

—Morag Fraser

Not quite

Unbreakable, dir. M. Night Shyamalan. It was always going to be hard for Shyamalan to follow that amazing little gem *The Sixth Sense*, which was all the more extraordinary for being his first movie. Shyamalan writes his own scripts, so he is going to be compared with other *auteurs*: Hitchcock and Welles in particular. The expectations raised by this are always going to be hard to live up to, but in the very fact of the comparisons being raised there is an acknowledgment of Shyamalan's genius, and some anticipatory excitement about what he might be creating in ten or 20 years' time if he doesn't get too bloatedly rich and emit the flatulent potboilers that have so spoiled the latter careers of George Lucas and Steven Spielberg.

Having said that, the film didn't match up to its own early promise, let alone the quality of *Sixth Sense*. The second half is untidily long and yet far too pat: the only thing that stopped me from feeling actually bored was that I had been made to care about what happened to the protagonist, David Dunn (marvellously and sensitively played by Bruce Willis, whose range seems to have increased enormously as he has aged). The surprise was that he acted Samuel L. Jackson off the screen. Jackson's charisma was somehow dimmed in the eloquent chiaroscuro that is becoming Shyamalan's trademark. The cinematography was great, particularly in the opening scenes where you were claustrophobically pressed up against the characters' faces, framed pretty much in the way of the great comic books. That is where it all starts. And, unfortunately, also finishes. **—Juliette Hughes**

Egg-cellent

Chicken Run, dir. Peter Lord and Nick Park. You've probably seen this film before: a band of defiant POWs make an ingenious bid for freedom. It's *Stalag 17*, *The Great Escape* and *Colditz* all rolled into one—but with an important difference. Instead of Steve McQueen, this film stars plasticine chooks.

Chicken Run comes from Aardman Animations, creators of the very British cult figures Wallace and Gromit, and certified claymation geniuses. It's Aardman's first big-budget Hollywood venture—and unfortunately it shows. The bitter-sweet whimsy of the Oscar-winning *A Close Shave*, for example, has been played down in favour of fast-paced action comedy. But it's still enormous fun.

At the heart of the film is a culture clash—just like the film's production process itself. Ginger (voice by Julia Sawalha, acting by the animators) is all British pluck; while Rocky Rhodes ('the Lone Free Ranger',

voice by Mel Gibson) is a silken Yankee charmer. Like Hepburn and Tracey they can't stand each other at first, but we know they'll be dancing beak-to-beak by the final reel. (Bad chicken puns are mandatory, the film's best is: 'She's poultry in motion.')

Ginger is the escape artist at Tweedy Farm. Rocky is a circus rooster who arrives in camp one evening courtesy of a cannon. Together they save their fellow fowls from the evil clutches of the crypto-Nazi egg-farmers, Mrs Tweedy (Miranda Richardson) and her dim-witted husband (Tony Haygarth), who are planning a profitable chook pogrom using an automated pie-making machine.

As with all the Aardman films the attention to detail and timing are superb. The film took 300 people four years to make and they laid an egg—a golden one.

—Brett Evans

All passion spent

Innocence, dir. Paul Cox. The world loves *Innocence*, if the critics and the people's choice plaudits are any guide. You can see why. It stars three Australian favourites: Julia Blake, Charles Tingwell and Terry Norris as the ageing but still—in their speckled ways—passionate love triangle. It has many of the hallmarks of Cox at his best. There are moments of surreal comedy (cf. *Man of Flowers*). It is lyrical and often beautiful in a haunted way (the flashbacks to Europe and first love). It has Cox's visual acuity about the domestic depth of people's lives, fine music (score by Paul Grabowsky) and dark absurdist moments (Tingwell, as Andreas Borg, watching his wife's disinterment, bone by bone).

I liked the intermittent riff of *timor mortis*. Cox has always had an eye for the fragility of the moment, the evanescence of happiness, the skull waiting. But this film as a whole seemed never to be absolutely sure of its tone. Maybe there were just too many tones at work.

First there is Europe, and a girl, Claire, in a full red skirt and a face just out of bud, like a young Ingrid Bergman, snatching kisses as she cycles down Van Gogh lanes. Her young man (Andreas as organ student) has the poignancy of every tall young man with tousled 1940s hair and close-fitting jumper. You see him as the subject of poetry maybe but not as a man who will live and work into a future. Because girl and boy hardly speak, and inhabit a world of closing doors and departing trains, they look like ciphers for tragedy. It is an odd shock to have them re-manifest so robustly in Australia.

In Australia, Julia Blake, as the older Claire, is at least visually continuous. Charles Tingwell gives a striking performance as the older Andreas, but it's as though he is playing in a different film. The youth was all wrists and angles. Tingwell is stocky zest and shrewd, ironic bonhomie. Terry Norris as Claire's betrayed husband also flirts with comic overplay. My favourite scene has him trotting off, music under his arm, to choir practice, where a serious group of ageing elves sing 'I'll take you home again, Kathleen' in close harmony. It's gloriously funny and humane and expansive—Cox at his wicked best. There are other scenes with related tang. Claire and Andreas rendezvous in a gypsy restaurant (in Adelaide!), overseen by a beaky proprietress in a fringed scarf, which she tosses disdainfully over her shoulder as she struts past the pair. The floorshow is a plump contortionist whose diaphragm seems implicated in her pelvis.

Against such comic grotesquerie it is hard to take the reignited passion of the septuagenarian lovers seriously, or sympathise with a husband whose grievance sits so close to farce. And all the while the European scenes are intercut, with dark trees pulsing past and train windows inducing a kind of disconnected vertigo.

Too many notes?

—Morag Fraser

High minx

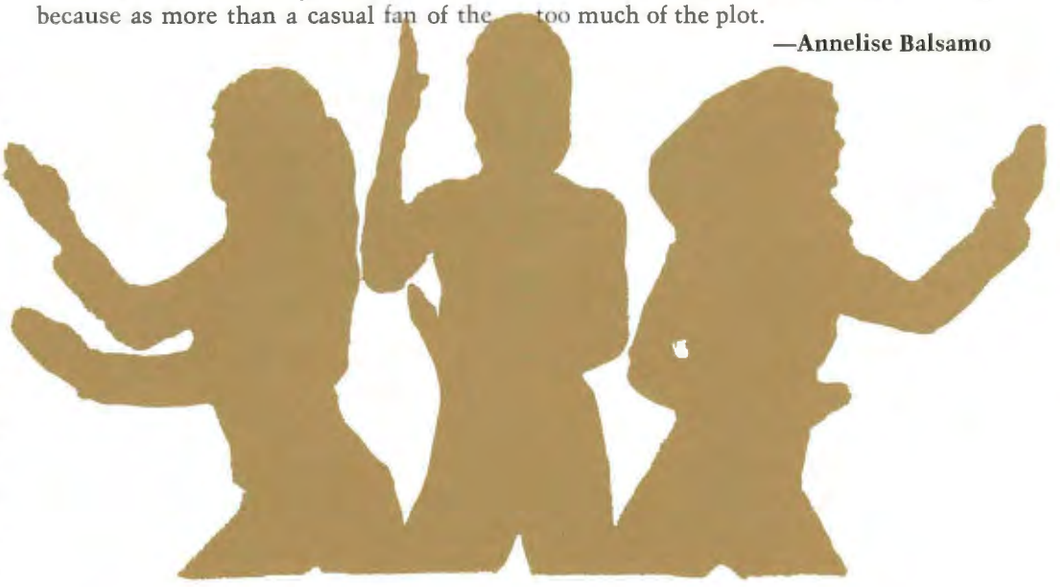
Charlie's Angels, dir. McG. I could hardly wait to see *Charlie's Angels*. I was excited because as more than a casual fan of the original series, I wanted to see how a movie-length update might work. And I didn't really care if it was fabulous or a turkey, I wanted it to be *authentic*. I wanted the writers and producers to have studied and appreciated the camp value of *Charlie's Angels* circa 1975. But then I am a 32-year-old, taking it all too seriously. The young boys who exited the cinema while I was waiting for my session, who would not have been *born* when Farrah was flipping the light fantastic, agreed enthusiastically that the movie was 'awesome'. Authenticity be damned.

Whatever your expectations, this movie is fabulous. It is funny and camp, there is action (kickboxing predominantly, and very few guns) and car chases and, joy of joys, dance sequences. The plot so diaphanous, you can see clear into the sequel. But then who cares, because we all know that Angels can fix complicated machinery with chewing gum—that at the very least was in the original series.

The casting is terrific. Lucy Liu, Drew Barrymore and Cameron Diaz are fine as the three Angels. Diaz gets most of the best lines, but Liu and Barrymore are not completely neglected, and all three are superb in the action scenes. Here are heroines who can change out of evening gowns and into leather fighting suits while running down stairs in killer heels. Can you ask for more? Bill Murray has a ball as Bosley. Tim Curry, Crispin Glover, Kelly Lynch, David Arquette and Matt Le Blanc all play various second fiddles, and are hams in the right proportions.

And now I find myself wanting to tell you about hair colour and wigs. But I really must show restraint. That would be telling too much of the plot.

—Annelise Balsamo



Web sights

Yes, I suppose I could be a bit of a nerd. In 1995 I got a whizzbang little Macintosh, connected to the net and developed a nasty surfing habit. Five years later, the web is a lot bigger, the Mac looks a lot smaller, and I can give up surfing any time I like, starting next week, tops ...

If you have a computer of some size, speed and reliability, being connected to the worldwide web is the easiest thing to do. But once you log on, what do you do? The internet is a gargantuan bazaar full of stalls with Rembrandts stored underneath broken Tupperware and leaking bike pumps. You should forage with some care, because you'll also come across the computer and psychological equivalent of infected waste, and these items don't always come with a hazard sign.

Yet if you have a map for the approximate location of the Rembrandt, you can gaze on it. That's the best thing to do with treasure: to contemplate it, rather than to own it. All the problems of the web, the hazardous waste, are the functions of attempted ownership, influence, power, money. The best places on the web offer the things that the web began in: the free dissemination of oceanic knowledge, unfettered and as diverse as its authors. But how do you begin?

The main maps are with the major search engines, of which the best is undoubtedly Google (http://www.google.com). I've used Google ever since it started because it gives more relevant hits than any other engine. And if you don't find what you're looking for, Google puts several other search engines (Alta Vista, Yahoo! and Lycos, etc.) at the bottom for you to click on, whereupon you find that your search has been conducted on whichever one you choose. Alta Vista does have a terrific facility, by the way: any web page can be translated instantly into another language of your choice. The result will have all the problems you'd expect of a computer translation, but you can negotiate occasional infelicities and contextual glitches.

Once you've found a treasure house, bookmark it for future visits. There are many great Australian sites, particularly government or university ones, where you can view policy, (http://www.fed.gov.au), your industrial agreements (http://www.law.usyd.edu.au/~library/indlaw.htm) and the environment (http://www.earthlink.com.au or http://www.csu.edu.au/biodiversity.html). And there are excellent links at Possum Pages (http://www.possumpages.com.au).

One place I go most days is *The Electronic Telegraph* (http://www.telegraph.co.uk). It's a fairly rightwing English newspaper, but doesn't look so far right when you compare it with Australian newspapers, whose editorial standpoints have been crowding up near Genghis Khan these many years. And among the sludge and pomp of other British newspapers it seems reasonably clear and intelligent, and what computer people like to call eminently user-friendly.

If you want to be amused and horrified, there is much to satisfy in http://www.balaams-ass.com. When I tell you it's an American Bible-bashing site that doesn't say it all at all. The proprietor, Steve Nattan, is Fred Nile gone feral. The site is huge, and includes household tips for 'Christian ladies'. The Nattan family oppose Christmas, dating, the Pope, Billy Graham, Freemasonry, the new world order and television. Basically they worship the King James Bible. If you're using any other translation you're stuffed, damned, denied the rapture and are generally spawn of Satan and the Whore of Babylon. Great fun.

But for serious treasure go to the Gutenberg project. The aim of the project is to make available any book that is in the public domain. It is so huge that its index of titles and authors is zipped for download. Go there (http://promo.net/pg). Then you can actually download, and if you wish, print out a whole book for free—perfectly legally and morally too.

There are many dictionaries and encyclopedias on the web. Just type 'dictionary' into Google and see what you get. Some of them you have to pay to view, such as Britannica Online, but you might feel it's worth it, and most places offer a free trial period.

The best magazine on the web, apart of course from your far from humble servant (http://www.eurekastreet.com.au), is the pinko-lefty American political muckraker *Mother Jones* (http://www.motherjones.com).

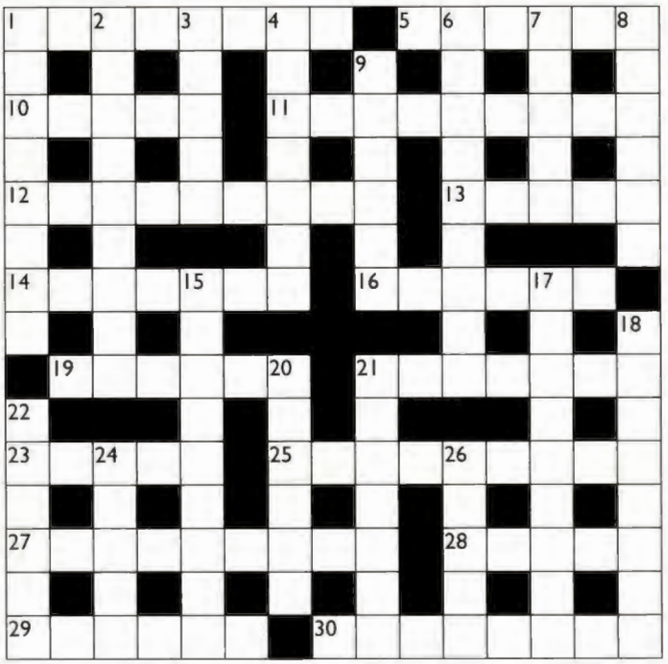
If you like museums try the Smithsonian site: (http://www.si.edu). Or visit NASA—great for kids (http://www.nasa.gov). And if you want quick facts about countries at your fingertips, the *CIA World Factbook*'s website is free and very useful for settling arguments (http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook). Are you, or have you ever been, connected with Ireland and the Irish? Try http://kildare.ie/Bestofirish.htm. Want to cook? Go to the Searchable Online Archive of Recipes (http://soar.berkeley.edu/recipes).

And finally, do use the Universal Currency Converter, which is useful if you have kids travelling overseas and you want to know just how little your hard-earned AUD international money order means in most of the countries they visit (http://www.xe.net/ucc). Happy New Year and happy surfing ■

Juliette Hughes is a freelance reviewer.

Eureka Street Cryptic Crossword no. 90, January–February 2001

Devised by
Joan Nowotny IBVM



ACROSS

1. Unload the fish to make the pudding. (8)
5. Rare vehicle caught in south-east direction. (6)
10. The dawn—of understanding, perhaps—came when witty pun was returned to us. (5)
11. Going to earth for a solid basis. (9)
12. More satiated than ever with oaten cakes. (9)
13. Feast in theatre attic! (5)
14. Ned gave as good as he got in retaliation. (7)
16. Educated but sounds tense! (6)
19. Hides vanished from established firm. Reorganisation needed. (6)
21. It goes round and round, back and forth, it's all the same! (7)
23. Overturn English coin in America and France. (5)
25. I'm returning to have mixed grill before morning—just a small amount. (9)
27. With circumspection, perhaps, duly rent quiet property. (9)
28. A girl astray! (5)
29. Burnt or raw, this colour can be found in Tuscan town about North. (6)
30. Public demonstrations in favour of exams. (8)

DOWN

1. Getting rid of messy soap lids! (8)
2. One cent Emma mistakenly paid for pie-filling. (9)
3. Sounds as if race circuits' standards decline. (5)
4. Denied donkey went round opening. (7)
6. Wild corn cut round street to make room to build. (9)
7. Bring up new melodies at the beginning of Easter. (5)
8. Place for height when breath plummets to bottom. (6)
9. Good French openwork fabric headgear. (6)
15. Leave with Ben but without sentimental intermediary. (9)
17. Casual outcome of most Irish exchanges. (3,2,4)
18. Some R.I.P.s can make pledges for future life. (8)
20. Hostility shown towards me, tiny though I be. (6)
21. Could be the ABC that produced early 'Queen' broadcast. (7)
22. What a commotion when peculiar cat lost tail! (6)
24. Being a hundred short, accuse someone of impudence. Might go well with 1-across. (5)
26. Unsuitable use of mixed paint. (5)

Solution to Crossword no. 89, December 2000

C	L	A	S	S	E	S	■	E	N	L	A	R	G	E
■	E	■	E	■	X	■	C	■	O	■	T	■	A	■
L	A	P	T	O	P	■	O	V	E	R	T	I	M	E
■	D	■	T	■	O	■	N	■	T	■	E	■	P	■
R	E	P	O	S	S	E	S	S	I	O	N	■	■	■
■	R	■	■	■	I	■	I	■	C	■	T	■	R	■
A	S	S	I	G	N	E	D	■	■	■	I	L	E	X
■	H	■	F	■	G	■	E	■	I	■	O	■	M	■
V	I	V	A	■	■	■	R	O	M	A	N	T	I	C
■	P	■	N	■	F	■	A	■	P	■	■	■	S	■
■	■	■	D	I	L	E	T	T	A	N	T	I	S	M
■	D	■	W	■	A	■	I	■	C	■	H	■	N	■
M	A	C	H	I	S	M	O	■	T	H	E	S	E	S
■	D	■	E	■	K	■	N	■	E	■	I	■	S	■
C	O	G	N	I	S	E	■	A	D	D	R	E	S	S

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