

# EUREKA STREET

Vol. 2 No 1 January-February 1992

\$4.00



**CRICKET**  
Will it make another  
Century?

**1992**  
THE TESTING TIME  
**EUROPE**  
THE GREAT MIGRATION

**HELLO AND GOODBYE, COLUMBUS**  
Rediscovering the Americas





In 1934, when Donald Bradman and Bill Ponsford walked out to bat for Australia at the Oval (their partnership score was 451) the future of Europe was uncertain. In 1992 the political shape of Western and Eastern Europe is again changing (see p8), the Americas face radical reassessments (pp4 and 27), and Australia faces a shift in political direction (p15). Even the game might not be the same (p12).



# EUREKA STREET

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January-February 1992

*A magazine of public affairs, the arts and theology*

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## The long conquest

### *The Americas, 1492-1992*

**L**ATIN AMERICA NEVER CEASES TO BE DISCOVERED, and reconquered. These days, the explorers and conquistadors invade not with sextant and blunderbuss but with word-processors at the ready. True, the *Yanquis* descend every now and again from the empyrean blue to nudge Latin American history back on course when, to paraphrase Franklin Roosevelt, the bastards cease to be theirs, or the people set out on their own voyages of discovery. Witness, respectively, Panama and El Salvador; and don't forget the two dozen other armed interventions of this century. But the fabulists who proclaim their discoveries of the real Latin America and map its true past—it is they who prepare the way for the media-made history-makers and render possible their often grotesque conquests.

Perhaps it was always so. Columbus himself, sailing the ocean blue, thought the Bahamas were offshore islands of fabulously rich Asia, and drew after him conquistadors sure that Eden, the new frontiers of Catholic Christendom, and El Dorado were before them. Then, after the initial conquests of Mexico and Peru, more sinister medieval fables of the soulless wild man joined stories of Amerindian cannibalism and unnatural behaviour to justify their exploitation as natural slaves, or their eradication as mere beasts.

Joining the intense Spanish debates about who the Amerindians were and how Spaniards should relate to them, the Aristotelian and theologian Juan Ginés De Sepúlveda, the leading scholar of his day, fabulised them as essentially inferior. In 1550 he argued that the Indians 'require by their own nature and in their own interests, to be placed under the authority of civilized and virtuous princes or nations, so that they might learn from the might, wisdom and law of their conquerors, to practise better morals, worthier custom and a more civilised way of life.' Insofar as the Aristotelian mythologists convinced bishops and princes, the way was cleared for righteous and legitimated genocide, and Latin American history constructed according to the projects of the conquistadors.

Sepúlveda, protected in fable by never setting foot in the New World, nevertheless had to debate and defend his position. His principal opponent was Bartholomé De Las Casas, 1474-1566, Bishop of Chiapas and apostle to the Amerindians. Las Casas told the truth about atrocities of the conquest that he

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had witnessed and reported signs of the humanity of the Indians that he had observed (among others, their extreme facility in learning Spanish). His vision of and for the New World was by no means what we would today recognize as secular romantic: that the place and people were best left alone, as a pristine wilderness peopled by happy savages. But it was unusual, though not unique in its time. New Spain would be a new Christendom, created slowly in dialogue with the Indians, not quickly by conquest. He seems to have had no doubt that dialogue would result in Indian conversion; but that was in part based on his conviction that Christianity itself was adaptable.

Las Casas became legendary, as did the experiments in mission by dialogue that followed him. The power of the legend became real for many of us as we were drawn into *The Mission*. Despite almost total defeat for the vision of Las Casas by the end of the 18th century, it becomes real for Latin Americans—and Spaniards—whenever they debate the soul of Latin America, the special identity of Latin Americans, and wonder where their very different societies are heading. In those anxious, if exhilarating times, the fabled visions of Sepúlveda and Las Casas are never far away.

Especially when the anniversary of 1492 comes around again. In 1892 there was dispute about whether Sepúlveda's treatise should be reprinted. A Spanish scholar weighed in on the side of the re-printing but was scornful of the content and of latter-day Sepúlvedans, whom he identified as 'those modern empirical and positivistic sociologists who believe the extermination of inferior races an inevitable result of the struggle for existence.'

**T**HE DREADFUL TRIBE OF SOCIOLOGISTS referred to were the most powerful ideologists in several modernising Latin American republics at the time. 'Order and progress'—the positivist slogan became Brazil's motto in 1890—could not abide the Indians or the cultural dialogue beloved of Las Casas. By and large, the positivist motto mapped a course of events that we can now look back on with some dismay—that history of self-assessed failure to attain Euro-American 'progress'; further repression, even extermination, of the Indians in the name of progress; of blaming the Indians not only for the failure to progress but for their own incompetence at survival. Surely absolutist Europeanism and the debate for which

it sets the agenda must have died, because of the absurdities and tragedies they have generated?

But no. The old debate is on again, on the eve of 1992. Our Spanish scholar would have no trouble discerning the Sepúlvedas and the Las Casas of this round in the battle for Latin American identity and direction. Could that one there be Sepúlveda himself, wily as ever, disguised this time as a passionately secular and justly celebrated fabulist? He sounds it, arguing that, in the name of feeding the hungry, as the Euro-Americans have shown us how, and of realising the uniquely European dream of individual liberty, the Latin American Indians might have to be asked to surrender their languages and what is left of their cultures.

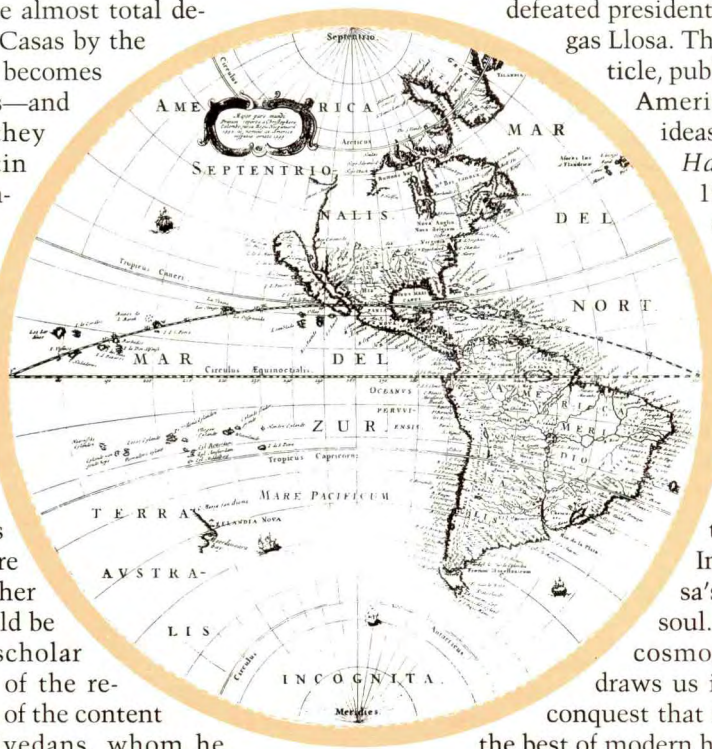
That is the kernel of a quincennial manifesto published by the great Peruvian novelist and recently defeated presidential candidate, Mario Vargas Llosa. There is much about the article, published in that great North American marketplace of the ideas and images that rule us, *Harper's Magazine* (Dec. 1990), to banish the ghost of Sepúlveda. Not least, for truly cultured Latin American(ist)s, is a disowning of the Argentinian literary giant of the 19th century, Domingo F. Sarmiento, who in the name of absolutist Europeanism sanctioned the eradication of the Argentinian Indians and, in Vargas Llosa's view, cost Argentina its soul. And there is an engaging, cosmopolitan geniality that draws us in to share a fable of the conquest that is shockingly innocent of the best of modern historical scholarship.

But there is the cold steel of cultural absolutism too. Once again a dialogical construction of Latin American cultures is being ruled out in the name of salvation made in the First World. Once again a sizeable segment of many Latin American societies is being fabulised into incompetence. Once again, the heirs of Las Casas (noisier now than during the last century—but that's another story of 'base communities' and Indian resistance groups) are being told that, now as ever since 1492, conquest is destiny. ■

**Rowan Ireland** is director of the Institute of Latin American Studies at La Trobe University.

• See p27, 'Rediscovering America'.

• Map of western hemisphere from *Nova totius terrarum orbis tabula*, drawn by Hendrick Doncker, 1665.





## Finding our way

**F**EBRUARY 15 1992, IS THE 50TH anniversary of the fall of Singapore to the armies of Imperial Japan. That British debacle, a tragi-comedy symbolised by the heavy guns left unused because the enemy attacked from 'the wrong' direction, brought about a fundamental change of attitudes in Australia.

It ended reliance on Britain in foreign and defence policy, and began an alliance with the United States. Australia was forced to recognise itself as an Asian-Pacific nation, ignoring Churchill's demand that Australian troops help protect the threatened empire in Burma, and instead committing them to Australia's northern approaches in New Guinea.

But this discovery of our locality has only fitfully been matched by a sense of independent identity. During the 1950s and 1960s, war and communist revolution in China, Korea and Vietnam dominated attention in the region. The US response to these events was a rapid expansion in its

a decision taken before any UN force was organised, and even before the US had invited Australian involvement.

At crucial times Australia has found itself numb and dumb before major developments in the region. Our failure to openly condemn the Indonesian invasion of East Timor is a source of lasting national shame.

Last November's massacre in Dili—the latest outbreak of violence in a conflict that Amnesty International estimates has cost more than 200,000 lives since 1975—highlighted not only the iniquity of Indonesia, but also the craven attitude that has guided Australian policy on this issue. We are in a weak position to recommend anything when we have shown ourselves to be so accommodating towards Indonesian interests.

But belligerence is not the only alternative. Since Bill Hayden's time as Foreign Minister, Australia has sought to be the honest broker in resolving conflict in Cambodia. The forces arrayed against the Evans plan tried to use proxies among the Cambodian factions to keep old contests alive—China against Vietnam; China, the USSR and the US against each other; Vietnam against Thailand. Yet despite this—and despite the understandable hostility shown towards the Khmer Rouge leaders on their arrival in Phnom Penh—the Australian-brokered peace appears to be working.

Whether or not the Evans plan ultimately succeeds, it will remain a model for the application of intelligent diplomacy. Its central assumption is that Australian foreign policy should reflect national interests identified by Australians themselves, rather than simply accepted as the consequences of military alliance. The pursuit of interests independent of the superpowers, and Australia's role as a significant though non-threatening presence in the region, are the stuff of self-confidence in the foreign relations of a new nation. ■

Michael Kelly SJ is publisher of *Eureka Street*.

**T**HE MILITARY WORLD has always been a home of the half-truth and the euphemism. Defence, for example, is a word often put to dubious use. For some of our neighbours in the Asia-Pacific region, the threat governments are most defensive about is a political one, posed by internal dissidents rather than by outside aggressors. Related half-truths surrounded the international military equipment exhibition, Aidex '91, held in Canberra at the end of November.

On the one hand, Aidex attracted support from state and federal governments because of the potential for Australian companies to earn export income from the sale of military equipment. Yet according to the organisers, the aim of the exhibition was not export at all, which is controversial, but rather imports—the sale of military equipment to the Australian defence forces.

The exhibition was organised by Desiko, an Australian private company specialising in industry fairs. Entry to Aidex, which included about 150 exhibitors from all over the world, was restricted to 'trade only', defined as 'industry professionals, government and military officials, diplomatic staff, international trade organisations and professional organisations'. The exhibition included displays by the Australian departments of Defence and Trade, and some state government-sponsored companies to attend. The Minister for Defence, Senator Robert Ray, also provided the organisers with a letter endorsing the exhibition, which was used in advertising.

In a letter to Community Aid Abroad, which campaigned against the exhibition, Senator Ray said the government supported Aidex 'because it reinforces our efforts to increase exports of high-technology Australian goods and services, including defence products.' This statement sits unhappily with a speech to the National Press Club in February last year, in which Ray said: 'A major lesson for the future relates to the need to control and reduce the international arms trade.'

The contradictions increase, since according to the organisers of Aidex, the aim of the exhibition was not the export market, but rather Australian



military presence in Asia, and successive Australian governments have regarded Australian and American interests as identical.

This attitude, summarised by Harold Holt's slogan 'All the way with LBJ', has most recently been demonstrated by Bob Hawke's decision to commit Australian forces to the Gulf—

## A neighbourly exercise

defence force personnel. An Aidex spokesman, Ken Morton, said '[the defence forces] import 70 per cent of their equipment, and that will be the main aim of the exhibitors.'

Asked about Senator Ray's remarks concerning increasing exports, Morton admitted: 'In the last two or three years the Australian atmosphere has changed somewhat, and as a result we place less of an emphasis on exports now.' Was this because of the controversy over the arms trade? 'It's just that the atmosphere has changed,' he said. However, Morton told at least one other journalist that, far from being a matter of emphasis, there would be no export orders resulting from the exhibition at all—an extraordinary claim, given the diplomatic representatives who were expected to attend.

The authoritative industry magazine *Pacific Defence Reporter* was under no such illusions. An article in its November 1991 issue, headed 'Aidex bookings triumph', congratulated Aidex organisers on the high number of exhibitors in spite of protests from 'peace groups'. The magazine reviewed the companies attending, and noted that the British supplier, Vosper Thornycroft, was seeking both the RAN minehunter order, and an order for corvettes from Brunei. United States companies hoped to sell torpedoes to 'regional navies' and the French company Dassault 'is likely to be interested in potential sales of fighter, ground-attack or training aircraft to several potential regional buyers', the magazine said.

Morton believes those who oppose Aidex misrepresent it 'as some sort of international arms bazaar'. Why is this a misrepresentation? Because, he said, only about a tenth of the exhibits was 'things that go bang. The rest is computer software, clothing and the like. It's decidedly unsexy as far as the media is concerned, but we think it's important from the point of view of Australia's defence.'

Those protesting against the exhibition acknowledge that its primary focus may have been on imports to Australia, but say that the export

component cannot be ignored. In October last year, Community Aid Abroad sponsored a tour by a Philippines defence analyst, Professor Roland Simbulan, who is a leader in the campaign to remove American bases from the Philippines. His visit highlighted the sale of military equipment by Australia to the Aquino government for use in the 'total war' against communist insurgents.

In the same month new information on Australia's arms exports came to light as a result of questions asked in Parliament by Senator Jo Vallentine. Last year \$331,907 worth of exports of arms to the Philippines were approved, and \$116,182 actually sent. These included gun propellant, shot shell cases and cryptographic equipment. Australia's military exports to the Third World are soaring—from \$4.8 million to \$55.5 million in the last financial year. A large part of this increase was due to one sale of Mirage fighters to Pakistan, worth \$36 million. But there is little doubt that some exported arms are used for dubious political purposes.

Australia exports arms to the military government in Burma, which is holding the Nobel Peace Prize winner, Aung San Suu Kyi, under house arrest. Aung San's party won an overwhelming victory in elections held in 1990, but the government ignored the poll and has made no attempt to restore civilian rule. In 1989 and 1990 Australia exported to Burma engine parts for Pilatus Porter aircraft, which the Burmese air force use in a ground-attack role against insurgents.

One of the leading arms exporters is Australian Defence Industries, which is government-owned. In the past two years it has sold rifles and spare parts to Papua New Guinea, ammunition to Indonesia, smokeless powder to the Philippines and Malaysia, phosphorus-filled mortar bombs to Singapore, naval projectiles, fuses and cartridges to Bangladesh, and Bofors-gun components to Ireland. Developing nations now account for 45 per cent of Australian arms exports, compared to only four per cent in 1989-90. Yet at a recent meeting of the



World Bank the Treasurer, John Kerin, urged developing countries to cut military spending.

Frank Brennan SJ, director of the Jesuit social research institute, Uniya, and an organiser of protests against the display said: 'I understand Aidex's primary purpose is to facilitate sales for Australian defence purposes, but a necessary accompaniment to that is the export of Australian technology within the region. If Aidex is a success, there will be a further militarisation in the Asia-Pacific region.'

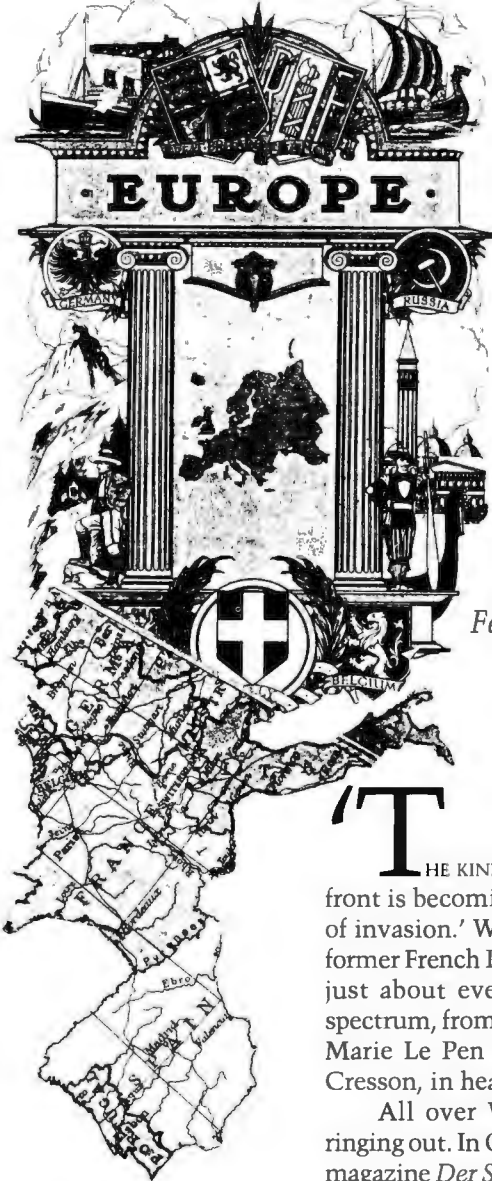
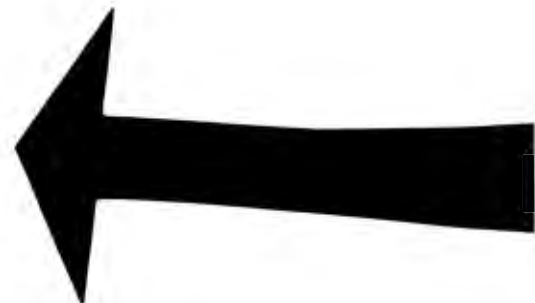
And why did the Australian Department of Defence feel the need to exhibit at Aidex, if its main role was as a potential buyer? The department spent about \$16,000 on its display, a sum which a spokesman described as 'cheap'. The spokesman said the display consisted of information on defence policy, particularly the recent armed forces structure review, and 'we might have a few models of defence equipment'.

What is the government's aim in mounting the display? The spokesman said: 'We see it as an opportunity to present information on Australia's defence policy to the industry, and to defence personnel.' Was this necessary? Surely these groups are aware of such matters? 'Yes, it is absolutely necessary. You would be surprised how much need there is,' the spokesman said.

No doubt. ■

**Margaret Simons** is a freelance journalist. She lives in South Australia.





## Waiting for the deluge

*Fears of war between East and West may be gone, but Western Europe is still expecting an invasion—of eastern refugees. And there are politicians eager to exploit such fears.*

**T**HE KIND OF PROBLEM we are going to have to confront is becoming, rather than one of immigration, one of invasion.' With this affirmation last September, the former French President, Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, joined just about everyone else along the French political spectrum, from the extreme-right National Front's Jean-Marie Le Pen to the Socialist Prime Minister, Edith Cresson, in heating up the debate on immigration.

All over Western Europe the storm warning is ringing out. In October 1990 the respected German news magazine *Der Spiegel* ('Mass Flight to the West?') claimed that 51 million Soviet citizens wanted to go to Germany. The article, citing figures from Central European government sources, conjured up an image of waves of migrants crashing over Germany en route to the West. A year later, the magazine said ('Trek from the East') up to three million Soviets of German ancestry were heading Germany's way.

At the end of November last year, as the crumbling former superpower braced for winter, the head of the political studies centre at Italy's Accademia delle Scienze, Lilia Shevstova, predicted in the Christian Democrat daily *La Repubblica* that the first big wave would descend on Western Europe in the winter of 1993-94, after Soviet travel restrictions had been dropped. She said that five million a year could set off to the West.

The OECD, however, released a report in August criticising the 'hasty speculation announcing the forthcoming arrival of large migratory waves (from Eastern Europe).' All this as the rich European nations look fearfully to the south, envisaging yet more 'waves' of unwanted migrants, drawn like moths to that bright light of prosperity incarnate, the EC, and its immediate neighbours. Unwanted because, since the last real waves of migrants, made up mainly of guest workers to help fuel the final stage of Western Europe's economic boom prior to the oil shock in 1973, immigration has been discouraged and tightly controlled.

In the past decade the share of foreigners seeking entry into Western Europe has been increasingly made up of refugees or asylum seekers. According to Jörg Alt, a Jesuit who has been studying the issue in Germany and Britain, 91,800 people applied for asylum in Europe in 1984. In 1990 that figure had risen to 402,000. European countries do not have immigration quota schemes such as those in Australia and Canada.

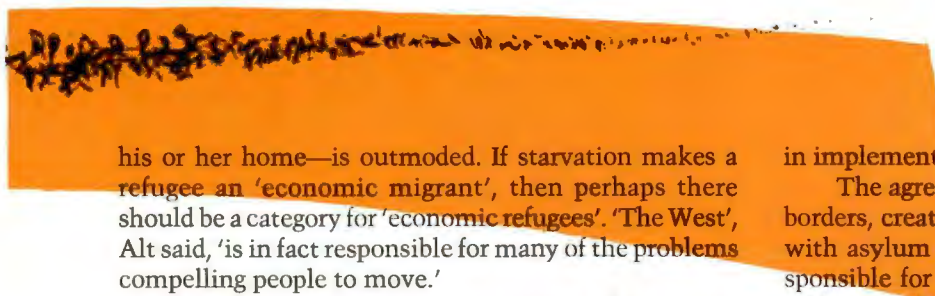
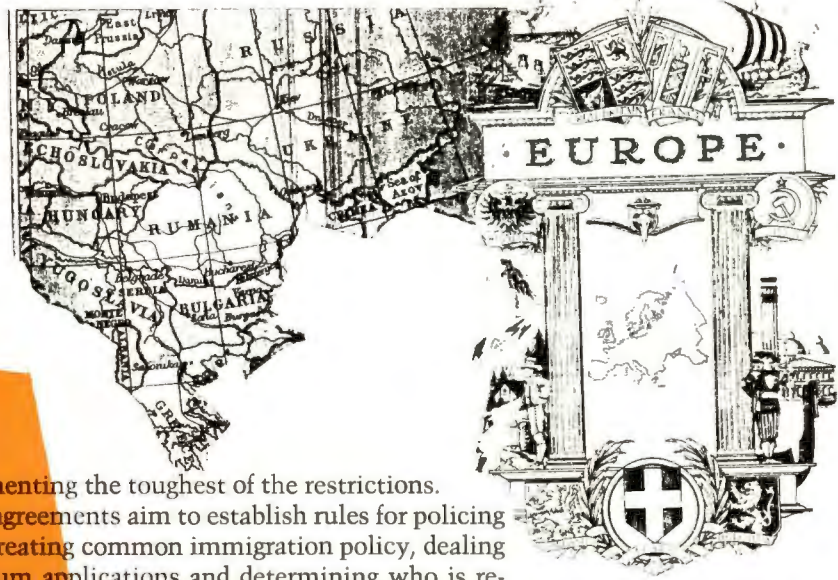
The United Nations High Commission for Refugees estimates there are about 17 million refugees throughout the world, not counting the Palestinians, and mostly in countries with economic problems considerably greater than those of Europe. Although they are signatories to the 1951 Geneva Convention on Refugees and the 1967 Protocol on the Status of Refugees, European countries have continued to tighten entry procedures, saying asylum is being abused by would-be migrants.

Despite assertions that the leap in numbers of asylum-seekers is due to such abuse, Amnesty International notes that, in Britain for instance, only 10 per cent of applicants have actually been turned away. The bulk, while not receiving recognition—and attendant government aid—become 'tolerated refugees'. The pattern is similar elsewhere in Europe, and leaves the impression of a gap between the real situation and political hype.

**E**NCOURAGED BY HIGH UNEMPLOYMENT and economic uncertainty, immigration has been pushed to the forefront of political debate, but Alt and others who work with refugees say the distinction between illegal migrants and asylum has been lost in the overriding concern for migration control.

The term 'economic migrant' is now applied to anyone not strictly conforming to a narrow definition of the politically persecuted. Alt suggests that the image of the refugee born in the ruins of Europe in the 1940s—someone forced by political repression or conflict from





his or her home—is outmoded. If starvation makes a refugee an ‘economic migrant’, then perhaps there should be a category for ‘economic refugees’. ‘The West’, Alt said, ‘is in fact responsible for many of the problems compelling people to move.’

John Joseet, the adviser on refugee affairs to the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales, voiced alarm in November, as the Conservative government’s new Asylum Bill went before the Commons, ‘at recent moves which attempt to raise the spectre of “mass economic migration” and dwell upon the race factor.’ Indeed, one of the problems many seem to have with migrants or asylum-seekers is their colour. When Giscard d’Estaing made his ‘invasion’ remarks, he noted that the ratio of Europeans to Africans acquiring

French citizenship had fallen from 8.6 in 1975 to 1.1 in 1989.

**A**CROSS EUROPE the relative merits of ‘migrants’ from East and South are generally debated. At least the Eastern Europeans, it is argued, are generally well educated and may contribute something. On the other hand, they could also present a threat to a workforce haunted by the spectre of high unemployment. However disturbing across the continent of an openly racist extreme right, human-rights workers are more worried by what is happening behind the scenes.

Attempts by the European Commission to elaborate possible EC legislation on immigration and asylum, which would normally have passed to the European Parliament in Strasbourg for debate, have been dismissed by member states, not least, according to Joseet, because such legislation would be subject to interpretation by the European Court of Justice.

In the name of national sovereignty, European states have preferred to work in the utmost secrecy on harmonising immigration and border control, especially in view of the EC’s internal borders coming down after 1992. In 1985 the first Schengen accord was signed by Germany, France and the Benelux countries. Italy joined in 1990 and Spain and Portugal in 1991. On June 15 1990 the Dublin Convention, largely the result of work by the TREVI group of justice and interior ministers of the twelve EC nations, and its subsidiary, the Ad Hoc Group on Immigration set up in 1986, was signed.

The accord and convention, although yet to be ratified by any national parliament, have largely been put into effect, and not only by the signatories. Austria has, for example, been described as one of the most assiduous

in implementing the toughest of the restrictions.

The agreements aim to establish rules for policing borders, creating common immigration policy, dealing with asylum applications and determining who is responsible for hearing cases, often the state where the asylum-seeker first arrives. The latter aims at stopping asylum-seekers applying in a second country if the first has turned down his or her request. One country’s refugee, however, is another’s nuisance. Alt says that although France recognises that Kurds have problems in Turkey, Germany tends not to. Greater co-operation between national police forces, fingerprinting of asylum-seekers and a ‘European visa’ are also in view.

The Schengen Group has a list of at least 59 and, some say, as many as 112 countries that would be subject to uniform visa restriction. How, asylum workers ask, could genuine refugees be expected to obtain visas when most do not even have passports? They see in such plans a simple means of reducing the need even to hear the cases of many asylum seekers. The group has signed a readmission deal with Poland, obliging the signatories to take back migrants they have given visas who cross illegally into the territory of the others. Observers see the arrangement as a means of turning Poland into a buffer against migration from the East.

Another element, already implemented in five countries, is the ‘carrier sanction’. Airlines can be fined for bringing in passengers without correct papers in Belgium, Denmark, Italy, Germany and Britain. British Airways, for example, owes the British government three million pounds in fines—1000 pounds per illegal passengers. Airline employees as arbiters of the fate of potential refugees?

**I**N OCTOBER LAST YEAR, the European Commission said fears over the abuse of asylum and the desire to harmonise controls ‘should not be used as a pretext to lower the standards of humanitarian obligations to which member states have subscribed within the framework of the Geneva convention.’ But fears are growing that harmonisation will mean agreeing on a common denominator of the toughest restrictions. Four months earlier the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Fadaiko Ogata, had said that in Europe ‘restrictive practices have been manifested in different ways ... overall, they can be said to amount to a clearly discernible regional trend.’ The UNHCR has been excluded from the deliberations of the Schengen and TREVI groups.

The largely powerless European Parliament, which on October 10 voted overwhelmingly for an anti-racism





and anti-xenophobia resolution, has repeatedly complained of being kept in the dark about proceedings. Germany is taking in by far the most foreigners. In addition to almost 400,000 *Aussiedler*—ethnic Germans from abroad with a right to reside in Germany—there were 193,000 applications for asylum in 1990

Giscard d'Estaing is not the only one who seemed to feel obliged to steal some of Le Pen's thunder. The former Gaullist Prime Minister and present Mayor of Paris, Jacques Chirac, has raised eyebrows with remarks about the 'smell' of Arabs and blacks.

alone. Although not so many *Aussiedler* were expected in 1991, 170,000 people had already requested asylum in the first nine months of the year.

The statistics have been contested. If the total number of foreigners is officially estimated at five million (of a population, east and west, of just under 80 million) and of refugees (recognised or otherwise) at one million, the Pro Asyl group claims the refugee figure is much lower, at 450,000. The explosion of neo-Nazi, racist violence since reunification has fuelled fears about foreigners in Germany, the country that awarded its millionth guest worker, a bewildered Portuguese, a free motorcycle on his arrival back in the 1960s.

**W**ITH THE TRANSFER of many foreigners, especially Africans and Vietnamese, from eastern Germany to cities in the west of the country, more and more politicians, sensing rising indignation in their electorates, have said enough is enough. In September 1991, for instance, the Social Democrat mayor of Bremen, Klaus Wedemeier, declared simply that the city was closed to *Asylanten*, for whom there was no more room. Other cities in and outside Germany have acted similarly.

The Social Democrats and their junior coalition partners, the Free Democrats, have successfully resisted calls from the ruling Christian Democrats and their Bavarian counterparts, the Christian Social Union, to alter paragraph 16 of Germany's basic law (constitution), which guarantees asylum to political refugees. Wolfgang Schäuble, the CDU party chairman and heir presumptive to the chancellor, Helmut Kohl, had said the paragraph would have to be changed and asylum requests processed much more quickly—at present they take four years—but on November 28 the CDU dropped plans to alter the basic law. In spite of the sense of crisis conveyed in the press and, some say, whipped up by certain politicians, a poll in October suggested 60 per cent of Germans approved of foreigners living in Germany, up from 44 per cent the previous month. Most, however, wanted speedier review processes.

In Britain, the ruling Conservative Party has attracted a barrage of criticism from churches, refugee groups and even the Bar Council for its Asylum Bill, which went before the House of Commons for a second reading in November. The island kingdom has comparatively little to worry about—it has been all but hermetically sealed by the 1971 Immigration Act, since reinforced by supplementary rulings and the 1981 Nationality Act. According to figures of the Office of Population, Censuses and Surveys, published in *The Guardian* as debate on the Asylum Bill began, immigration since 1966 has not exceeded 250,000 a year, often more than compensated for by emigration. In 1989, 205,000 left the country, leaving a positive balance of about 45,000. The year before, 16,000 more had left than those arriving with the intention to stay.

The Home Office gives a different picture, but hardly more alarming. In 1990, it said, 52,400 people were 'accepted for settlement', 49,650 the year before. Usually such acceptance comes after four years of residence. A spokeswoman said the figures included such refugees. Nevertheless, UNHCR statistics showed the number of asylum-seekers had doubled from about 15,000 in 1989 to 30,000 in 1990, expected to rise to 50,000 for 1991. Prior to 1989, the annual numbers hardly exceed 5000.

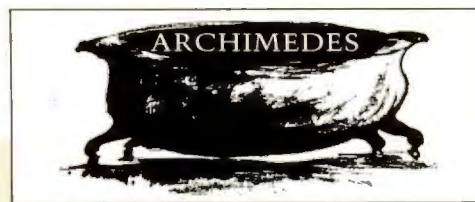
The bill, introduced by the Home Secretary, Kenneth Baker, envisages fingerprinting of asylum-seekers, doubling the carrier sanction to 2000 pounds, a 48-hour deadline for lodging appeals on refusals for asylum and the withdrawal of legal aid. Immigration control had, according to Mr Baker, been 'distorted and strained' by the rise in the number of people seeking asylum (the majority of them in the recent past from Sri Lanka).

Although all parties recognise there is some abuse of the system, Baker's Labor counterpart, Roy Hattersley, said Parliament: 'Mr Baker's concern is not with

The explosion of neo-Nazi, racist violence since reunification has fuelled fears about foreigners in Germany, the country that awarded its millionth guest worker, a bewildered Portuguese, a free motorcycle on his arrival back in the 1960s.

the genuine asylum-seeker but with diminishing the respect this country ought to hold for people in desperate trouble.' Baker replied by pointing to the rise of the extreme right across Europe and the need to avoid such a phenomenon in Britain by tightening entry rules. In the same breath, he assured the House that the bill was not racist. Baker singled out for particular mention Jean-Marie Le Pen in France, where the immigration and racism debate has taken on a different tone.





## Two tell one tale

**M**OST, IF NOT ALL, actions appear to have their equal and opposite reactions, or at least their consequences. This is a mutation of classical physics, but it obtains nonetheless. A rearrangement of the periodicals in my local library, for example, meant that I came across two science journals that might otherwise have slipped by me. One is *Archaeology in Oceania* and the other *Polar Biology*. Between them, the traces of a story emerge.

Thousands of years ago, when the ice age ended, the polar icecaps melted and ocean levels rose—a rather gross variation on Archimedes' Principle. People living on coastlines in or near the tropics suddenly found their way of life disrupted, or so the theory went. In the October 1991 issue of *Archaeology in Oceania*, however, Bryce C. Barker reports on a study of 'Nara Inlet 1: coastal resource use and the Holocene marine transgression in the Whitsunday Islands, Central Queensland'. The archaeological evidence indicates a changing but undisrupted Aboriginal settlement for at least 8000 years, despite the 'marine transgression'. Barker tentatively concludes that the community's social structures enabled it to cope with the crisis.

In the latest issue of *Polar Biology*, W. Ernst and M. Klages have a piece attractively titled 'Bioconcentration and biotransformation of  $^{14}\text{C}$ - $\gamma$ -hexachlorocyclohexane and  $^{14}\text{C}$ - $\gamma$ -hexachlorobenzene in the Antarctic amphipod *Orchomene plebs*'. Beneath this innocent disguise we have, in fact, a story about the effects of pollution in Antarctica. *O. plebs*, as its friends call it, is an organism that takes in and concentrates all sorts of substances, including toxic ones if they happen to be around. *O. plebs* is also a popular food for fish. Ernst and Klages put the issue more succinctly: 'Because of the necrophagous feeding mode lysianassoid amphipods are assumed to play an important role in the benthic systems of the deep-sea and the polar regions.' What their research indicated was that even at cool temperatures toxic substances get into the food chain, just as they do in warmer climates, if a little more slowly. It's good to know that our scientists are on the job.

If you put these two articles side by side, however, the question that emerges is clear: do we have the sorts of social structures and the sorts of relationships to our environment that are going to allow us to survive the increasing risks of pollution? Can we set an agenda that is personal rather than party-political?

May our scientists stay on the job, and close to our social awareness. And may we stay close to our scientists. Next time you go into your local library, keep an eye out for the next exciting issues of *Archaeology in Oceania* and *Polar Biology*. These may not offer evocative literature, but they do tell a kind of tale. ■

—John Honner SJ

On November 20 Le Pen's National Front announced a 50-point plan to deal with immigration, unleashing the customary storm of protest. The plan envisages the expulsion of foreigners, and even revoking naturalisations going back to 1974. Although his overall electoral support is said to be low, according to several opinion polls Le Pen has about a third of the population behind his immigration policies.

Giscard d'Estaing is not the only one who seemed to feel obliged to steal some of Le Pen's thunder. The former Gaullist Prime Minister and present Mayor of Paris, Jacques Chirac, has raised eyebrows with remarks about the 'smell' of Arabs and blacks. And in July, in an attempt to recover waning electoral support, the prime minister, Edith Cresson, announced a series of measures to deal with illegal immigrants. (Asylum does not appear to excite political passions. France takes in the second highest number of refugees in Europe.) The most spectacular, but least practicable, was a suggestion that all illegals should be expelled, if necessary on mass charter flights.

**I**F GERMANY LOOKS with consternation to the east, France's fears rise from the other side of the Mediterranean. The media regale the public with stories of North Africans trying the illegal and dangerous crossing of the Straits of Gibraltar to enter Spain and continue to France. Immigration fever has risen with unemployment, approaching three million of a population of 56 million. There are about four million French born of foreign parents, and a million naturalised citizens, but the High Commission for Integration reported in November that the number of foreigners resident in France in 1991 had actually fallen to 3.6 million a decade before.

Not much of an invasion. What has changed is the migrants' appearance. In 1975, 46 per cent were from outside the EC; now outsiders number 64 per cent. To top it all, *L'Express* published predictions in August that by 2005 France would have to import labour to the tune of 100,000 migrants a year. The point is to attract the right kind of migrant.

Italy, traditionally a land of emigration, has only recently discovered the immigration 'problem'. The gypsies tourists used to fall victim to at Rome's Termini rail station have been swamped by the face of black Africa, mostly Somalis and Ethiopians, both once part of Mussolini's glorious empire. North Africans, too, have appeared in all the major cities of Italy in the past 10 years. Italians, so often the object of abuse in other countries, have discovered racism. After unwillingly accepting the shock of 22,000 Albanian boat people in March last year, Italy was quick to toughen its stance, forcibly repatriating the second wave of 13,000 in August. It was impossible, the government said, for Italy to play host to so many refugees. ■

Damien Simonis is *Eureka Street's* European correspondent.





*The dramatic end to the First Test between Australia and the West Indies, Brisbane, 1960. Ian Meckiff has just been run out by Joe Solomon, causing the game to end in a tie. Will Australians in 2060 still know what made this moment great? (photo courtesy of The Age.)*

**T**HE HEALTH OF TEST CRICKET has long been a matter of public concern in Australia although never more so than now. For much of the 1960s, a curiously drab era in Australian cricket, many people were convinced that the game was on the way out. But cricket did not die. It underwent a popular revival in the early 1970s at Test level, which set things up nicely for the advent of international one-day cricket a few years later. Cricket was booming again, and it was possible to believe that not even in the heyday of the Bradman era had the old game been so popular.

In the early 1990s, however, signs are that cricket's popularity has gone off the boil. The game's administrators are worried by a drop in junior playing numbers, which are always a significant indicator. And there is other evidence. According to a leading sports-goods company, sales of all kinds of bats in Australia have fallen from nearly 500,000 in the mid-1980s to about 350,000 today. To some extent this can be blamed on the recession, but nobody doubts it also reflects a softening of interest in the game. The problem is not just an Australian one. Forty years ago in England, 60 per cent of boys played cricket; today the proportion is less than 10 per cent. Even in the West Indies, where cricket's pulse has always felt strongest, the game is said to be losing support.

In Australia, the specific area of concern is Test cricket. Probably for the first time since the inaugural Test match was played in Melbourne in 1877, people close to the game are looking at the possibility of Test cricket fading away in the next 10 to 20 years, at least in the form we know it. This is not mindless doomwatching by people who dislike the game; those predicting Test cricket's demise are often those who will be sorri-

est to see it go. I know one prominent cricket official who is convinced Test cricket will not survive much beyond the turn of the century. He is a cricket traditionalist to his bootstraps, yet he says he is also a realist. He believes Test cricket's fate has already been sealed, and there is nothing anyone can do about it.

It can be argued that market forces should be allowed to dictate such matters—if the public doesn't want Test cricket, why try to preserve it? Even the Australian Cricket Board's marketing company, PBL, is doubtful about Test cricket's long-term capacity to pay for itself. In an interview for *The Sydney Morning Herald*, one of PBL's executives, Tony Greig, told me he thought that Test cricket had a future, but that the one-day game would have to subsidise it.

**S**O WHY SHOULD a popular game have to prop up a less popular one? There are several good reasons, the most important being that Test cricket is the game the players themselves prefer. Sport has become so heavily commercialised that we have tended to lose sight of what it is for. Sport's primary purpose is not to be watched, or sponsored, or written about, or marketed, but to be played. True, if the players wish to go on playing Test cricket, they cannot expect to be paid as much as if they turned themselves over entirely to the one-day game. But the fact remains that most players prefer traditional cricket, which is reason enough to keep it going.

Further, Test cricket is imbedded in Australia's cultural history, and it may be argued that it is as deserving of preservation as any historic building or monument. Test cricket is one of the oldest of all Australian institutions, stretching deep into our colonial past. I had this impressed on me when, in the course of



some research, I found a newspaper report of a cricket match between New South Wales and England in 1879. On the same page of the paper, below the details of byes, off-drives and maiden overs, was an account of the Kelly Gang's raid that day on the town of Jerilderie. Somehow, this gave the cricket match a different historical perspective. An interesting possibility arose: perhaps Ned Kelly himself followed the Test scores, even while he was on the run. It would not be surprising—most other young Australians at the time were mad about the game.

**L**ET US ACCEPT, then, that Test cricket warrants preservation. The question is how to go about preserving it. There has been a good deal of talk about this, and it has invariably focused on slow over rates. The complaint is that, because there are so many fast bowlers nowadays who are taking so long to bowl their overs, spectators are simply not being provided with enough action—they are not getting as much value for their admission money as they used to. This is certainly true. Whereas only 25 years ago Test bowlers were averaging nearly 20 overs an hour, today they are doing well to manage 14.

In a long and thoughtful examination of the subject in the latest edition of the *ABC Australian Cricket Almanac*, Greg Chappell identifies slow over rates as the biggest single threat to the future of Test cricket. He says the problem is so serious that cricket administrators at the international level must act at once to speed up the game or risk having Test crowds fade away. Chappell advocates a radical measure suggested to him by Bob Cowper: that cricket authorities should fix a maximum time for any bowler to bowl an over.

The idea would work quite simply. Let us imagine the maximum over time decided upon was three and a half minutes. As each bowler started an over, the electronic scoreboard would begin to register the time. If the bowler took longer than three and a half minutes, the umpire would issue the bowler with a warning and inform his captain. If the bowler repeated the offence, he would be issued with a second warning. If he offended a third time, the umpire would remove him from the attack for the rest of the innings. The umpire could make allowance for time lost inadvertently, as in the case of a

ball being hit on the roof of a grandstand. According to Chappell, the rule would not only speed up the game but would result in less short-pitched bowling—because fast bowlers would not have as much energy to expend on bouncers—and more spin bowling, all of which would enable batsmen to play more strokes and so improve the game as a spectacle.

It is by no means certain that the Chappell proposal provides a total solution to Test cricket's problems.

It can be argued that the game is not too slow, but, rather, too *long*. A sporting contest that lasts five days is likely to seem as out of place in the 21st century as a dinosaur. Living styles will simply not accommodate it. We are already getting a taste of this. Some schools in Sydney have reported enrolling three or four times as many basketballers as cricketers. A teacher told me: 'It isn't because the kids prefer basketball to cricket. It's because the cricket on Saturday takes three hours and the basketball takes 40 minutes.'

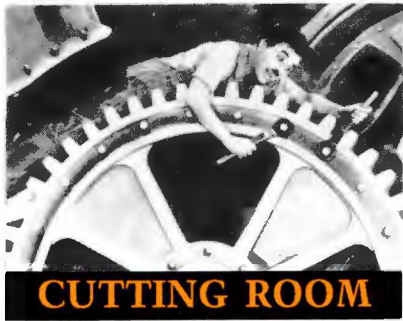
**I**T IS HARD TO AVOID the conclusion that Test matches will suffer a steady decline in attendances in the years ahead. Australians who cherish this old form of the game can only hope that it will manage to survive in the absence of hordes of spectators—after all, Sheffield Shield cricket has been surviving largely without spectators for 30 years or more. Yet Shield matches are contested as strenuously as ever and, I suspect, are still followed by a large number of Australians through newspapers and broadcasts. Channel Nine reports that television audiences for Test cricket have held firm, which suggests that even though cricket fol-

lowers aren't prepared to spend a day at the ground, they still like to switch on the cricket telecast at odd times during the five days of the match.

This, then, may be the future that awaits Test cricket in the 21st century. It will be a game played before largely empty grandstands, watched by sizeable numbers of Australians at home, supported financially by one-day cricket, enjoyed by the cricketers playing it, and appreciated by people with a love of artistry and a sense of history. ■

**Philip Derriman** writes on cricket and other subjects for *The Sydney Morning Herald*, and is editor of the *ABC Australian Cricket Almanac*.





## CUTTING ROOM

### Cross purposes

I went inside the confessional. The priest slid back the small wooden door behind the screen, and I could see the gray outline of his head. His voice was that of an elderly man, and I also discovered that he was hard of hearing. I tried to explain to him the nature of my problem, but he only became more confused.

'I'm an undercover police officer, Father. My work requires that I betray some people. These are bad people, I suppose, or what they do is bad, but I don't feel good about it.'

'I don't understand.'

'I'm lying to people. I'm pretending to be something I'm not. I feel I'm making an enormous deception out of my life.'

'Because you want to arrest these people?'



"THE FALSE BEAK I CAN TAKE. ITS THE COCK A DOODLE DO EVERY MORNING I HAVE PROBLEMS WITH."

'I'm a drunk. I belong to AA. Honesty is supposed to be everything in our program.'

'You're drunk? Now?'

I tried again.

'I've become romantically involved with a woman. She's an old friend from my hometown. I hurt her many years ago. I think I'm going to hurt her again.'

He was quiet. He had a cold, and he sniffed into a handkerchief.

'I don't understand what you're telling me,' he said.

'I was shot last summer, Father. I almost died. As a result I've developed great fears about myself. To overcome them I became involved in an undercover sting. Now I think other people might have to pay the price for my problem—the woman from my hometown, a man with a crippled child, a young woman I was with today, one I feel an attraction to when I shouldn't.'

'Can you just tell me the number of commandments you've broken and the number of times?' he asked. 'That's all we really need to do right now.'

He waited, and it was obvious that his need for understanding, at least in that moment, was as great as mine. —James Lee Burke, *A Morning for Flamingos*, 1990.

### Screen test

I don't make films to make money, I make them to get even so far as money is concerned. If I saw a bag on the street with \$2 million in it I wouldn't keep the bag because it would kill me, it would ruin me. It would take away the need of the little Brooklynite in me to scramble, to scratch. So staying just above water is good for my soul as an artist. What I am saying is a metaphor about not making films like *Die Hard*, or *Terminator*, or *Predator*.

We sit and eat our Raisinettes, we give our eyes to the silver screen for two hours, we deserve something for our time. Now we don't deserve pap, we don't deserve noise and nonsense like *Terminator II*, not if we're adults; we do deserve a modicum of entertainment, we do deserve a sense of fable, we do deserve some hope and some joy.

You have got to be pretty tough and pretty real and pretty hard, but how you conclude is a different matter. Beethoven tells us, if we listen, how to conclude. Tolstoy tells us how to conclude, Rembrandt tells us. And none of these guys are bleak—none of the great storytellers, none of the great painters. They end eloquently but they never end bleakly.

—Mel Brooks, *International Herald Tribune*, November 1991.

### Travel talk

Who these days really examines maps, studies contours, reckons distances? Nobody, except perhaps vacationers or drivers. Since the invention of the pushbutton, even the military don't do it anymore. Who writes letters listing the sights that he has seen and analysing his feeling while he did so? And who reads such letters?

After us, nothing will remain that is worthy of the name of correspondence. Even young people, seemingly with plenty of time, make do with postcards. People of my age usually resort to those in a moment of despair in some alien spot or just to kill time. Yet there are places examination of which on a map makes you feel for a moment akin to Providence.

—Joseph Brodsky, 'Flight from Byzantium', in *Less Than One: Selected Essays*, 1986.



## 30-Day Directed Retreats

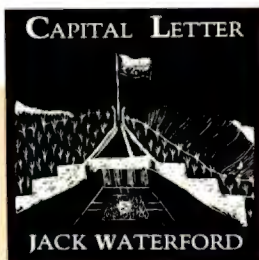
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## The Hewson pitch

**J**OHN HEWSON HAS PROMISED the end of 20 years of Whitlamism. He has a quite different view of the way the nation might be. *Fightback!*, the document announcing the opposition's Goods and Services Tax, caught the government and the media by surprise. It was not just that it seemed to have its mathematics right, or that the proposed compensation appeared to leave almost all groups in society better off. It was the fact that the document covered all areas of policy—it reflected a philosophy of government.

This is what has the government on the hop. On points of detail it might be able to compete, or to demolish. But now it is engaged in a battle of ideas. And, even in the ordinary sense of the term, after nearly nine years of government Labor's leaders are pretty well bereft of ideas. What is more, they are particularly ill-equipped with the ideas needed to win a debate about ideology.

There is hardly a component of the tax policy that Labor, on its record, could declare anathema. It is not the consumption tax alone; it is the approach to government spending, including issues such as health, welfare, state funding and taxation. Labor might not want to go as far or as fast as Hewson, but it has been going in the same direction for quite some time.

Nor is it simply a matter of leadership. Labor's own flirtation with economic rationalism has compromised most of its senior members. Just as the Liberal Party contains members whose ideology differs from Hewson's, so Labor has people with reservations about the way things have been done. But not many of them, at this stage at least, appear to be alternative leaders.

Labor's swing to the right in the 1980s seemed brilliant politics at the time. Its own constituents had nowhere else to go, or if they did their two-party preferred vote stayed safe. The Liberals were forced to further extremes, failing to help themselves in the process by a succession of leadership brawls and inept accountancy. Labor, in short, had the middle ground.

The problem with politics as a search for the middle ground, however, is that there is no fixed pitch. Hewson has switched to a different oval to play the politics of polarities. He has established his position, and the government must react to it. If it simply moves in the same direction, the likelihood is that the politician who is setting the agenda will hold the day.

Labor's best strategy is to move to the opposite corner—to have a debate about different views of government, hoping in the course of it to take more of the middle ground than the Liberals. And the alternative it could propose to the Hewson policy is Labor's traditional policy—Whitlamism, if you want. It might be a 'more responsible' Whitlamism, with less middle-class welfare and more specific programs. But it has ideals to which many still respond: that there is virtue in government, that collective action can achieve things for the common good; that the activity of the marketplace

needs to be restrained to protect the little people.

Hewson wants 'a generational change that will give individual Australians greater control over their own lives. We aim to achieve this goal by creating more incentives and opportunities for all Australians to work harder and to be rewarded for it, to save and to invest ... These objectives can only be achieved if national government sees its proper role as providing a framework of policy and equal laws within which individuals, families and businesses are allowed to fulfill their potential and plan with certainty and confidence.

'We believe that policies aimed at building incentives, opportunities and rewards for individuals are the most effective way ... Under a coalition government the cost and size of government will be reduced ... to enable people to retain more of what they earn. This will in turn improve individual freedom of choice and reduce the unnecessary dependence of people on government.'

The Whitlamism Hewson is fighting? Here is how Labor's 1972 policy speech put it: 'We are determined that the Australian people shall be restored to their rightful place in their own country—as participants and partners in government, as the owners and keepers of the national estate, as fair and equal sharers in the wealth that this nation should offer in abundance to all its people. We will put Australians back in the business of running Australia and owning Australia. We will revive in this nation the spirit of national cooperation and national self-respect, mutual respect between government and people ...'

The momentum is with Hewson, and a year or more of chipping away is unlikely to shake the fact that Labor is reacting to his agenda. But there are some signs that the Hewson package—which is about as indigenous as a starling—may have missed the boat. Long-term research into voter attitudes suggests that the mood is switching back to a belief in government again.

Twenty-five years ago, when people were asked whether they wanted lower taxes and fewer services, or whether they were prepared to pay more tax for better services, most opted for the latter. By the mid-70s, the picture had changed: people had lost faith in government and wanted tax cuts and reduced services. For the past five or six years, however, the pendulum has been swinging back again.

The Thatcherite and Reaganite small-government revolutions were at their height a decade ago. By now they have lost steam. The conservative successors of Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan have consciously dropped the hard edge of their policies and want to be seen as compassionate. No doubt Hewson wants to be all of these things as well as the architect of a generational change. His problem is that it has to be darkest before the dawn. ■

**Jack Waterford** is deputy editor of the *Canberra Times*.



# Knights of the forest

*Illegal loggers and corrupt officials are stripping the Philippines of its natural resources, but some Filipinos are determined to stop the trade.*

**D**R DOMINADOR CABANGANAN is a respectable man, a very respectable man. As vice-president of the Samar State Polytechnic College and a grand knight of the Knights of Columbus, a Catholic community organisation, he takes his civic responsibilities seriously. Perhaps more seriously than some Philippines government officials had reckoned.

Samar is one of the bigger islands in the Philippines. It is also one of the islands most affected by deforestation; its forest cover has dropped from 90 per cent to 40 per cent in a few decades. The Philippines Department of Environment and Natural Resources says it is responding to the problem—since 1989, according to the director of the department's special concerns office, Ebert Bautista—the national reforestation rate has overtaken the damage caused by loggers. In that year, 119,000 hectares of land were denuded and 130,000 were replanted. Those are the official statistics; when I spoke to Dr Cabanganan, he was not so sure of them.

Seated at his desk, a portrait of President Corazon Aquino on the wall behind him, Dr Cabanganan was abrim with patriotic indignation. He explained how the department had asked the Knights of Columbus to survey about half of the 1000 hectares being replanted around the capital of Samar, Catbalogan. It was not an easy job. Perhaps, he said, the knights had been expected to take the easy way out by rubber-stamping the work. But the department had reckoned without the knights' civic zeal. Putting up their own money to do the job, the knights divided into three groups—unknown to each other—which carried out overlapping inspections.

The gap between the department's claims and reality turned out to be enormous. According to the department, all the replanting had been done. The farmers and commercial contractors who were supposed to have carried out the work had been paid \$A500 per hectare for labour and plants, with more to come for tending the saplings. Yet the knights discovered that, of the first 290 hectares checked, only 179 had been planted. One contractor had been paid for 60 hectares but only 10 per cent of the work had been done. The knights were horrified—more than \$A55,000 raised through public loans

had vanished. Their report called for department officers to be prosecuted, and for senior officials to inspect the 'ghost projects'.

But there is little chance of that. A bookkeeper with the Environment Department in Catbalogan, Ligaya Tan, told me she could recall only one prosecution for illegal logging on Samar, with a fine of just \$A50. Department officers turned a blind eye to contractors using dummy projects to get a bigger share of the reforestation money, she said, and were then paid to say the work had been completed. In 1986, a department officer had cut down saplings and planted rice for himself. The resulting official investigation 'couldn't see' the damage and the case was closed. Raphael Yrastorza, a lawyer who heads the Samar office of the government-appointed Commission on Human Rights, confirmed that logging was continuing on the island, although it had been officially banned since 1989. 'I see logs illegally cut and carried on trucks because I often go around the region,' he said.

**B**ACK IN MANILA, Ebert Bautista spread his hands in dismay and despair. Of course there was corruption, he said: 'We know there are certain contractors who violate the area planting requirements.' And there were problems in the department—37 officers have been suspended nationwide. Bautista said that he had a network of regional officers who were loyal to the department and reported directly to him. Spies? 'Yes, you can call them spies if you like.' He insisted, however, that Dr Cabanganan's findings reflected an isolated problem.

But the evidence suggests that the natural resources of the Philippines are being pillaged at an alarming rate. On Samar, poverty has already torn the heart out of the people, and now it is tearing the guts out of the island itself. With forest cover low, many of the logger barons are turning their attention to the latest natural plunder, stalactites and stalagmites. Sonny, an Environment Department worker in Catbalogan, showed me a truck loaded with 6000 kilos of limestone columns. The department had already confiscated 50,000 kilos, he said, but much more was getting through. Except in the





'A very respectable man': Dr Dominador Cabanganan under the presidential gaze.

national parks, there were no guards on caves. Most of the irreplaceable heritage of Samar, said Ligaya Tan, was simply being snapped off and shipped out to prettify homes in Manila and overseas.

The director of the Environment Department's forest management bureau, Cirilo Serna, admitted there were problems. 'Forest destruction continues in Samar and all over the Philippines,' he said. 'It's common knowledge that illegal cutting is happening in many parts of the country. I think it can be only minimised—it's impossible to stop it entirely.' Serna's pessimism was echoed by Senator Orlando Mercado, who is sponsoring a bill that would place a total ban on commercial logging. Asked whether the military was involved in illegal logging, he said: 'It has a role, I think, although you cannot discount the role of certain figures who are well-entrenched politically—businessmen, officials of the government. If the military is the one that is logging and smuggling, then there is very little hope for the country.'

Illegal logging has other costs for the economy of the Philippines. South of Manila lies Laguna Lake, which at 392,000 hectares is one of the biggest expanses of fresh

water in South-East Asia. The lake feeds the Pasig River, which eventually flows through Manila as an oil-flecked open sewer. Twenty-one rivers drain into the lake, and deforestation on the surrounding watersheds has increased runoff in the rainy season. Since the hillsides were cleared, the volume of water that passes through Manila in times of flood has increased from 270 cubic metres per second to 3300 cubic metres per second.

The Laguna Lake Development Authority has put barriers at the source of the Pasig, to control flooding and to prevent polluted and tidal water flowing upstream, so that the lake can be used for drinking and irrigation. But Rodolfo Erasga, who heads the Laguna Fishermen's Association, says there is increased salinity in the lake, turning the water cloudy and substantially reducing fish stocks. To complete the scheme, the authority is considering spending Japanese loan money to build a concrete dyke around the lake.

Villagers fear the loss of 20,000 houses and their farmland.

**D**EALING WITH THE COLLAPSE of forest management in the Philippines would cost millions of dollars, which would come overwhelmingly from foreign governments and banks. The Philippines government already allocates 40 per cent of its budget to servicing debts, and further borrowing would make it even more difficult to act on logging, for fear of losing export income. So the spiral of misery and degradation continues.

Ebert Bautista insists the government is trying to deal with the root of the problem—poverty—by transferring reforestation projects into the hands of local people. Yet green activists insist that it is not the *kaingineros*—the poor who slash and burn—who are responsible for the devastation, but the big logging companies. And even Bautista's colleague, Cirilo Serna, agrees that the *kaingineros* usually enter the forests by following roads built by the loggers.

If commercial logging is banned, it will be because the loggers can no longer make a profit. Senator Juan Ponce Enrile, whose San Jose company was regarded as the main culprit in the devastation of Samar, is now a firm supporter of a logging ban. It may be of little use now. As Senator Mercado put it, banning logging in areas where the forests have already been felled is like telling a bald man he can't have a haircut. And there are no toupées for tropical rainforests. ■

David Glanz is a Melbourne freelance journalist.





Morag Fraser

Morag Fraser

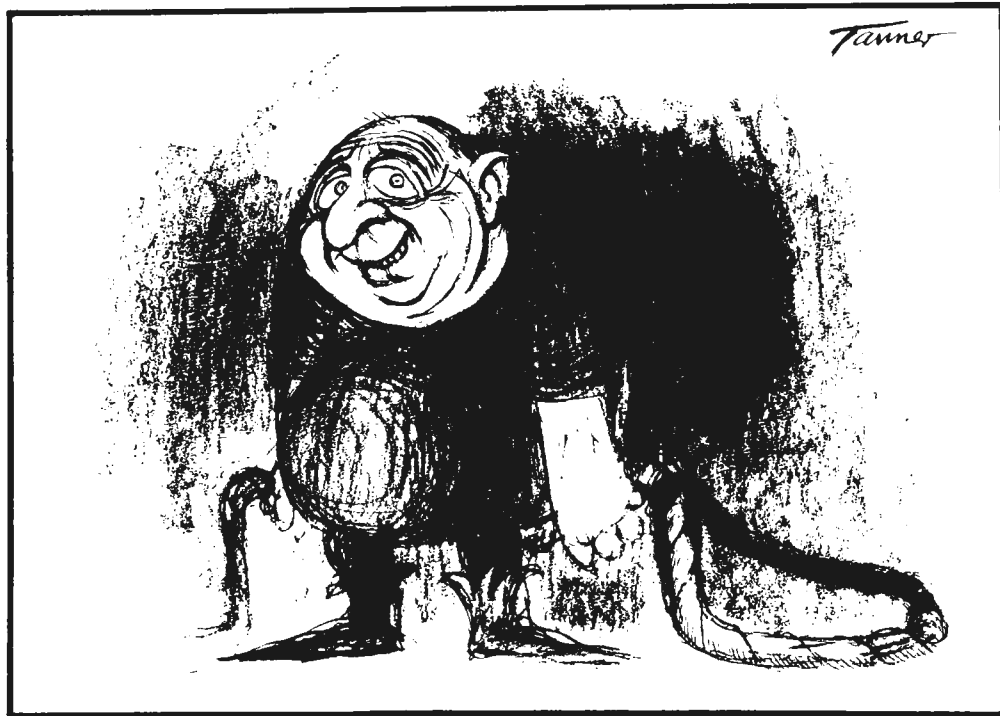
'I got a letter bomb once—an arrangement of batteries and things. Mike Leunig had a look at it, got very upset and said we'd better call security. So the guard came, picked up the package, tossed it up in the air and said oh yeah this is one alright. So he got the tactical police. They arrived in black uniforms—guns and everything. The bloke in charge said yes it was a letter bomb but if it had gone off it wouldn't have done me much harm. Probably would just have wounded my hands. I said oh thanks, that's a great comfort. And do you know, after years of drawing politics, what got me that letter bomb was a drawing I had done about the English cricket team.'

# Black and Tanner

**T**ANNER TELLS THE STORY WITH SOME RELISH. After all, it is a given of cartooning tradition that artists will serve as thorns in the sides of the illustrious, the notorious and the humbugs. He recalls gleefully that the great cartoonist, Phil May, was included in Hitler's invasion-of-England death list. Tanner himself has agitated more than English cricket fans. In 1967 Sir Frank Packer made Tanner hot property when he insisted on pulping an edition of *the Bulletin* containing Tanner's cartoon of the late Sir Henry Bolte in hanging mood.

Two generations of Australians have grown up with the cartoons and writings of Leslie Mervyn Tanner (he wisely abandoned an early ambition to style himself L. Mervyn Tanner). Political parties have come and gone. So have cricket teams. So have ways of being Australian. Tanner remains more Hard Yakka than Country Road. But there's the trap: hazard a characterisation of him and you learn fast what it's like to be the straight woman. He's beaten you to the lines by making a life's work and art of self-deprecating autobiography. 'Leslie Tanner or how I fought life to a draw' reads one of the early *Age* promos. Even the headline is his. 'Black and Tanner' was his tryout title for the *Saturday Age* column (he has now been writing a weekly column for longer than just about any other journalist around). *The Age* said no go, the title was comprehensively offensive. Which of course was the point.

Tanner has been writing and drawing now for more years than Paul Keating and John Hewson have been alive. He has worked on different continents, been to war, saw Hiroshima six months after the bombing. He has worked for a representative range of Australian media proprietors and he has, on his own admission, been absolutely wrong about



'I do not bow to mob demonstrations—only to mob support.'



every major political movement since the thirties—'wrong about communism, wrong about Vietnam and even wronger about Suez.' He has survived to write and draw about all of it. Almost miraculously survived. Tanner's medical history reads like a grand tour of all the pathologies: cancer of the larynx, heart trouble, battles with alcohol and bouts of what he calls 'rattiness'. He 'speaks' with a microphone jammed against his throat and can no longer sing or swim. He chafes at the deprivation: 'I used to sing anything. I was one of those poisonous people who knew all the words. My sister and I still ring each other up and say how does the second verse of *Anything Goes* go?' But to date he has lived longer than any other male Tanner and his mother is 88. Maybe the battler's genes come from her side.

Tanner started off in newspapers in the composing room. 'I was going to be a printer—down there with the workers. But my mother always encouraged the drawing thing. See, my mother's family were low-grade vaudeville people—everybody had to be able to do something—to be able to draw, sing, tap dance.

His sister got the tap lessons ('she was terrible') so Tanner learned some compensatory tricks from his 'Uncle' Billy, 'like how to draw a ship coming towards you. It stuck with me forever. Most times I draw people three-quarter face. I think that is a hangover from Uncle Billy days because with three-quarter face you get a lot for your money: you get profile, ears, both eyes and the expression.'

**I**N FACT HE WANTED to be an analytical chemist. 'I had an uncle who worked at a dye factory. He came up with the analytical thing and I loved big words—I still throw them into the column. So I was going to be an analytical chemist. That didn't last very long because I got jobs at Grace Bros and Woolworths. The pressure at school was to learn by rote and I jacked up on that. I started going to night classes at East Sydney Tech but that was no good so I enrolled at the Julian Ashton School. I probably learned more after I left school—the usual cliché.'

The world Tanner comes out of is a distant memory for many Australians. Working-class Glebe, 1930s: 'It never occurred to me that I was in the middle of the Great Depression. I just thought that was the way everybody lived. I was surrounded by people who were making a quid one way or another. My father, for instance, ran one of the all-time small-time SP betting shops. They bet in thruppences and sixpences. A shilling or two-bob bet was a big bet.

The family were tribal Labor. In 1948 Tanner and his brother fell into the Communist Party, in youthful rebellion against their parents' Labor allegiance, and fell



out again in 1956 after the invasion of Hungary. But even during his card-carrying days he was too opportunist or too black-witted to be properly doctrinaire. At least, that is how he tells it. At the time he was working for Frank Packer at the *Daily Telegraph*, and even Packer's organisation inevitably included a fair number of Communists. 'I remember one marvellous party branch meeting I went to, where the Sydney committee wanted to tighten up the organisation at the *Daily Telegraph*. This poor idiot came along and told us we should all sell *Tribunes*. And one bloke got up and said oh well I can't sell *Tribunes* comrade, I'm the news editor. And another got up and said I can't sell *Tribunes* comrade because I am the chief of staff. Another one got up and said I can't sell *Tribunes* comrade, I am the chief reporter. I got up and said I can't sell *Tribunes*



because I am the cartoonist. By this time the bloke from the Sydney committee was in tears. So he said 'Oh well let's just keep in touch with each other.'

Tanner's political disillusionments mesh with his experiences as a cartoonist. The traps are often the same—you can end up towing the party line instead of seeing what is really going on. 'I fell into a trap when they announced the GST. My immediate reaction was to the political party game—I mean, Hewson had beaten Hawke to the punch. And I saw it in terms of the players. Then the very next day I'd thought it's not just the politics, how is it going to affect all the people out of work, on low incomes? So I did one cartoon after another and they contradicted each other. In the first one Hewson is winning. In the second the Liberals are the monsters. That is one of the traps of cartooning.



Frank Broadhurst

You tend to start to play the game yourself. In admiring the skill of the butcher as he cuts the flesh you tend to ignore the flesh. Another big danger in journalism is writing or drawing for the people you work with. And that is or can be very common in newspapers. It is a bit like being ideologically sound about everything.

Well, I had those days of being ideologically sound in the Communist Party.'

**Y**OU CAN GET a misleading picture of Les Tanner if you are sidetracked by surface impressions. His friends will tell you he is a highly cultivated man—not something he would admit to, although he does lay claim to being a clever dick and a snob who insists on real pens rather than blue biro. 'Years ago Graham Perkins showed me one of John Spooner's drawings. Said what do you think of that? And I looked at it and said not much. It was a drawing in biro pen of somebody—probably a world leader. And I was very offhand. John loves to tell that story.'

Sir Henry Bolte once accused him of being an arty farty and the record lists no denial. But like most of his colleagues Tanner is reticent about his own drawings. Echoing Bruce Petty he claims not to care for them much, at least not afterwards. Apart from the Bolte cartoon, the only Tanner drawing he keeps on his walls is the sketch of friend and illustrator, Frank Broadhurst. Broadhurst, like Uncle Billy, taught him something: 'He would say to me "Don't try and get the whole figure. Get the way the man walks or the way the woman holds herself. If you even get one arm ..." It was terribly good advice and freed me up. So one rainy lunchtime I drew Frank with a Rotring pen—they flow beautifully. I'd used a scratchy dipping pen up until then. And I was tickled to death with that. I can look at it and say, yes, I did that.'

His Gulf War cartoon, *Desert Storm*, came with similar, though rare, ease. 'I was in Sydney, in the *Herald* office, doodling, when the news came through that it had started and the operation was code-named Desert Storm. The doodle was a skull, which incidentally was a leftover from the Julian Ashton days—I learned skulls. So I just put on some more black, wrote *Desert Storm* underneath and sent it through by fax. It doesn't often happen like that. That is when the game really is worthwhile.'

Tanner has long had unusual working conditions. Since the Bolte days he has enjoyed what *The Age* itself once described as 'full freedom of expression', meaning that he isn't about to be messed with. Is he a cantankerous devil to work with? 'Yeah, I am a bit. I used to think I was the soul of flexibility. But one day I heard David McNicoll talking to one of the staff at *The Bulletin*. He said "You have got to watch out for Tanner. He's touchy." And I thought, gee that's good.'

He also had what a decreasing number of journalists and cartoonists have nowadays—the long apprenticeship with its complement of required, flexible skills. 'You literally were filling holes and you had to have a style





## DESERT STORM

48cms x 14 cms.

that could be comic to go with funny things, serious, design-ish. In other words, you had to be terribly fickle. That is the one thing that I have got up my sleeve that the other buggers haven't got.'

Tanner began writing during his *Bulletin* days. At the moment he has a grant to research the life of the convict cartoonist William Goodwin. And he still files his weekly column. How does he keep it up? By staring at a blank sheet of paper on Thursday night. 'Very compelling, a blank sheet of paper.' He writes lists of what has happened during the week. 'Often nothing has happened. Last week I was out the back and a very old lady stopped and said I love to look in your backyard. It's lovely to see a bit of green. She went on to tell me that her mother had taught her that if you are ever walking along the street and you see somebody's gate left open don't stop or look in because that's rude. And I realised that as a definition of rudeness that has gone right off the planet. So I wrote about it.'

**T**ANNER'S MOTHER WAS a lapsed Catholic, brought up in an orphanage. Her experiences led him to vague, 'nothing' Christianity, and a spell as a militant atheist. What made him militant? 'Oh, I think the Church of England. Snobbery. Then I became what I called an ecumenical atheist because in the Communist Party you could pick who were the Catholic atheists and who were the Church of England atheists. The Catholics were more accessible, more outgoing, more human. The Protestant ones were the narks. They were the ones who wanted "a bit more serious thinking, comrade"'. Later I realised the impulse to be human had nothing to do with belonging to the right religion, the

right party.' Now he describes himself as a sceptic, and sometimes as a liberal humanist. How sustaining is the stance? 'Not very. I am inclined to agree with those who see a lot of the trouble that has been caused by unthinking liberalism—I mean, no one has ever really resolved, for example, the argument about censorship to my satisfaction. I think the nearest I come to it was Peter Coleman's concept of it as being the accepted norm of society, from time to time. I mean I can see all the liberalism about pornography coming home to roost, with hardcore pornography being supported by people who would never for a moment either

conceive it, make it, write it, read it or propagate it. I think that kind of liberal idealist has now become the establishment. I know at *The Age* I often run up against this kind of fair-play view of the world ... but maybe that is the black streak in me that you talk about.'

Photo: Bill Thomas



Final note:

'You are still married to the same woman, Les?'

'Oh yes. Same woman, 42 years.'

'Is that good?'

'Yeah. It's very good. Very reliable. We have a high and deep regard for each other.'

'A bit lucky then, aren't you?'

'Lucky Les ... Yeah.'

Morag Fraser is editor of *Eureka Street*.





## A shout for the jug girl

*Don Quixote raised his voice, and called out in an arrogant tone: 'Let the whole world stand, if the whole world does not confess that there is not in the whole world a more beautiful maiden than the Empress of la Mancha, the peerless Dulcinea del Taboso.'*

*The merchants stopped when they heard this speech, and saw the strange figure who made it; and from his appearance and his words they divined that the speaker was mad. But wanting to know more fully what this confession he required of them really meant, one of them, who was a bit of a joker and very sharp-witted, said: 'Sir Knight, we do not know who this good lady is that you speak of. Show her to us and, if she is as beautiful as you say, we will most willingly and without any pressure acknowledge the truth demanded of us by you.'*

*'If I were to show her to you,' replied Don Quixote, 'what merit would there be in your confessing so obvious a truth? The essence of the matter is that you must believe, confess, affirm, swear and maintain it without seeing her. If you will not, you must do battle with me, monstrous and proud crew. Now come on! One by one, as the law of chivalry requires, or all together, as is the custom and evil practice of men of your breed.' \**

**'S**HE'S JUST THE JUG GIRL, mate,' snickers the man seated next to me. He is referring to a thin blonde who stands behind the bar with a beer jug in her outstretched hand. There is no beer in the jug. It contains coins, mostly 10c and 20c pieces. She smiles. 'Do you want to put in for an extra show?' We add our contributions to the jug and she moves on down the line of drinkers. The man next to me is not my mate. I have never seen him before and, although I do not usually object to 'mate' as a general term of address, I decide that I do not wish to hear it from him.

But I do not pursue the matter. Instead, I ask about the blonde: 'The jug girl?' 'Yeah, she's not part of the show, y'know, but she tries to work the pubs anyway. They let her strip here if she can fill the jug with coins, and she gets paid what's in the jug.' He paused, and added, 'She's a real bitch—she hit me last week.' I say nothing. I do not think it is necessary to ask why the jug girl hit him. Or to ask why, if he finds her so objectionable, he still tosses coins into the jug.

She is now standing in the middle of a school of drinkers at the end of the bar, where the new landlord and his brother are bolting together sections of what will become a catwalk. Evidently, the prospect of an extra show is not sufficient to persuade them to part with their loose change. One of them appears to be demanding more. He sways towards her, gesturing with his glass. Still smiling, she shakes her head, shrinking back against the bar. She turns and appeals to the landlord, who shrugs and returns to his unfinished catwalk. Well, the landlord is paying for the show, not for her. She's just the jug girl.

He hopes that the show will lure enough drinkers to compensate for his folly in buying the pub at all. It is the kind of small inner-city pub that is not quite in the right place to become gentrified and attract a yuppie clientele. Its patrons are what they have always been: mostly male, and mostly on their way home from work. Tonight, there is a large group of youngish males who are obviously from the same workplace. They are all drunk, one of them very drunk. He is dressed as a clown, with a plastic nose only slightly redder than the rest of his face. It is evidently a bucks' party, the clown is the prospective groom, and the landlord is very pleased. He has just the show for them.

The official stripper arrives. Unlike the jug girl she is not nervous. The jug girl, perhaps striving for professional solidarity, greets her eagerly. The greeting is ignored. Two policemen arrive and speak to the landlord and the official stripper. The landlord does not expect trouble; he is a former policeman himself, and the two policemen are old friends.

The show begins. Many of the drinkers move to the side of the catwalk, and the official stripper begins to sway to the music. Every few minutes the music changes tempo and she removes an item of clothing, sometimes inviting the men near the catwalk to remove it for her. There are cheers and whistles, and she taunts the men as they taunt her. She is a professional. As the music grows louder the throng around the catwalk gets bigger, and the bucks' party push the clown on to the catwalk. The stripper knows he is the star of their show. She is lying on the catwalk now, legs apart, wearing only a G-string. She orders the clown, who is very drunk, and crawling along the catwalk, to remove the G-string. There is loud applause from the onlookers when this operation is accomplished. The bucks' party pick up the clown, who now wears the G-string as a necklace, and carry him out into the night.

The jug girl is on next. She has filled her beer jug. She hands the landlord a tape of the music she will use and steps on to the catwalk. She cannot dance as well as the official stripper, and is not sure what to do about the groping hands of the men. She slaps them away, whereas the professional had made it all part of the tease. When the jug girl is naked, it is obvious that she is very thin. And there are bruises on her body. I look away.

'Bitch!' roars the man seated next to me. The landlord grabs him and marches him out the door of the pub. When the landlord returns, he switches the music off and says to the jug girl, 'If y'can't control the punters you'll never get a regular job.'

I leave. I am ashamed. My feminist credentials were never very good, and my chivalric credentials aren't much better. I decide I will not return to the pub. I wonder what the jug girl will do. ■

\*From *The Adventures of Don Quixote* by Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra, trans. by J.M. Cohen.

Ray Cassin is production editor of *Eureka Street*.





*Librarians: This index can be removed and bound into Volume One.*

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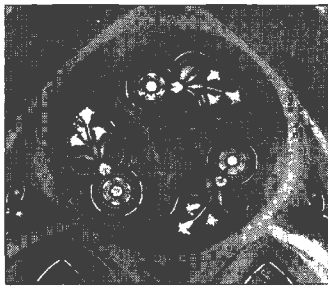
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# Rediscovering America

*Australians found that celebrating the bicentenary of European settlement in 1788 focused but did not resolve tensions between Aboriginal Australians and those who have arrived since. For Americans, celebrating the 500th anniversary of Columbus' arrival in their hemisphere presents similar problems.*

**B** EING THE LONE CLERGYMAN on the Christopher Columbus Quincentenary Jubilee Commission has its advantages—and disadvantages. I was abruptly and uncomfortably reminded of this in May 1990, when the National Council of Churches passed a resolution calling for a near boycott of the 1992 international celebration. The news came during the Santa Fe meeting of the commission, just hours after we listened to Russell Means, of the American Indian Movement, vilify the commission as an insult to Americanism, and the invited Indian speakers as traitors to their tribal heritage. Controversy, abuse and rejection in the name of the quincentenary shocked the commissioners.

For six years we have known that the observance of the 500th anniversary of the discovery of America was going to be a massive and complex affair. For six years we have been aware of the powder keg on which we are sitting. All of us have had to learn a new vocabulary, beginning with 'quincentenary', a stumbling block to many, including President Reagan. This is to be the 500th anniversary of the *discovery* of America by Christopher Columbus, an Italian navigator sailing under the Spanish flag.

The native peoples of America object to the idea of being discovered, like so much ore, and insist on describing the event as an encounter. Gently, with more sensitivity to the whole hemisphere, the object of discovery—of encounter, that is—became *the Americas*. Then, citizens of our America began to disclaim Columbus because he never set foot on the continental United States. Others joined the parade of critics in discrediting Columbus' 'discovery' because the Vikings had beaten him to the North Atlantic shores. And so it had gone for six years.

As the discovery/encounter, America/Americas debate receded, and people began to breathe easier, more

acute objections were voiced over the idea of celebrating an event that brought death to millions through disease and dispossession by alien systems of law. 'Celebration' was then softened to *commemoration*, and commemoration has now yielded to *observance*. The last word to fall is jubilee. The act of Congress that brought the commission to life included 'jubilee' in the title, like the last tasteful touch on an anniversary cake. No one seemed to recall that a *jubilee* was an ancient Judaic practice which recommended that every 50 years the fields should lie fallow, that people should reconcile their differences and that all should rejoice over past blessings and future hopes. Ten times that long ago East met West in the Americas, and we have yet to rest, reconcile ourselves and rejoice.

For six years we have been learning a new vocabulary and relearning things we thought we knew so well. We have been unlearning clichés, distortions and un-clever cover-ups. But none of this invalidates the quincentenary as observance, celebration, commemoration or jubilee. It is all of these things for all of us in all the world.

**T** HE QUINCENTENARY HAS BECOME an occasion to rethink America, and if America has any meaning at all, it must take that meaning from its place in world history, not from being just a newly discovered hemisphere in the West. The misnamed 'Indians', the immemorial inhabitants of a vast continent, just like the Africans, Asians and Europeans, are correct in insisting on 'encounter.' When they became 'Americans', they were being named in relation to an old and crumbling 'world.' The finding of America by Europe was really the discovery, the unveiling, of the human world. No more would the mystery of the West shelter unknown peoples, because explorers and navigators had finally closed the circle.



Advance to the West became return from the East.

European values and legal systems had long depended on axioms of earth-ownership that culminated during the era of feudalism, when tribal strong men were allotted power according to their titles to land. After 'discovery', the vast continents of America were mapped out according to feudal notions. The untitled lands were so extensive that the powers granted by monarchs were unwieldy, and the unwitting encounter with the non-feudal peoples of the Americas spelled an end to the ancient ways of Europe. Although it took centuries, the basis of social power was shifted from land ownership to the human person. Perhaps the greatest contribution that the Americas have made, and continue to make, to world history is the insistence that human rights are based in the person and not in the possession of land. The way of America holds firmly to the notion of human stewardship over the resources of nature, not to their wanton exploitation.

Don't misunderstand. This social dynamic has not yet become axiomatic in the world, but it is emerging as a result of the discovery of the 'New World' and of the encounter with its peoples. We can learn important new insights from the discovery/encounter debate. They are not either/or terms. 'Discovery' is the finding of something previously unknown; it characterises the mental set of the finder. This is why the 'discovery' of America is a radically *Euro-centric* concept.

**'E**NCOUNTER,' ON THE OTHER HAND, is not a concept but a real condition; it is contact between realities. Analogously, discovery is seeing, encounter is touching. Both have their place in the history of the Americas. The coming of Columbus to America was a discovery for Europe; and for the Americas it was the introduction to an unknown and vaster world. Encounter with the peoples of the Americas was the biological link between the hemispheres. The encounter assured that contact would change the course of world events, intermingling peoples and life forms. This profound interchange, and nothing less, is the focus of the quincentenary.

The tall ships and the ethnic pageantry are our attempts to express the magnitude of the changes that overtook the world in 1492. We need, also, to think in philosophical terms. In our anxiety to find our own history and culture we have overlooked the fact that all history and culture has been changed by Columbus' achievement. Even though Europe struggled mightily to hold a cultural and legal beachhead from the shores of the Atlantic to the Pacific, the waves of immigrants and the intermingling of bloods continue to propel humanity toward still undiscovered futures. We are now launching ourselves from Cape Canaveral to the moon and the planets. This is the continuing dynamic of the quincentenary. Any resolution by the churches that reviles the discovery of America is thus misplaced.

The Christian churches are right, however, to insist that we attend to the injustices of the past because

there can be no human future without a responsible exercise of freedom. As in the ancient practice of the jubilee, there must be both reconciliation and rejoicing, for the world is woven of good and evil. If the Christian faith has taught anything, it is the radical need for forgiveness. We may have trouble forgetting, but we must always forgive—without forgiveness there is only the past to remember and no future to hope for.

What concerns the commission is that the United States may be too slow in learning the lessons of the quincentenary. Many of our political leaders continue to view the forthcoming observance as little more than a super-parade, a pizza party or a world-class regatta. In the meanwhile, the leaders and savants of other countries are pouring out redefinitions of America, from its discovery to its impact on the world.

This is a genuine moment for new vision and new leadership. When the tiny caravels blow under the Golden Gate on October 12 1992, an era will end and a new one will have begun, but only if we properly grasp the meaning of the anniversary we will be observing worldwide. —*America* magazine. ■

Charles W. Polzer SJ lives in Tucson, Arizona.

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ESSAY  
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WAY  
←

## Poles apart

Photo: Andrew Stark

**D**ICHOTOMY IS NOT PECULIAR to the intellectual and sub-intellectual life of this country, but it is pronounced here—a truculent and embattled habit of argument. In Australia its vigorous and long-established employment proceeds from an unappeasable disquiet over what is of value in the national life.

Popular versions of Australian history are scored with dichotomies. Consider these long-established oppositions, these antagonisms: gaolers and convicts, Protestants and Catholics, literate and illiterate, English and Irish, squatters and selectors, landed and landless, national and colonial, home and away—Britain and Australia. And there are many more: the city and the bush, the universalists or cosmopolitan critics and the radical-nationalists (in John Docker's version of Australian literary historiography), the political party of initiative and the parties of resistance (in Sir Keith Hancock's distinction between the Australian Labor Party and its conservative rivals), 'The Old Dead Tree and the Young Tree Green' (in the subtitle of the sixth volume of *A History of Australia*, which Manning Clark drew from a poem by Henry Lawson). The dramas of Australian political and cultural history have been given distinctive expression through the use of dichotomy as a technique of argument, or as a substitute for it. Unhappily, dichotomy has seldom been the rude precursor of the development of dialectical processes.

Dichotomy is a cutting in two, a radical simplification of issues and of possibilities. What was whole is divided, and then the two parts are frequently set against one another. In this way an antagonistic model of explanation, one that encourages envy and resentment, is favoured. Dichotomy resists consensus, preferring instead the predictable comforts of ingrained hostility, whether sectarian, national, or of social class. In Australia its uses express a profound and abiding fear that nothing of worth or durability has been created. The aggressive taking of sides, the disputes over terrain, are actions masking a sense of spiritual despair and nullity.

In its postulations of them against us, dichotomy is in its essence a melodramatic fashion of argument. The literary mode of melodrama has enjoyed a critical rehabilitation, begun in part by Peter Brooks' study, *The Melodramatic Imagination* (1976). Brooks argued for 'the melodramatic mode as a central fact of modern sensibility', considered it in broad terms as a reaction against the decay of religious faith in the nineteenth century. The novelists and playwrights who modified the popular forms of stage melodrama—Balzac, Dickens, James, Ibsen and Chekhov among them—wrote in part, Brooks reckoned, in response to 'the vertiginous feeling of standing over the abyss created when the necessary centre of things has been evacuated or dispersed'. Unwittingly, Brooks found an eloquent description of Australia.

**T**HE GENIUS AND CHARACTERISTIC TEMPER of the national literature of Australia have been melodramatic, from Marcus Clarke's time to Manning Clark's. As much as it was in *His Natural Life* (1870-1), the spirit of melodrama is sovereign in Clark's six-volume *A History of Australia* (1962-87) and in his first volume of autobiography, *Puzzles of Childhood* (1989). Clark insistently imagined enemies of his favoured characters in the *History*, and persecutors through *Puzzles of Childhood*. The Anglican hierarchy, which does little to advance his father's career in the church, become 'men in black ... satisfied with nothing less than death'. Bullies whom young Clark encounters at Melbourne Grammar are inflated into 'guardians of bourgeois society in Victoria'. In the narrative that Clark constructs, the persecuted father and son must feel themselves in some measure to deserve persecution. In Manning Clark's case, an obscure sense of guilt derives in part from his parents' election of him as the hero of a personal melodrama. They characterise him as Mann the Elect, superior to and therefore hazardously different from his fellows. Heroes and heroines of melodrama feel that



they are persecuted unjustly but aren't surprised that this happens. Such persecution is a condition of their righteous lives. This intuition of a punishment that is in store for those marked by virtue, and also for the egregious, is at the core of Clark's melodramatic version of Australian life, and his own.

More generally, the melodramatic strain in the national literature perceives and responds to a double threat: the loss of the tenuous culture which has been established in Australia, intensified by the fear of coming adrift from the parent, British culture. Melodrama insists on the fragility of social institutions, on the imminence of predators. In the Australian literary context, these are menacing, but often and strangely impalpable. Australian practitioners of the melodramatic mode, Christina Stead and Patrick White, Kate Grenville and Thomas Kenally among novelists, have identified the threats to individuals here and—at the risk of glamourising them—tried to accustom readers to their jeopardy.

There's been a sideshow to this literary activity that has run with little fanfare for decades. It's a melodrama that has drawn on a small cast of actors and has attracted a dependable audience, 'fit though few'. Hence there have been negligible changes of script or of direction. The plot of the play is melodramatic: the persecution and dispossession of the so-called radical-nationalist literary critics—rude, good-hearted folk—by the oppressive tolerance, the silky aggression of the Eurocentric critics. Ward, Phillips, Palmer line up against Wilkes, Kramer, Buckley. Supplementary gang members are enlisted when needed. There are usually youngsters in sufficient supply to carry on the old feud. This literary historical melodrama apes the conflicts of convicts against

their gaolers, bushrangers against squatters—the business of colonial stage melodramas. But who among these critics truly constitutes the establishment? Who are the villains? The manners with which each side conducts hostilities are exaggerated to fit the stereotypes: vernacular speech opposes the accents of Oxbridge.

**T**HIS MELODRAMA HAS HAD a long run in Australia. But in whose interests has it been performed? Its effects, after all, don't appear to have been beneficial. One symptom and consequence of the 'play' has been the stasis of Australian literary historiography. In the course of the writing of our literary history, the melodramatic

habit of dichotomy has been tenaciously maintained. In *The Stockyard and the Croquet Lawn* (1981), Wilkes illuminated the dualistic and antagonistic perspectives on Australian cultural development which have been endemic. He mentioned 'the antithesis of the genteel and the robust, the refined and the crude, the old world and the new, and the contest between them for mastery'. With such divisions and strife, where can the culture feel itself securely to be lodged? The melodrama perpetuates a sense of cultural infantility. Wilkes could have mentioned other interpretive dichotomies that have been offered by Australian literary historians: colonial and national, national and international, utopian and vitalist (Buckley), vulgarity and refinement (Burns), land and language (Goodwin).

Besieged all, these dichotomies reveal the melodramatic and apprehensive character of many of the literary histories that have been written in Australia. So many of them depend upon the author's perception that one system of value and allegiance is threatened. In consequence, they choose to define the adversary in as starkly opposed and inimical terms as possible. Such literary histories indicate their authors' melodramatic sense of what a fragile, endangered property is national selfhood, and within it, the literature and culture of Australia.

The threat of dispossession and displacement—of the loss, in no particular order, of honour, liberty, property, privilege, chastity, selfhood, life—is the principal action in melodramatic art. This is a threat that has been transposed in Australia onto a wider cultural and historical canvas. Thus puissant vice preys at large on helpless virtue. As innocence is beset by evil, the melodramatic world resolves itself into dichotomies. Here moral

ambiguity or complexity finds scant welcome. Alert for the threats of invaders or predators; defensively hostile to alien values and to people who seem to jeopardise their material well-being or their systems of belief—this is the psychic temper of the victims-to-be of melodrama. To feel that one's social and physical lodgments are imperilled, that assault or revelation could destroy them—this is the typical anxiety of the hero and heroine of melodrama. The source of their supposed danger and persecution is often impersonal, invisible, perhaps conjured by the victims out of their own obscure needs. In these aspects the peculiar cultural and historical conformations of Australian melodrama can be discerned.

*The dramas of Australian political and cultural history have been given distinctive expression through the use of dichotomy as a technique of argument. Unhappily, dichotomy has seldom been the rude precursor of the development of dialectical processes.*



Here against there, them against us—these are the brutal dichotomies that have been given more specific and sophisticated terms in intellectual debate in and about Australia. Such debate may only have disguised profound resentments and fears that the cruder dichotomies expressed. Since melodrama is acutely concerned with the fragility of one's tenure of self, property, relationship, the dichotomy between home and away is near its heart. In Australian culture this has often had genteel and mythic representation in the conflict of allegiance to Britain or to Australia. This focuses national anxieties as to the value and reality of our indigenous culture. For the people of a postcolonial society such as Australia, a crucial question may be—as Northrop Frye argued in his introduction to *A Literary History of Canada*—not 'who am I?' but 'where is here?' Shifting ground from individual identity to historical and social contexts for understanding nations in becoming, this is a question that asks whether anything of substance has been established, any kind of secure habitation been found in such 'new' countries as Australia.

The bitterness between expatriate artists and the society that they left behind in Australia, particularly in the 1940s and 1950s, is now somewhat diminished. Ease of travel, as well as the much increased rewards for the practice of art in Australia have quelled passionate suspicion and dislike of those who went away and towards the same people when they came home. This is

one dichotomy in the process of being erased from the national life.

**B**UT MANY OTHERS PERSIST. All of them are in some important respects variations on the dichotomy between appearance and reality, once so beloved by scholars of that proto-deconstructionist, Shakespeare. Yet did *he* believe in a reality behind appearances? And in the Australian context, whose experience is more authentic—an Irish convict's or a British officer's, a farm labourer's or a clerk's? Notions of 'the real Australia' can be found in C.E.W. Bean's *On the Wool Track* (1910), where 'it' is located in north-western New South Wales. When Lawson and A.B. Paterson considered the merits of the city versus the bush in their put-up verse debate in *The Bulletin* in 1892, they were arguing about the veritable Australia, as well as how best to portray the rural or the urban environments that each knew.

Behind their good-humoured and moderately profitable exchanges may have lain a terror that neither the city nor 'up the country' was reliable or substantial. Rather each may have been the consoling invention of the 'Southern poets' whom Lawson derided but to whose fraternity he belonged.

The city/bush dichotomy supposes, falsely, that those who live in either environment, in so far as they can simply be distinguished, do so by choice. Most of the opposed conditions of Australian life mentioned before—convict or free, one Christian denomination or another, city or country—have been imposed upon those whom they purported to describe. As spatial dichoto-

mies—here versus there—shade into social and aesthetic judgments, their folly becomes clearer. 'Sydney' asserts its superiority over 'Melbourne', spawning a conference and then a book. In imitation of that, on a Lilliputian scale, the claims of Launceston are ranged against those of Hobart.

While all dichotomies simplify intellectual issues, these comparisons of places—sneering but light-hearted as usually they are—perniciously work against a comprehension of national diversity. Much that might have been rich in the story of Australian regionalism is muffled by the dichotomising habit, as well as by skewed demography. From dichotomies flow stereotypes. Patterns of opposition are consolidated; habits of grievance entrenched. The dichotomising tendency in Australian intellectual discourse may have its origins in a melodramatic anxiety about what kind of reality this society has, together with a perception of ubiquitous threat. It is a tendency that indicates not a complacent but a frightened society, one which seeks to assuage its anxieties through ritualising and familiarising old and often fictitious antagonisms. ■

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## Books for dipping into

**H**ERE ARE FOUR BOOKS of short pieces for summer. They have all been road tested for reading out of doors. They have survived a gruelling process of review which has included being left in the sun for an hour without their spines dissolving, an experiment which, in Melbourne, was conducted in a laboratory. They have also had factor 15 sunscreen applied to their covers without discolouration. All these books can be held comfortably in one hand, leaving the other hand free for windsurfing, hang-gliding, brushing off flies etc. They are books you can take to the bush or beach and not worry too much if they get lost and don't come back: none of them are books you will want to keep forever.

*Millenium* is the right book to have by you during another interminable season of cricket. Helen Daniel has asked an impressive gallery of Australians to contemplate the figure of Old Father Time as he pushes and prods his score towards 2000. Their commentary on Time's innings at the close of another century makes a mixed bag. Some writers are as inventive as the BBC faced with a full day of wet weather.

Jack Hibberd, for example, imagines James Joyce walking the streets of Melbourne in the year 2000. Eventually, Joyce goes out of town in search of Hibberd's best known creation, Monk O'Neill, whom he finds dead. Dinny O'Hearn runs through a business proposition for staging the end of the world at a profit. Other writers are as laconic as the Sydney Hill, or what used to be the Sydney Hill.

**Millenium: Time-pieces by Australian Writers** hosted by Helen Daniel, Penguin Books, 1991.

ISBN 0 14 015481 7 RRP \$14.95

**Neighbours: Multicultural Writing of the 1980's** edited by R.F. Holt, University of Queensland Press, 1991.

ISBN 0 7022 2318 2 RRP \$14.95

**Homeland** edited by George Papaelinas, published by Allen and Unwin for Carnivale, 1991.

ISBN 1 86373 108 3 RRP \$16.95

**The Best of Granta Travel** Granta Books in association with Penguin Books, 1991.

ISBN 0 14 014041 7 RRP \$16.95

Of these, James McQueen tells the story of a Thai friend who, when asked if he had any expectations for the millenium, simply says that for Buddhists the year 2000 came and went in what westerners would call 1457 AD. Andrew Riemer is a shade more dry. He recreates the turn of the first millenium. Other writers are as serious as members waiting breathlessly for the bar to open. Finola Moorhead, for example, offers a New Age spiritual exploration of killing a fish.

**I**T IS HARD TO GENERALISE about a book as diverse as *Millenium* except to say that its distracted wanderings are enough to defeat any motion that history should somehow put itself in order before passing through the year 2000. 'Wandering' is, in fact, a word or a theme which crops up in a number of these writings: Archie Weller touches the theme of the wandering aborigine



and Graham Henderson that of the wandering Jew. Marion Halligan opens the book with an account of the contribution of the 'wandering willow' to history. The willow has not only given us cricket bats but also, I discovered, polo balls. Halligan's work is typical of *Millenium* at its best: off-beat but arresting.

*Millenium* demonstrates that the numbering of calendar years is totally arbitrary and, at the same time, has a hold over our imagination in the way that Friday the thirteenth oughtn't but does. These forty two writers are understandably coy about the future. Some react by looking sideways and telling us of their own wanderings. I enjoyed this travel writing, not least Georgia Savage's experiences as a tourist in Vietnam.

Others look backwards and give themselves over to memory. Sometimes I wondered if I was being asked to believe that if you can plot two points on a graph, the past and the present, then you can draw a line into the future. I was surprised too by the hold that Jewish and Christian apocalyptic has over some contributors: the Book of Revelation (Kerryn Goldsworthy) and John the Baptist (Gerard





Windsor) are considered at arm's length but nonetheless they are considered. So too are the road to Emmaus, the temptations of Jesus, the day of atonement and, repeatedly, Noah's ark. There is plenty of millenarianism in scripture and, fair to say, so far only the fundamentalists know quite what to do with it.

**M**illennium is a pleasure of sorts. It is also, at times, like sitting in the outer waiting for something to happen. The book is unkempt. Possibly this stems from Helen Daniel seeing herself more as the 'host' to these writers than their editor. Who knows, a few brave umpiring decisions may have lifted the tempo.

*Neighbours* sounds as though it could be the book to have by you during the summer soap-opera reruns on TV. But the sub-title is 'Multicultural Writing of the 1980s'. It is the sequel to *The Strength of Tradition* (QUP, 1983), similarly edited by Ron Holt, which was an anthology of multicultural stories from the 1970s. Keep *Neighbours* in mind for a week in a crowded caravan park. All 28 of these stories are reprinted from elsewhere and in some cases it was like running

into old friends somewhere unexpected, like the beach. The story by Tim Winton, for example, which lends its title to the collection has been a favourite of mine for a while. As has Beverley Farmer's 'Milk'. Both stories seem to me to turn the tables on convention by making an unemotional 'Aussie' the foreigner in their own street or family and then warming them by slow degrees to the temperature of their environment.

There are as many accents in this book as in a caravan park or a public housing estate or a lane behind a street of restaurants. Some of these voices are at pains to master the existing idiom. Joe Abiuso's 'An Italian Joins the Union', for instance, mines in the same vein as Henry Lawson's sense of humour: the story sets up a competition in the work place between workers of all nations to find out who is the laziest.

**O**ther stories are, thankfully, in an idiom of their own. This is true of the only translation in the collection, Nihat Ziyalan's 'Mondays—I like them' which takes the racetrack and payday and rugby and makes them exotic, possibly because they have been

first absorbed into Turkish and then re-translated into English. There are funny stories such as Ugo Rotellini's account of a marriage between Greek and Italian families. There are also moving stories such as David Malouf's and Serge Lieberman's two separate accounts of relating to migrant fathers. *Neighbours* has plenty of colour and variety. I've often wondered why people go to caravan parks. I suppose that must be the reason.

*Homeland* is the same but different. It's the sort of book to be reading when you're standing in queues at the summer sellouts. This time we have twenty six contributors, brought together by George Papaellinas, each snatching at promising definitions of the word 'homeland' and seeing how well they fit. 'The homeland is the place of the grandmother's stories'. 'Homeland is in the margins where one is ignored, but one is free.' 'Minjala, Our Mother, our beautiful land'. 'Homeland is where the senses steer by instinct when the reins are let go'. Like getting home from the summer sales, I finished this book with a bagful of ideas and wondered a few days

later how many had really been worth the bother.

**T**WO PIECES HAVE stuck with me, however, they being the ones by Robert Dessaix and Janette Turner Hospital. To take just the latter, Hospital tells the story of a Queenslander dared through her backyard fence by the local ratbag. In other times and places the experience is repeated and we are led to the discovery that even when we reach our most longed for homeland we are still only ever visitors there.

*The Best of Granta Travel* is the book if you won't be going anywhere this summer. Oddly enough, there are travel stories here in which the writer hardly leaves home. These include Jonathan Raban's account of buying a boat, Bill Bryson's of growing up in Iowa and Paul Theroux's journeys in the New York subway. Theroux is interesting. He once caught consecutive trains from one end of the Americas to the other and turned his various complaints into *The Old Patagonian Express*. Travel for Theroux is planned misery and the subway described in 'Subterranean Gothic' is very obviously his cup of tea.



There are some wonderful pieces by journalists on a mission, generally in quest of some retiring tyrant or other. Patrick Marnham doesn't find Idi Amin, Nicholas Shakespeare doesn't find Abimael Guzman in Peru but Isabel Hilton does find Colonel Stroessner, the man who kept Paraguay in terror for 35 years, living quietly in suburban Brazil.

*The Best of Granta Travel* is above all else blessed with an abundance of absurd situations. Consider the figure of one James Fenton, in a story of his own, watching TV in a Buddhist monastery to escape the Khmer Rouge. Consider again this same James Fenton, in someone else's story, being rafted through the jungles of Kalimantan reading the juvenile poetry of Jonathan Swift. *The Best of Granta Travel* harbours many such individuals. Not to mention a stack of names that need occasionally to be dropped. It is not a book you will want to keep forever. As with *Neighbours*, it is one you will be sharing. ■

Michael McGirr is a regular contributor to *Eureka Street* and an itinerant Jesuit scholastic. His summer travel

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## The Book of Knox

The *Knox Brothers*, Penelope Fitzgerald, Harvill paperback, London, 1991. ISBN 0 00 272097 3 RRP \$18.95

AT HER UNCLE RONNIE'S 60th birthday dinner, Penelope Fitzgerald tried to leave early to look after her baby. Uncle Ronnie's good friend Evelyn Waugh was appalled. 'Children?' he snapped, 'Nonsense! Nothing so easily replaceable!'

Fitzgerald, a Booker Prize-winning novelist, told the story when she was in Sydney to promote her books. Her celebrated uncle, Monsignor Ronald Knox, is the star of her 1977 biography *The Knox Brothers*, now reissued as a Harvill paperback. Today almost forgotten, in his time Ronald Knox was the best-known priest in the English-speaking world. Oxford wit, convert, a writer of detective yarns, volumes of sermons, apologetics, literary essays and more, his fame reached its height after World War II, with the publication of his translation of the Bible.

Working alone over nine years, he tried to give Catholics a Bible they could learn to love. His translations of St Paul's epistles were deemed most successful, clearing up much of the obscurity of earlier versions. A New Zealand priest, Fr Cox, stitched his Gospels together to make a continuous 'life of Christ', and this Knox-Cox version became very popular in lay apostolate circles. The new translation was a bestseller, the English bishops, who owned the copyright, made a packet. But while the Knox Bible undoubtedly got more Catholics reading the sacred text, somehow it failed to stay the distance. New versions—the Jerusalem Bible, the Revised Standard Version—came along and eclipsed Knox.

'I'm so glad Uncle Ronnie died when he did [in 1957]. He would have been so disappointed at what happened to his Bible,' she said. I reminded her that when he told his brothers about his plans, they were unenthusiastic. 'He doesn't know very much Greek,' said one. 'Or theology,' said the other. Yet it was this amateurism that gave the translation its distinctive voice. Style was Ronald Knox's strength. Working away in the country, without research assistants or editorial committees, and, indeed, not much of a library or even a secretary, he could concentrate on hearing the tone and accent of each book of the Bible.

HIS DETECTIVE YARNS gave a clue to his approach. In them, the brilliant amateur always got the better of the Scotland Yard professional. Likewise, in his sermons he often remarked that the weight of scholarly opinion went all one way, whereas—a flash of insight—the true meaning must be otherwise. Just before settling down to do the work of translation, he had published *Let Dons Delight*, an Oxford book that charted the change of opinion there each 50 years. (Australian historians used the same device for the Bicentennial 'slice' history, in which successive volumes explored 1788, 1838, 1888 and 1938.) As a piece of writing, *Let Dons Delight* is remarkable for its ability to catch each half century's differing nuances of speech. Such were the special gifts Knox brought to his attempt to English the Bible.



They were not enough, for Catholic scriptural scholarship was already gathering the strengths that would lead to Vatican II. One of the first areas of Catholic life to benefit from ecumenism, it favoured a no-nonsense learning and objective rigour. Increasingly, it looked askance at the Knox translation. Ronald Knox was a humble, modest man who, nevertheless, felt very protective of his work. The criticisms hurt him. He promised to forgive his reviewers—but only on his deathbed.

'Of course, he shouldn't have attempted it,' his niece said. She suggested that something of his own protected life had got into his pen, and made the text too dry to live. For he was a man who had never had to wash up in his lifetime, not even a teaspoon. Possibly, as Hilaire Belloc once suggested, he was 'insufficiently coarse'. Knox had set out to translate the Bible into what he called 'timeless' English. But no language is timeless—unless it is the language of the tomb.

Knox's friends shared his high hopes for the translation. Evelyn Waugh, whom he would choose to write his posthumous biography, said in a magazine article in 1948 that a century hence the only Englishmen who knew their Bible would be Catholics. 'And they will know it in Mgr Knox's version,' Indeed, said Penelope Fitzgerald, his biography of her uncle was similarly wrongheaded. Waugh had masses of Knox family papers to work on—'but I don't think he looked at many of them.' The Waugh biography is not a success because he detached Ronald too far from his family. Her own book, *The Knox Brothers*, is a corrective to Waugh.

He was, she said, a much-loved youngest brother of a strongly-bonded family of wits—her own father, for instance, had been editor of *Punch*. Like every one of the brothers, Uncle Ronnie's wit was always in play, as when, in a serious work of apologetics, he observed that 'a sloppy Christianity will lead to a sloppy atheism.' Yet, in the end, his wit was not sufficient to save the child of his latter years, the Knox Bible. ■

**Edmund Campion** is a Sydney priest and a contributing editor of *Eureka Street*.

## Jesus, a marginal Jew

**A Marginal Jew. Rethinking the Historical Jesus, Volume 1: The Roots of the Problem and the Person**, John P. Meier, Anchor Bible Reference Library, Doubleday, New York.

**T**HE REGULATION BIENNIAL PUBLIC controversy about who Jesus really was is usually a grotty affair. It is born at Christmas or Easter—slack times for news—involves a showy theory with vast consequences for Christian origins, a proponent whose agenda goes beyond the scholarly, a media interested in stirring the pot, a few Christian protagonists whose defence of orthodoxy is based more strongly on passion than on knowledge, and the rare scholar whose voice can barely be heard for the noise.

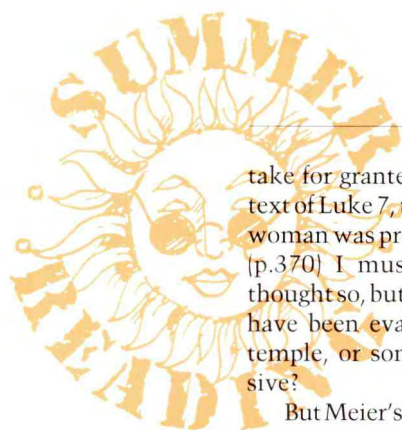
So a new discussion of what can be said historically about Jesus Christ inevitably arouses mixed feelings. I warmed immediately to John Meier's splendid new book when he shared his own hesitations about the project. Why join the legion of scholars who have peered narcissistically into the pool of the historical Jesus only to see themselves? No other line of research seems so geared to making sceptics out of scholars.

From Jesus the violent revolutionary to Jesus the gay magician, from Jesus the apocalyptic fanatic to Jesus the wisdom teacher or Cynic philosopher unconcerned about eschatology, every conceivable scenario, every extreme theory imaginable, has long since been proposed, with opposite positions cancelling each other out and eager new writers repeating the mistakes of the past. In one sense, there are enough 'Jesus books' to last three lifetimes, and a sinful Buddhist

might well be condemned to spend his next three incarnations wading through them. (p.3)

Meier has weighed the risks. What he brings to his own work is an impressive concern for truth and for evidence in a field where these qualities are not always effectively shown. It was Pilate who asked, 'What is truth?' Meier defines the truth which he seeks in a very limited way. He wishes only to establish what can be said with some likelihood about the life of Jesus by using the methods and criteria of historical scholarship. This is a modest truth, which neither amounts to nor subverts the understanding of Jesus Christ given in faith in his Resurrection. Nor does it recapture the face of the 'real Jesus', any more than historical documents necessarily recapture the 'real person' in the case of other historical figures.

**I**T DOES, HOWEVER, establish a control over lazy or speculative thinking about Jesus, whether such thought is pious or dismissive. It keeps us honest and returns us to what the Gospels actually say, sometimes to make surprising discoveries. When speaking of the sinful woman in Luke 7:36-50, for example, Meier comments on the lack of evidence for identifying her, as the Western church has tended to do, with Mary of Bethany and Mary Magdalene. He continues, 'Need it be pointed out that male exegetes are all too ready to



take for granted with no basis in the text of Luke 7, that the sin of the sinful woman was prostitution or adultery?' (p.370) I must confess that I had thought so, but why should not her sin have been evading taxes due to the temple, or something equally offensive?

But Meier's limited task also makes him aware of the limitations of his own enterprise. As he remarks when discussing Jesus' childhood, 'One does not have to be a Freudian of the Strict Observance to realize that, without any data about Jesus' childhood relationships, his adolescent struggles and coming to adulthood and his activities during his twenties—to say nothing of his specifically intellectual and religious development—nothing certain can be said about the influences that moulded the Jesus known to us through the public ministry.' (p.253)

**T**HIS BOOK, THE FIRST of two volumes, establishes the framework of discussion. Meier discusses the value of the Gospels as historical evidence, the independent historical value of the references to Jesus in Josephus (important), Tacitus, Pliny and later Jewish sources (less so), the apocryphal Gospels (of little value), and the criteria by which we should distinguish between the material in the Gospels that reflects Jesus' own life, and the material that reflects the life of the communities out of which the Gospels came.

He then goes to discuss Jesus' family and social background, touching questions that are usually left unasked. Did Jesus exist? (Yes). Was he legitimate? (Only later polemic seems to have claimed otherwise). Did Jesus have brothers? (The historical evidence suggests that he did). Was Jesus married? (The evidence suggests not). What language did he speak? (Probably Aramaic, but it is difficult to know what people generally spoke at the time).

Meier works through these and other questions in an orderly way, outlining the steps of the argument, and marshalling both the evidence and the range of opinions on each topic. Throughout, he is careful to indicate the degree of probability that his conclusions have. He displays the best qualities of North American scholarship: a comprehensive grasp of

the relevant literature, and a clarity of presentation and of argument. In addition, his grace of style and wry humour make the work a joy to read.

He presents other scholars in an attractive way, summarising their positions clearly and fairly, and making it clear when they fall short of the standards that he believes should be adopted. Of a speculative hypothesis adopted by a fellow Roman Catholic scholar to avoid attributing brothers to Jesus, he says: 'One cannot avoid the impression that every escape hatch

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*'Need it be pointed out that male exegetes are all too ready to take for granted with no basis in the text of Luke 7, that the sin of the sinful woman was prostitution or adultery?' (Meier)*

*I must confess that I had thought so, but why should not her sin have been evading taxes due to the temple? (Hamilton)*

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imaginable is being pried open because a highly unlikely position has been adopted *a priori* on other grounds.' (p.361)

In the same vein he concludes his treatment of the Qumran documents with this judgment: 'He (Jesus) is never mentioned in the documents found at or near Qumran, and his free-wheeling attitude towards the stricter interpretation of the Mosaic Law is

the very antithesis of the superobservant Qumranites, who considered even the Pharisees too lax. All this has not kept some imaginative scholars from seeing Jesus and John the Baptist in certain Qumran texts. This simply proves that learned fantasy knows no limits.' (p.94) The concluding sentence of this quotation has a footnote referring to Barbara Thiering's hypothesis.

We shall have to await the second volume for Meier's treatment of Jesus' life to emerge fully. But the key to Meier's careful scholarship, as well as to his findings, is found in the title *The Marginal Jew*, by which he insists that Jesus escapes any attempt at categorisation. He does not quite fit into what we know of any of the social or religious groups of his time. And this ensures that he is made more marginal during his life, and dies as a non-person.

**M**Y ONLY COMPLAINTS about this admirable book arise from its restricted scope. Meier confines his attention to areas directly concerned with his theme, disclaiming any intention of writing an introduction to the New Testament. But given his mastery of the material, and his clarity and judiciousness, I wished at several points that he had expanded his scope.

And finally, Meier does leave to be answered the critical questions about the relationship between the different truths about Jesus. In restricting his attention to the historian's perspective, and by making it clear that the product of his inquiry is neither the real Jesus nor the believer's Christ, Meier has claimed space for his enterprise. He exploits the relative autonomy of reason in its dialogue with faith, and insists that his enterprise is part of theology, the articulation of faith.

The consequence is that he gives a relatively minor significance to the results of his inquiry. His portrait of Jesus is not to replace the risen Christ who is confessed in faith. But how the results of this enquiry are to influence the way in which we speak about Christ, and integrate it with the other sources of theology, begs to be spelled out further. ■

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# The concordance, the computer and the Dead Sea scrolls

*Some claim that the scrolls not yet published contain evidence about Christian origins that authorities wish to conceal. A scholar who worked on the scrolls soon after their discovery replies that there is no mystery, just a lot of hard work and a little academic jealousy.*

**O**N WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, US television carried the first news of it. The next morning the front page of *The New York Times* announced: 'Computer Hacker Bootlegs Version of Dead Sea Scrolls' and *The Washington Post* reported on its first page: 'Renegades Bring Dead Sea Scrolls to Light: Computer Used to Reconstruct Ancient Texts That Scholars Suppressed' That is a brief summary of the latest phase of the battle for the scrolls.

What these reports refer to needs some explanation. 'Dead Sea scrolls' is a generic term for scrolls and fragmentary texts found in caves on the northwest shore of the Dead Sea. The most important of them come from the Qumran caves, 11 of which have produced written material. The seven major scrolls of Qumran Cave 1, discovered in 1947, and about 75 minor fragments, have all been published (between 1950 and 1956). From the so-called minor caves of Qumran came 130 fragmentary texts, which were published in 1962. Cave 11, discovered in 1956 and cleaned out by the Ta'amireh Bedouin, yielded about 25 fragmentary texts, most of which were published in 1965, 1971, 1977 and 1985. In other words, from these 10 Qumran caves about 237 texts have been recovered and definitively published.

The problem, however, has been Qumran Cave 4, discovered by Bedouin in 1952, and partially cleaned out by them before Jordanian authorities moved in and competent excavators took over. The official report of

the excavation of that cave tells of 'at least 15,000 fragments' retrieved. The largest fragment was the *Pesher of Nahum*, which measured about 25 inches by 5 inches. These fragments, and others bought from the Bedouin, were brought to the 'scrollerly' of the Palestine Archaeological Museum (now called the Rockefeller Museum). Then began the 'giant jigsaw puzzle', the attempt to piece together related fragments, identify the texts, photograph them and make them ready for publication.

The director of the Jordanian Department of Antiquities, together with directors of various archaeological institutes in Jerusalem—American, British, French—became directors of this project. Since the museum was in East Jerusalem and the fragments had been found on the West Bank, each of which was then in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, no Jewish scholar was allowed to become a member of the international and intercreedal team. The members were given the task of putting the puzzle together and of eventually publishing the fragmentary texts entrusted to them.

The team worked on that puzzle off and on from 1952 until 1960; many of them had teaching posts elsewhere where most of their academic year was spent. By 1960 the bulk of the puzzle had been finished, and 511 fragmentary texts had been identified and distributed over 620 glass plates. Volume 7 of the *Discoveries in the Judaean Desert* series of Clarendon

Press, Oxford, published by Baillet in 1982, presented the definitive texts of 4Q482 to 4Q520. This revealed that the texts from Cave 4 then numbered 520.

Since then at least five more have been added, and there are at least 50 plates of 'hopeless cases,' fragments so tiny that they cannot be related to other texts or to one another. Besides the 39 documents of Baillet, Professors Milik and Allegro had definitively published 59 texts, Milik also published seven Aramaic texts of Enoch and parts of five other related fragmentary documents. This means that 110 texts out of 525 from Qumran Cave 4 have been definitively published by Clarendon Press, and the scholarly world has so far got access to about 25 per cent of Qumran Cave 4 texts. It is the 75 per cent still awaiting publication that cause the problem.

To aid the interpretation of non-biblical texts, a German scholar, Karl Georg Kuhn, published in 1960 *Konkordanz zu den Qumrantexten*, a concordance of all the texts that had been published up to that time.

**E**ARLIER, IT HAD BEEN DECIDED TO prepare a similar concordance on cards for the Cave 4 fragmentary nonbiblical texts already pieced together. When one uses such a concordance, one can tell whether the same phrase occurs elsewhere; the other occurrence may thus be a clue to the meaning of a word. In 1957 I was added as a young assistant to the team to begin the



Photo: Andrew Stark

preparation of this concordance. I had finished my doctorate at The John Hopkins University in June 1956. I arrived in Jerusalem in 1957 and during the year 1957-8 began the concordance.

I put each word and each prefixed preposition or conjunction on a separate card, together with its basic root, the place where it occurred and its given form and context. When all the words of a given text were so recorded, I numbered all cards in the lower left-hand corner before they were sorted for the alphabetical file. During that year many fragments were still being added to texts already pieced together. But the numbering of the cards would eventually enable us, when the texts were definitively published, to reshuffle those of each text and put them in their proper sequence, in order to check the entries against the final definitive readings and make necessary adjustments. For, even within the last decade, some texts have been published in an order different from what was then in use and with different titles or sigla.

I left Jerusalem on July 10, 1958, the day after the purchase of the 'last' nine fragments of Cave 4 from the Bedouin, among which was a famous Aramaic fragment mentioning some-

one who would 'be hailed (as) the son of God, and they shall call him Son of the Most High' (recall Lk. 1:32,35)—a text that still awaits full publication. After I finished my work, the concordance entries were continued in 1958-59 by Raymond Brown SS and in 1959-60 by William Oxtoby. I have been told that the Spaniard Javier Teixidor also contributed to the concordance at a later date. The original plan was that once all the Cave 4 fragments were published, we would revise the entries and publish the concordance. The irony of the project: there exists a concordance (of sorts) to 4Q nonbiblical texts that are still unpublished.

**T**HAT CONCORDANCE LAY in boxes in the scroller for years. I have been told that at the time of the Six-Day War (1967) the cards were dumped pell-mell into a closet. They were apparently later recovered and the concordance-file was reconstituted.

In the mid-1980s, one of the Cave 4 team, John Strugnell of Harvard University, and a German scholar, Hartmut Stegemann, decided to photograph the cards. The latter wrote to me at that time, asking whether I would want to buy a copy of the concordance that I had helped produce!

The title page accompanying the letter did not even list the names of those who had initially produced it—a defect since remedied. I did not buy a copy, and I have only seen one, when I visited Milik in Paris last year. I have heard that there are copies at Baltimore Hebrew University and in the library of Harvard Divinity School.

Now a copy of that photographed concordance has come into the possession of the Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati, and Professor Ben Zion Wacholder has made use of it to reconstruct forms of the texts on which it was based. *The New York Times* article quotes Professor Wacholder as having said that 'the copyright on the concordance had expired.' This is news to me. Obviously, in its card form, it was never officially copyrighted. It did not belong to Brown, Oxtoby, Teixidor or myself but was a possession of the museum where it was housed. I am unaware of the copyrighting of the photographic form. It may have been done, but if so, the copyright cannot have expired so quickly.

On US current affairs television recently, Eugene Ulrich of the University of Notre Dame, one of the troika responsible for the editing of the Cave 4 texts for the Clarendon series, questioned the 'propriety' of



Wacholder's use of the concordance. Likewise, Frank Cross of Harvard University, one of the team members, is quoted in *The New York Times* as referring to these reconstructed texts as 'pirated.' Aside from the fact that the cards for this concordance were made from preliminary, not definitive, transcriptions of the fragmentary texts, there is the ethical question of such use of the result of someone else's work. Yet this does not concern Professor Wacholder.

That the reconstruction of Qumran texts from the concordance has been done with a computer is interesting. But one really did not need a computer to do it, because the cards were all numbered and could easily be reconstituted in their proper order. Now we learn that texts so reconstructed from this working concordance, based only on preliminary transcriptions, are going to be published shortly for the public at large. So we shall have a bootlegged version of the Qumran Cave 4 texts, but one of which the public should be wary.

**I**N ALL OF THIS, the public at large has to realise the problems that surround the publication of these Cave 4 texts. First, there is the jigsaw-puzzle aspect. From 1952 to 1960 there was no way that the texts could have been published; too many fragments were still unidentified. Some partial texts were published by team members when they realised their importance, yet partial publication was restricted because of the contract made with Clarendon Press for publication in its series. By 1960 there was little likelihood that many further 'joins' in the puzzle were going to be made. From that time on, the texts should have been gradually published.

Second, publication of the Cave 4 biblical texts should have been relatively easy; they were easily read and identified, and there is little excuse for the delay of those. But the Cave 4 nonbiblical texts were another matter. A few of them were known from other caves (e.g. the sectarian *Manual of Discipline* of Cave 1) or from ancient translations in other languages (e.g. Ethiopic *Enoch* or *Jubilees*). Most of them, however, were previously unknown and created many problems of identification and reading.

Third, sickness and death have affected the team. Allegro, who published definitively all except one of his texts in the Clarendon series—though in a miserable and shoddy fashion—eventually died. Skehan and Starcky have also died without having published definitively texts allotted to them. Skehan's texts were passed on to Professor Ulrich, whose volume is now in press. Other team-members have had health problems that delayed their work.

**W**HEN THE TEAM was assembled in 1952, the directors who gathered it were the heads of archaeological institutions in Jerusalem, working with the Jordanian Department of Antiquities. With their authority, the team divided up the material that they were to study and publish. Their 'rights' to publish such material were based on a gentlemen's agreement. In the scholarly world, that is normally respected. The scholar who first discovers a text usually has the 'right' to publish it.

When the Six-Day War took place (1967), Israeli authorities were apparently inclined to take some of the Cave 4 material away from the delinquent editors, but Père de Vaux, still the director of the team, succeeded in getting the authorities to respect the gentlemen's agreement. After de Vaux died (September 1971), Pierre Benoit OP became the director. After his death (April 1987), John Strugnell became the director responsible to Clarendon Press for the official publication of the texts. He was removed from that post last year, and a troika has been set up: the American Eugene Ulrich, the Israeli Emmanuel Tov and the Frenchman Emile Puech.

About a year and a half ago the Antiquities Authority in Israel set up a Scrolls Oversight Committee, which has some dubious authority over the Cave 4 texts since they are still in the Rockefeller Museum. I say 'dubious' because of the political situation in the Middle East. When Cave 4 was discovered (1952), it was in the West Bank area controlled by the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. Though the Jordanian Department of Antiquities had arranged with foreign institutions (such as McGill University in Montreal, Heidelberg University in Germany, Manchester University in England, and the Vatican Library) to help

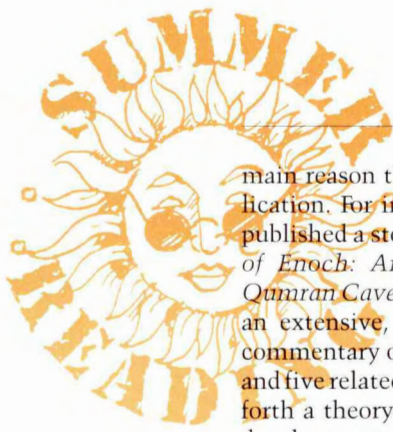
to buy from the Bedouin fragments recovered from Cave 4, with the understanding that the fragments once published would become the property of such institutions, the Jordanian Government nationalised the scrolls and fragments in its territory. When Israel occupied the West Bank (1967), the Jordanian nationalised scrolls came under Israel's control.

Given such a history, one sees why it is difficult to answer the question often posed: Who has the authority over the Dead Sea scrolls? Why cannot someone move in and insist on the immediate publication of the outstanding texts? Milik has given Joseph Baumgarten, of Baltimore Hebrew University, the right to publish the Cave 4 fragments of the *Damascus Document*, and James VanderKam, now of the University of Notre Dame, the right to publish Cave 4 texts of *Jubilees*. But the Israeli Oversight Committee has since moved in and forbidden Milik to pass on other texts. (I asked Milik for the right to publish the 10 Cave 4 copies of the *Manual of Discipline*, on which I had worked for the concordance. He had to refuse.)

The main reason for the delay in publication is not the desire of the team members to suppress the texts, as *The Washington Post* alleges or as some irresponsible persons have maintained, claiming that the as yet unpublished fragments contain something detrimental to either Jewish or Christian faith. It is rather the desire of team-members to say the last word on the texts with which they have been entrusted. Instead of publishing the photographs, a transcription of the texts in modern Hebrew characters, a translation in a modern language and a few notes to explain the readings used in the transcriptions, they want to write lengthy commentaries on each text.

To do this takes time, often years of work. Yet we all know that no pioneer editor ever says the last word on a new text. This, however, is the

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main reason that is holding up publication. For instance, in 1976 Milik published a stout volume, *The Books of Enoch: Aramaic Fragments of Qumran Cave 4* (Oxford: Clarendon), an extensive, scholarly and erudite commentary on seven texts of Enoch and five related fragments. In it he put forth a theory about the growth and development of Enochic literature, with which no reviewer to date has agreed. Now he is at work on a similar commentary on the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs.

Again, professors have been doling out their texts to graduate students for dissertations. Instead of publishing the texts themselves, they are consuming their time in the direction of such dissertations. This sort of problem is at the root of the delay in publication. Who can remedy it? Who can move in and see that the texts are published shortly? After all, almost 40 years have passed since Cave 4 was first discovered, and 30 years since the jigsaw puzzle was in great part finished. In that time the Cave 4 fragments should all have been published. Instead, we still await the definitive publication of almost 75 per cent of them.

So goes the battle for the Dead Sea scrolls. It is not over yet, but the latest phase is one that the public at large will have to recognise for what it is worth, a renegade and bootlegged publication of reconstructed texts.

—*America* magazine

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# Looking for the light

**The Light on the Hill: the Australian Labor Party 1891-1991**, Ross McMullin, OUP, Melbourne, 1991. ISBN 0 19 554966 X RRP \$39.95. **Lynched: the Life of Sir Phillip Lynch, Mastermind of the Ambush that Ended Gough's Run**, Brian Buckley, Salzburg Publishing, Melbourne, 1991. ISBN 0 646 04564 4 RRP \$14.95

**'S**ETTING A LIGHT ON A HILL' was a professed goal of the American founding fathers, though their black slaves who sang 'This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine' may have understood the image differently. Jesus' command to his followers to be the light to the world has been interpreted in many ways, and Ross McMullin explores one of them in his centenary history of the Australian Labor Party, *The Light on the Hill*. McMullin's title, of course, refers to the use of the phrase by Ben Chifley, a man he judges to have 'symbolised the ideals of the labour movement more than any other Labor leader'.

In his most famous speech, Chifley said: 'I try to think of the labour movement, not as putting an extra sixpence into somebody's pocket, or making somebody prime minister or premier, but as a movement bringing something better to the people, better standards of living, greater happiness to the mass of the people. We have a great objective—the light on the hill—which we aim to reach by working for the betterment of mankind not only here but anywhere we may give a helping hand.' McMullin tells the story of how this ideal has fared in 100 years of Labor practice—including the coal miners' strike that Chifley broke by using troops.

The choice of 1891 as the starting point of the story is a little arbitrary, as McMullin concedes, since there were labour parties before that in some of the Australian colonies and there could be no federal parliamentary party until 1901. But he traces the effects of the Queensland shearers' strike of 1891, which included a switch in emphasis from industrial to parliamentary tactics, down to the election of a former compositor, J.C. Watson, as the first Labor prime minister in 1904. The

ALP's moderation is made clear: its founders were influenced more by Edward Bellamy, Henry George and nonconformist Christianity than by Karl Marx. Irish Catholics were not prominent in the formation of the party, but by 1905, when Cardinal Moran defended the party's understanding of socialism as compatible with Catholic teachings, many of them had rallied to its flag.

Next, McMullin tells of the conflicting attitudes to forming national and state alliances that preceded the reform legislation of 1910-1914, which made Australia a world leader in the eyes of working people. He describes the upheaval in the party during World War I, when pro-conscriptionists crossed the floor with that renegade wharfie, Billy Hughes, as the *great* split, rating it as worse than the divisions of the 1930s and 1950s.

In McMullin's view, the ALP's failure to confront the depression of the 1930s led to increased membership of the Communist Party in working-class areas such as the NSW coalfields, where resentment of Scullin's policies ran deep. During Australia's slow recovery up to 1941 the ALP fared badly, but in World War II, under Curtin, it gained unprecedented support that carried through to 1949.

In his account of the 1954-55 split, McMullin regards the Industrial Groups' as having made a strategic error in attacking Pat Kennelly. He accepts B.A. Santamaria's judgment that the Liberals' need to keep DLP preferences was decisive in winning state aid for independent schools from 1963, rather than Michael Hogan's view that other groups, notably from NSW, played the key role.

Although he focuses on Victoria for the DLP story, McMullin argues that Labor's greatest strength has been



MICHAEL KELLY

## Cloud of witnesses

**I**T WILL BE A BIG YEAR for saints. 1992 will see Australia's Mary MacKillop reach the first stage of public recognition of her sanctity when she is declared 'venerable'.

These days, to be a canonised saint one needs to be a dead Roman Catholic with a document from the Pope declaring you holy. It was not always thus. In the Old Testament the saints were that 'cloud of witnesses' to God's faithfulness. St Paul uses the term to refer to the ordinary faithful in his many communities around the Mediterranean. From early Christian times, the term also referred to those who gone to God, but with whom the faithful could still commune—the Communion of Saints.

For much of the first millennium of the Christian era saints were created simply by acclamation. A village or a city would celebrate the heroic faith or virtue of an individual and henceforth he or she would be called 'Saint'. Politics being what it is, the practice was abused. Local leaders began to develop, or even invent, saintly figures for their own ends. To restore some decorum, the popes reserved the right to nominate official saints from the 10th century onwards. In 1634, Rome put some sap and sinew into procedures for entering the holy register and these procedures have survived as the process of canonisation.

Local heroes in former times, saints now have a broader reach. The Catholic penchant for patron saints can take us into the realms of the bizarre. Thomas More for lawyers is obvious enough. But Francis de Sales, bishop and writer, has been annexed by journalists even though he died 200 years before the publication of the first newspaper. In modern times the notion of patronage has been fetched even farther. Struggling to find a patron saint of airline pilots the Vatican opted for St Joseph of Cupertino, who used to levitate and had to be tied down with a rope. ■

Michael Kelly SJ is publisher of *Eureka Street*.

in NSW, where it has so often governed at state level—at times with the help of ballot tinkering. Not that crookedness was all north of the Murray: he also records the armed snatching of party ballot boxes and other corruption in Richmond. The formation of the DLP and the tensions of the Cold War meant 'sad days for the party', which, until its resurgence under Whitlam, seemed 'doomed to indefinite opposition'. However, McMullin points out that the 1961 election, which the ALP lost under Calwell, was the closest poll since federation.

This commissioned history judges that the Hawke government has 'generated more grass-roots dissatisfaction than any of the governments led by Curtin, Chifley and Whitlam', and describes the Hawke-Keating policies as being driven by 'some new and alien philosophy'. Still, McMullin praises the Hawke government for the accord, environmental legislation and pension increases.

*The Light on the Hill* has a cast of hundreds, including famous men such as William Lane, T.J. Ryan, William Holman, Jim Scullin, John Curtin, Arthur Calwell, Henry Boote, Bert Evatt, Ted Theodore, Don Dunstan, Jim Cairns, and Gough Whitlam. It also includes many whose stories are rarely told, although very few women. McMullin has tabled the male dominance and racism of the early party and traced some improvements.

The old radicals of the Industrial Workers of the World mocked ALP members for thinking that they could overthrow capitalism by making marks on ballot papers. McMullin concludes that despite infidelities and broken promises on the ALP side and myopia on theirs, trade union stalwarts committed to uplifting the disadvantaged and downtrodden have, in general, stuck with the party for 100 years, been its core and thereby formed a broad-based coalition of reformers. How much longer the rank-and-file will stick with it remains to be seen.

**W**HEN PHILLIP LYNCH, graduate of Xavier College and Melbourne University, became Minister for the Army in the Gorton cabinet, he was one of few Catholics to have gained a high position in Australian government

through the Liberal Party. Although a trickle of Catholics had followed Joe Lyons into the conservative parties since 1931, in 1968 Catholics still usually entered politics through the ALP or the DLP.

Brian Buckley, a former member of Lynch's staff, describes in *Lynched* how making war in Vietnam was central to his subject's early career. Lynch ran into controversy when he denied, but later had to confirm, the use of water torture by Australian soldiers. Then came revelations of the army's harsh treatment of conscientious objectors. Buckley praises Lynch's role in bringing about the dismissal of the Whitlam Government in November 1975, calling it the highlight of 'an honest, patriotic and honourable public life'. By the end of his career, Lynch had become the successful administrator of more than half a dozen portfolios, Liberal deputy leader—before he was 40—Treasurer, Acting Prime Minister, and a knight.

But by not making clear who 'lynched' Phillip Lynch, the book fails to explain its title. Buckley implies it was the ABC, *The Age* and Malcolm Fraser. Fraser dumped Lynch as his deputy in 1977, after allegations that Lynch had bought a unit on the Gold Coast with profits from crooked land deals involving the Housing Commission of Victoria. Buckley concedes that 'to most of the interested public who flicked past the headlines it seemed that a Treasurer with a special mission to reduce Government spending and public entitlements had become involved in a fishy land deal'.

*Lynched* is hardly a biography. There is, for instance, only a brief mention of Lynch's father and no mention of his mother. The book reads like a collection of Lynch's press releases, interspersed with comments from acquaintances. Buckley, who like Lynch is from a Melbourne Catholic background and shared Lynch's views, ducks some questions that he was well placed to have answered. Why did the young graduate of working-class Irish Catholic background join the Liberal Party? And did Lynch feel, in the end, that he had been used by the establishment? ■

Val Noone is writing a book about Melbourne Catholics and the Vietnam War.



# Patronage, sponsorship and the Guggenheim

*If you thought it was all just about looking at the great paintings of the Modern period, think again. The art exhibition of the year has a more complex story to tell.*

*Femme tenant un vase,*  
Fernand Léger, 1927.  
Oil on canvas,  
146.3x97.5cm.

**T**HE *Masterpieces From the Guggenheim* exhibition at the Art Gallery of New South Wales has been easily the most over-hyped exhibition ever to visit Australia. No other show has been on the receiving end of such forcibly manipulated media coverage; it has even been enlisted as a part of Sydney's bid for the Olympic Games. With Saatchi and Saatchi running its advertising program, using slogans like 'Don't Dilly Dally on the way to Dali', and the gallery director in a commercial for fake New York taxis and building reconstruction, this exhibition promised much. Yet the smaller than expected crowds at the gallery suggest that it failed to deliver.

The question then, surely, is why should an exhibition 'deliver' the numbers? If the projected crowds had come then viewing the art would have been a decidedly unpleasant experience. Under the present circumstances it is quite pleasant to wander at leisure through paintings and sculpture by some of the best known names of the 20th century. The answer lies in the funding, or sponsorship. Sponsors need

numbers to reassure them that their product is popular (the gallery needed to at least break even on this one to make sure that it did not have to retrench even more staff). The *Masterpieces from the Guggenheim* is surely the ultimate case of the sponsored exhibition, and this is its tragedy, because the Guggenheim collections are examples of patronage at its best.

Patronage and sponsorship are related, and are often used as synonyms for each other, but their differences are more significant than their similarities. The Guggenheims collected art out of love and for public benefit, not for immediate financial return.

**S**OLOMON GUGGENHEIM and his wife Irene Rothschild were children of the rich. Their families had benefited from the expansion of 19th century America, but they also came from a tradition of philanthropy, from the idea that those who are given much by society are under an obligation to repay at least some of the gift. As with

many wealthy Americans of their generation the Guggenheims collected 'old masters', beautiful *objets d'art* from ages past. But after a young portrait painter, Hilla Rebay von Ehrenweissen, convinced Solomon Guggenheim that he should acquire some of the most radical art of Europe, the collection changed direction.

It was not conventional rich person's taste. Despite the superlative adjectives that have been hurled around about the Guggenheim exhibition, not even the advertising industry has dared call this work 'pretty'. It was the art of Robert Hughes' *The Shock of the New*, art so out of kilter with conventional taste that even today it seems modern. (One of the odd experiences in visiting this exhibition is hearing people surprised at the modernity of art made when their great-grandparents were children).

Rebay had been introduced to the radical traditions of French art through her suitor Jean Arp. When Guggenheim started purchasing work on her advice, the art she advocated contin-



ued a certain personal association. The artists were all male—Rebay liked artists who were attractive men—so many women were written out of this major collection of European *avant garde* art. The most glaring omissions were Sonia Delaunay, whose husband Robert was widely collected, and Gabriel Münter, the long-time lover of Kandinsky. And there were other biases.

The first of these was towards abstract, or non-objective art. For Hilla Rebay art that was not consciously based on any figurative forms was almost of necessity superior to art based on an identifiable object. This had for her a mystical association: many of the artists Rebay purchased were Theosophists, and she had a lifelong passion for art that sought spiritual values.

Patronage by Rebay, via Guggenheim's cheque book, did not only support the future heroes of western art. She may have been a passionate supporter of Kandinsky, who is one of the stars of the current exhibition, but she gave at least equal treatment to the academic cubist Albert Gleizes. Rudolf Bauer, her confidant and lover, was given a monthly income by Guggenheim to enable him to paint, but he is hardly a household name today. Theirs is all very dry art. The very lush nude by Modigliani—one of the centrepieces of the exhibition—is unusual in that it was one of the few works in the Guggenheim exhibition actually purchased by Solomon himself.

The importance of the Guggenheim patronage was that Rebay and the Guggenheim's believed in this art. They gave support to the artists on trust, and did not demand an immediate cash return. As the collection grew to cover the walls of the Guggenheim suite at the Plaza Hotel, they thought of the next step: a foundation and a museum. The first institution, opened in 1939, was called the 'Museum of Non-Objective Painting'. The name says it all: theoretical rigour, purity of stern purpose in honour of one particular dogma of art. Its aim was to convert the visitors to the importance of the seemingly incomprehensible, to persuade them with background music of Chopin and Bach, and the sweet smell of incense, that this art was a truly sublime experience.

The permanent and famous Fifth Avenue home followed years later after protracted dealings with architect Frank Lloyd Wright, and the name—The Guggenheim Museum—was fixed on only after the founding benefactor's death.

The other Guggenheim, Peggy, was also passionately involved in the art she collected. The niece of Solomon, she had also inherited wealth beyond the dreams of most people. Like Hilla Rebay she was a friend and lover of artists, but was disciplined about the artists she collected for the public good. She knew and admired Matisse, but did not collect him because she saw him as working in an older tradition. Her advisers included Marcel Duchamp and Herbert Read. It was not enough for her to support modern art by simply buying it; she also became the most passionate advocate for recent art. Her first museum, the Art of This Century, was later relocated to her house in Venice and then opened to the public.

**U**NLIKE THE NEW YORK Guggenheim museum, with its shrine-like atmosphere, the Venice collection was always intimate and accessible. The latest in art was made personal, and was eventually given over to the public as one of the great small-scale museums. This then is patronage: the act of supporting a cause for the common good. The great contradiction of the current exhibition is that it is brought to us by sponsorship.

Sponsorship is another name for advertising, but as the name sounds softer the commercial ramifications are sometimes overlooked. The central question in any kind of sponsorship is that asked in Andrew Denton's tasteless joke about David Hill: 'What's in it for me?' Unless the answer is 'a lot', the sponsor does not deliver, and unless the answer is equally favourable to the organisation being sponsored, then it is an unequal bargain.

In the case of the Guggenheim exhibition the main sponsor is the State Government of NSW. In its case the 'What's in it for me' was answered by a claim that it would bring tourism in time of a recession and impress the International Olympic Committee when Sydney places its bid. There was an additional benefit. All governments like cheap bread and circuses, but at

the time the beleaguered Greiner government was acutely embarrassed by losing tens of millions on a motorbike circuit. Losing \$2 million on the arts would make it look more cultured.

For Caltex the question is a trifle more complex. Supporting a major travelling show is image advertising rather than a direct commercial. It makes them look good with government. As the Premier spoke directly to the managing director on this particular sponsorship deal, the public can be assured that Caltex now looks very good to the NSW government.

The other advertisers have a more direct interest. Australian Airlines is benefiting from those visitors who choose to travel interstate to see an exhibition of European and some American art, and the Intercontinental Hotel has a similar interest in filling tourist beds. In addition, supporting the exhibition enhances their image and that of Qantas, the international carrier. But enlightened self-interest is not patronage; it is simply a prudent contra-deal and this sound business practice should never be confused with passionate philanthropy.

Walking through the exhibition, seeing what benefits America has reaped from its firmly entrenched tradition of private patronage, is both inspiring and depressing. Inspiring because so much of the art is good—and there are other similarly endowed museums in America with even better—and depressing because the art of patronage is so misunderstood here. Patronage can afford to take risks because the patron actually cares about the art form; sponsorship demands a guaranteed dollar return, because it is part of the advertising budget. So sponsorship is attached to programs already supported by governments like blockbuster exhibitions and opera, while the arts on the cutting edge, where there is both danger of obliteration and glory, struggle on in a hand to mouth existence.

• *Masterpieces from the Guggenheim* will remain on view at the Art Gallery of NSW until 12 January. ■



**Joanna Mendelssohn** is art critic for *The Bulletin*. In November 1991 she won the Pascall Prize, Australia's major award for critical writing.



**FLASH IN THE PAN**

*The Fisher King*, dir. Terry Gilliam (Hoyts). I have a nightmare in which the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences decides to award a special Oscar for Best Moralising Bore. It's tough, choosing between Robin Williams and Kevin Costner, but in the end Williams wins. After all, he's a loud moralising bore. True, his character in *The Fisher King* dispenses moral uplift in softer tones than the hysterical radio announcer he played in *Good Morning, Vietnam*, or the crypto-fascist schoolteacher of *The Dead Poets Society*. But otherwise all that Williams has changed is his clothes.

At least Gilliam spares us by not making Williams' less-than-sublime fool the central character. In this film he is a foil to Jack Lucas (Jeff Bridges), a misanthropic talk-back radio host who is trying to expiate the guilt he feels over a caustic remark that incited a shotgun massacre. Jack is befriended by Parry (Williams), one of New York's homeless and, it turns out, a widower because of the shotgun massacre. Parry is obsessed with the Grail legend and becomes convinced that Jack, the source of his pain, is the parfit knight who will find the Grail for him.

I tried hard to like *The Fisher King*. The Grail stories are a rich source to tap for metaphors of self-discovery and forgiveness, but their appeal lies as much in their reality as in their

fantasy. In most versions of the legend, only one knight out of many succeeds in the quest and falling by the wayside is part of point of the story. But very early in *The Fisher King* we can see that, despite a little backsliding, Bridges will find the Grail for his friend and redemption for himself. For redemption here becomes little more than adopting the schmaltzy, you-can-be-a-good-guy-if-you-try persona that Robin Williams has made his own. And in the process we are given a romanticised view of homelessness and a kind of hymn to New York, as though the city itself were one big Grail, containing all human goodness if we could but find it.

Frankly, I'd rather listen to Lou Reed or even Liza Minelli warble about the Big Apple. And I suspect the Grail is even bigger still.

—Ray Cassin

### Eureka Street Film Competition

Can you caption the above still, showing the start of one of the Three Stooges's many ferocious arguments? We'll award two tickets, to the film of your choice, for the answer we like best. Write to: *Eureka Street* film competition, PO Box 553, Richmond, VIC 3121. The winner of December's competition will be announced in our March issue, and the winner of this month's in April.

*The Comfort of Strangers*, dir. Paul Schrader (independent cinemas). This film of Ian McEwan's novel retains all the brooding menace of the original, which is no small achievement. An English couple, Colin (Rupert Everett) and Mary (Natasha Richardson) come to Venice to sort out their relationship. Very soon we see that they are being secretly photographed by Robert (Christopher Walken), looking like a seedier and more dangerous version of Bogarde's Aschenbach in Visconti's *Death in Venice*.

The film itself has a voyeuristic feel; as we are privy to the playing out of Colin's and Mary's fantasies, the voyeurism of the viewer disturbingly

parallels the voyeurism of Robert. But it soon becomes apparent that the private fantasies of Robert and Mary are less menacing than the fantasies of Robert and his wife Caroline (Helen Mirren).

The film holds together superbly; Venice works as a kind of labyrinth through which Colin and Mary move inexorably to the film's culmination. The film itself is punctuated by Robert's narrative of his childhood, which changes meaning with every repetition, marking by its changed contexts the changing realities in the movie. All the actors acquit themselves well; Everett and Richardson play like refugees from a Merchant-Ivory historical drama, bewildered by the seedier world of Ian McEwan but drawn to it. Walken is splendid as Robert, and Harold Pinter's screenplay has just the right note of reserve. All this, and the film looks good, too—though be prepared for a rather alarming experience.

—David Braddon-Mitchell

*Highway to Hell*, dir. Ate de Jong (Village). This film is clearly made for the schlock-horror, teenage-babysitter market, and may have been consigned to the video stores by the time *Eureka Street* goes to press. But I hope not. De Jong has combined the road movie and the horror movie and the marriage is a happy one. Given the infernal subject matter one hesitates to call it a marriage made in heaven, but Brian Helgeland's script for *Highway to Hell* is replete with that kind of excruciating pun. Anyone too refined to enjoy trash is thus warned, and the rest of you may read on.

Here are the elements: a pair of eloping teenagers (Adam Storke and Kristy Swanson), driving through the desert to reach that paradise of quickie marriages, Las Vegas. They decide to take a back road, not knowing that it contains a mysterious gate to the underworld. And thus begins a contest between our hero and the Devil (Patrick Bergin), who is keen to add our heroine to his collection of virgin brides. Sounds silly? Of course, it goes with the territory. But De Jong prefers deliberate silliness at many levels, blending Christian theology, classical, Norse and Celtic mythology, and some heavy-handed political and cultural satire (including parody of other horror films). Sounds even sillier? Per-



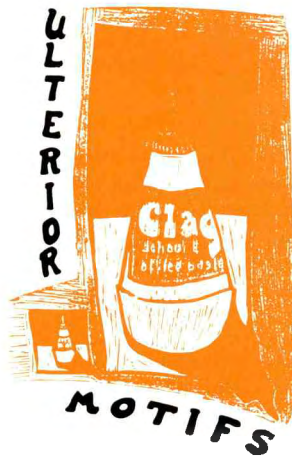
haps, but it is not so very far from the mix that Dante concocted for his *Inferno*.

And I'll bet Beatrice would have preferred it to the *Inferno* when she was a teenage babysitter.

—Ray Cassin

Answers to quiz on p46

1 Willful murder, oppression of the poor, defrauding a labourer of his wages, and sodomy. 2 Wisdom, understanding, counsel, knowledge, fortitude, piety and fear of the Lord. 3 Seth. 4 21, 41, 28, 571, more or less. 5 In 1950, when Pius XII proclaimed the dogma of the Assumption. 6 Six: Black, of the Seven Dolours; green, of the Immaculate Heart of Mary; blue, of the Immaculate Conception; white, of the Holy Trinity; red, of the Passion; and brown, of Our Lady of Mount Carmel. (If you knew all their names, give yourself two points.) 7 The 20th century. 8 Vivaldi. 9 Alleluia. 10 Because it was sung from a step ('gradus'). 11 Jesus wept. (John 11:35) 12 Archbishop Justin Simmonds, coadjutor to Daniel Mannix. 13 Archbishop James Duhig of Brisbane, who had just been knighted. Duhig's coadjutor was Patrick Mary O'Donnell. 14 Father Gerry Dowling. 15 Father E.B. O'Dwyer. 16 Father John Coore. 17 Wally Broderick, owner of the 1965 winner, Lightfingers. 18 Mike Carlton. 19 John XII, in 954. He was 16. 20 Enid Lyons, John Cramer and Neal O'Sullivan. 21 By giving piano and organ recitals. 22 Monsignor Patrick Harrigan. 23 Narrandera, NSW. 24 A convict, Father James Dixon, in 1803. 25 Caroline Chisholm. 26 Francis Xavier. 27 Ad Maiorem Dei Gloriam—Towards the greater glory of God. 28 The Jesuits. 29 Death-bed conversions to Catholicism. 30 Attempting to destroy Michelangelo's *Pieta* with a hammer. 31 Alessandro Serenelli. 32 Never—there has only been one Peter. 33 Omnia omnibus. 34 Miriam Agatha. 35 B.A. Santamaria (in The Australian) and Jim McClelland (in The Sydney Morning Herald). 36 The Christian Brothers. 37 The Sisters of Charity. 38 St Patrick's College, Manly. 39 Frank Sheed and Geoffrey Chapman. 40 John Henry, Cardinal Newman. 41 Sevenhill. 42 Earl Beauchamp, Governor of NSW 1899-1901. 43 William Wilkinson Wardell (1823-99). 44 When Jesus cleared the temple. (OK, so it was a joke question. If you've thought of a funnier answer, give yourself a point anyway.)



## California, not just a state of mind

Did someone say we're all Californians now? Perhaps the movies and MTV have made American popular culture universal, but a glance at the advertisements in *LA Weekly* suggests that Tinsel Town is still in a class of its own when it comes to narcissism and New Age daffiness.

Dr Brian Novack, of the Beverly Hills Institute, is a plastic surgeon who caters for the I-want-to-look-like-Arnold-Schwarzenegger brigade. His advertisement—complete with 'before' and 'after' photos—announces that he specialises in male pectoral implants, and asks: 'Why spend all your money on your car or clothes when it is *you* they really notice? To get the attention you deserve, the very best investment is in your appearance.' Dr Novack does not say how much money he requires patients to outlay on their very best investment. He is also the subject of a sneering feature in the *New York Times* science supplement. New Yorkers seem to nurse a grudge against Hollywood for inflicting King Kong on them.

The lawyers of Los Angeles can tout for business as well as any doctor. Ronald H. Hoffman, who 'specialises in the defence of drunk driving', assures his bibulous clients not only reasonable rates but a time-payment plan, too. And of course, 'no court appearance is necessary.'

When was the last time you had something vital, gentle and free?' asks the Brentwood Dental Practice. New patients get an examination and four X-rays without charge, and hey, they won't hurt a bit.

Most things may be bigger in Tex-

as, but one *LA Weekly* ad tells us that California hosts The Whole Life Expo, 'the largest wholistic [sic], self improvement, New Age exposition in the world.' Among the 200 luminaries booked to speak at this navel-gazing extravaganza were presidential hopeful Jerry Brown, and the bionic woman herself, Lindsay Wagner.

Californians in need of a break can take 'a 60-minute vacation' in a flotation tank. And where is this aqueous marvel? At Club Altered States, which also boasts something called a mind gym. One might have thought that mental gymnastics *increased* stress, but perhaps after an hour floating in a pseudo-womb you can't feel anything at all.

Among the many eateries advertising in *LA Weekly* is the Jamaican Café, which serves 'earthy, tasty, plentiful food, with assertive spices.'



Not hot or mild spices, mind, but *assertive* ones. Presumably they are just the thing for people worried about intrusions on their personal space.

Finally, the Scissor Wizards are 'artists in hair replacement for balding ladies and gentlemen'. Balding *ladies*? Maybe they put too many assertive spices on their food. ■

**F**OR ALL THOSE WHO CAN REMEMBER ... If you are Catholic and old enough to know the difference between a scapular and a Miraculous Medal, have we got a quiz for you. If you aren't that old, have a go anyway. If you aren't Catholic, you're allowed to look at the answers first.

**How your score rates**

**40 or more:** You're probably the scriptwriter for *Brides of Christ*.

**30-40:** Not bad, but you must be pre-Vatican II.

**20-30:** You probably think the Beatles are part of ancient history, too.

**Less than 20:** You're a New Age hippy.

*The answers are on p.45 (and inverted!)*

- 1 What, according to the old catechism, are the four sins crying to heaven for vengeance?
- 2 And what are the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit?
- 3 Cain and Abel had a brother. Who was he?
- 4 How many cubits in a 12-metre yacht?
- 5 When was the last time a pope spoke *ex cathedra*?
- 6 How many devotional scapulars were there?
- 7 In what century did the last *castrato* die?
- 8 Which composer was known as 'the red priest'?
- 9 What was the deacon singing when the Hun archer shot him through the throat?
- 10 Why is the gradual psalm so named?
- 11 What is the shortest verse in the Bible?
- 12 Which Australian bishop was nicknamed 'the lady in waiting'?
- 13 Whom did Mannix congratulate by sending a telegram addressed to 'Sir James and Lady Mary'?
- 14 Which priest wrote the official history of the North Melbourne Football Club?
- 15 Which priest was warned off all Australian racecourses because of his involvement in the Fine Cotton ring-in?
- 16 Which priest played Rugby League for Australia in the late 1960s?
- 17 Which owner of a Melbourne Cup winner 'in the first instance, thanked God' in his acceptance speech?
- 18 What Australian radio personality, now working in Britain, is the son of a former priest?
- 19 Who was the youngest pope ever elected?
- 20 Who were the Catholics in Robert Menzies' first cabinet?
- 21 How did Rosendo Salvado raise money for his monastery at New Norcia?
- 22 What was the real name of 'John O'Brien', author of *Around the Boree Log*?
- 23 In what town was he parish priest?
- 24 Who celebrated the first Mass in Australia?
- 25 Who is the only Catholic depicted on an Australian bank note?
- 26 Which 16th century missionary refused to preach in Timor, saying it would be fruitless because the island's colonial rulers were so corrupt?
- 27 What do the letters 'AMDG' stand for?
- 28 Who introduced ballet to France?
- 29 What do John Wayne, Oscar Wilde and Aubrey Beardsley have in common?
- 30 Laszlo Toth is an Australian famous for what deed?
- 31 Who killed Maria Goretti?
- 32 When did Pope Peter II reign?

- 33 Cardinal Moran and Archbishop Mannix had the same motto. What was it?
- 34 For more than 60 years Agatha le Breton wrote stories and columns for *The Messenger* and the *Annals*. What was her *nom de plume*?
- 35 In 1931 two boys shared a desk in their final year at St Kevin's College, Melbourne. Later they became well-known for, among other things, their newspaper columns. Who were they?
- 36 Morris West's first novel, *Moon in My Pocket*, is about a religious congregation in Australia. Which one?
- 37 The first religious sisters arrived in Australia in 1838. To which congregation did they belong?
- 38 Thomas Keneally's early novels *The Place at Whitton* and *Three Cheers for the Paraclete* are set in an Australian seminary. What was the model for it?
- 39 Two Australian law graduates have founded successful publishing companies in London in this century. Who were they?
- 40 What famous 19th century English Catholic was known to boys in his school as 'Jack'?
- 41 What is the Jesuit winery in South Australia called?
- 42 Which Australian governor became the model for Lord Marchmain in Evelyn Waugh's *Brideshead Revisited*?
- 43 Who was the architect of St Mary's Cathedral in Sydney and St Patrick's Cathedral in Melbourne?
- 44 When was high jumping first mentioned in the Bible?



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| Sept 27-Oct 4 | Springs of Carmel Retreat, led by Peter Slattery O.Carm                         |
| Dec 13-20     | Directed, or Reflecting On Our Life Experience Retreat, led by Tim Lockwood CFC |

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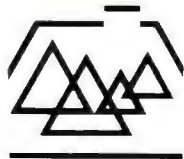
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