

ANNAALS

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ANNALS AUSTRALASIA

Journal of Catholic Culture

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3

Market Forces, Censorship and the Right to Choose

When issues like abortion and pornography arise, the spectre of Censorship comes back to haunt us. Our editorial looks at some of the key issues underlying the Censorship debate.

19

Paul Fregosi - Home from the Sea

JAMES MURRAY writes with affection of a fellow-journalist and old friend who died in Brazil on January 31 on his way to Australia – his adopted home. Paul's English, Corsican and Venetian ancestors found a strong and beguiling voice through his writings.

22

Australian Aboriginal Music

Australia's musical heritage ranges from the dawn of time to the threshold of space. JOHN COLBORNE-VEEL gives us a brief history of Aboriginal music that until recently, apart from the digeridoo, was neglected or dismissed as of little value.

27

Loveless Lies

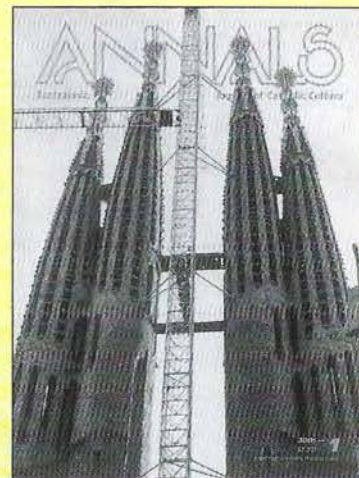
A recently published book discusses taboo subjects like contraception, natural moral law, married love and conscience with fearless clarity. MARY HELEN WOODS reviews *Contraception – The Hidden Truth*, by Christine de Stoop.

32

A Devilish Suggestion

If one were to be Old Nick's adviser, how would one go about ensuring that the devil's evil reign triumphed? GILES AUTY offers some answers to this question, describing some modern breakthroughs of devilment on the social, moral and religious scene that must gladden Satan's hard heart.

Cover Photo: Paul Stenhouse, MSC



Front Cover: *The towers of the yet to be completed Church of the Holy Family in Barcelona commenced by Antonio Gaudi [1852-1926] in 1884. He worked on it until his death. The towers reaching up to God, and the crane seeking equilibrium, symbolise the dynamic and complementary relations between Faith and Science as we enter the 21st century.*

Back Cover: *A selection of books published by Chevalier Press, ideal as presents for Catholics and for non-Catholics, and for all occasions.*

In the Name of the Father	1
How the Rosary Guided a Son to his Mother ..	6
Letters	7
On a Different Track	11
St Sebastian, the Cobbler's Crow and Divus Rediculus	12
Thought from the Liturgy of the Day	14
Challenges for Christian Witness	15
News of the Catholic World	18
Media Matters	29
My Dinner With Andre	35
Patron Saint of Cancer Sufferers	38
Movies	39
News of the Catholic World	44

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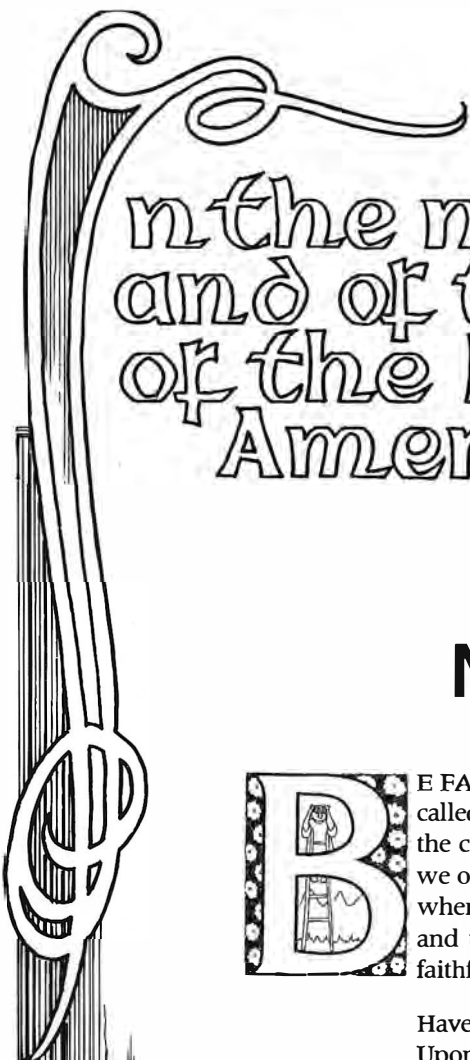
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In the name of the Father,
and of the Son, and
of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

A Prayer for a New Millennium

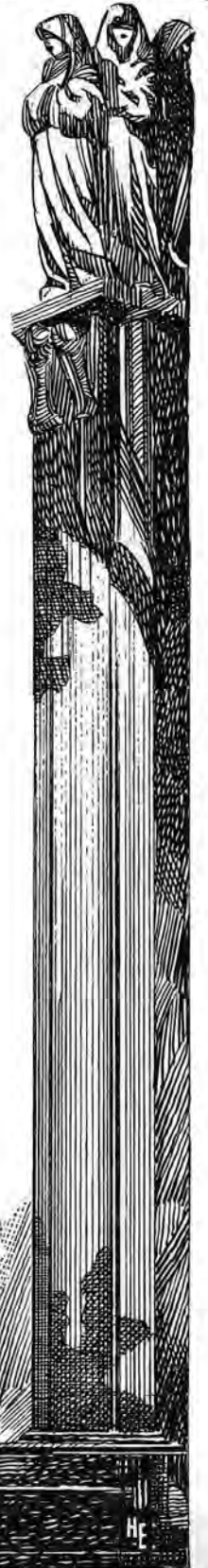


BE FAITHFUL to those who love you . . . and to those whom God has called you to love. If you are, sooner or later you'll begin to notice that the cup overflows, and you have plenty left over for others. So often we overlook the simple and obvious fabric of our daily life. But that's where love begins. That's where our discipleship starts. It's the altar and the cross for each of us. It's why Augustine wrote that 'to be faithful in little things is a big thing.'

Have mercy
Upon us.
Have mercy
Upon our efforts,
That we
Before Thee
In love and in faith
Righteousness and humility,
May follow Thee,
With self-denial, steadfastness and courage,
And meet Thee
In the silence.

Give us
A pure heart
That we may see Thee,
A humble heart
That we may hear Thee,
A heart of love
That we may serve Thee,
A heart of faith
That we may live Thee.

- Archbishop Charles Chaput OFM of Denver, Colorado, USA, *Speaking the Truth in Love*.





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MARKET FORCES, CENSORSHIP, AND THE RIGHT TO CHOOSE

When issues like abortion and pornography arise, the spectre of Censorship, like Banquo's ghost, comes back to haunt us. PAUL STENHOUSE, MSC PhD looks behind the Censorship debate to some of the key issues that underlie it.



REPORTS that the distributor, Fox Searchlight Pictures, has censored much of the sex and violence in its web site for *Quills*, a recent movie about the sexual fantasies of the Marquis de Sade who died mad at Charenton in France, provoked the following comment from scriptwriter Doug Wright: 'I find this censorship is delicious irony. I always thought issues of censorship would arise, but I never dreamed it would be in our own backyard'.

Is one being too cynical in suggesting that Doug welcomed censorship's becoming an issue? The spectre of censorship has been known to sell books, promote movies and fill art galleries with outraged liberals who see their idea of democracy under threat as soon as someone objects to the pace at which the privatising of morality, and the desensitising of the young, is proceeding.

No one suggests that the entertainment industry or the media, especially TV, create violence or sexual confusion. That they significantly contribute to it is becoming harder to deny.

In 1995 the *New York Times* declared 'There is much in the movies and in hard-core rap music that is disturbing and demeaning to many Americans. Rap music which often reaches the top of the charts, is also the music in which women are degraded and men seem to murder each other for sport. But no one ever dropped dead from viewing "Natural Born Killers" or listening to gangsta rap records'.

Columnist George Will replied, 'No one ever dropped dead reading *Der Sturmer* the Nazi anti-Semitic newspaper, but the culture it served caused six million Jews to drop dead'.

Elsewhere in this issue (Media Matters/Global Secularisation) our media correspondent raises the grim

spectre of Thalidomide, and the difficulty of making governments in the past face up to their obligation of care for their citizens.

People who show concern for the overall health of society risk being passed off as hypocrites (the approach taken by *Quill's* pre-release publicity when talking of the reaction of de Sade's contemporaries to his actions and writings) or as ultra-conservatives who favour 'paternalistic' government and censorship.

'Censorship' in practice

PR and media hype notwithstanding, some kind of discernment (aka 'censorship') functions willy-nilly within every society. Scientists, journalists, teachers, professionals in medicine and law, academics and big business are expected to be discriminating in what they show, write, advertise, teach, practise or sell, and what they don't; and how they do, or don't do it. Even in democratic societies, the general public, like children at school, get to know what they know only on a need to know basis. And they generally are not the ones who decide who needs to know what.

Nor is the Fourth Estate exempt from playing the censor. TV programmes, even if they aren't recorded, are being censored in some degree by their producers and by every person who has a say in what images and what words reach the viewing public. Newspapers censor the news. Letters editors censor the comment of readers. Daily editorial conferences are held to decide what news stories and what comment reaches readers.



EXTINGUISH in your heart the fiendish love of military glory, from which your sex does not necessarily exempt you, and to which the wickedness of flatterers may urge you. Say upon your death-bed, 'I have made few orphans in my reign – I have made few widows – my object has been peace. I have used all the weight of my character, and all the power of my situation, to check the irascible passions of mankind, and to turn them to the arts of honest industry: this has been the Christianity of my throne, and this the gospel of my sceptre; in this way I have striven to worship my Redeemer and my Judge.'

– Advice to Queen Victoria on her accession to the English throne by Sydney Smith, (1771-1845) wit, co-founder of the *Edinburgh Review* and Anglican Clergyman, quoted in *The Smith of Smiths*, by Hesketh Pearson, 1934.

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The media are businesses. Without some discernment and discretion the paper would never appear. And then there are the advertisers to consider. My great-grandfather gave up a well-paid job (£1,000 a year) as editor of the *Sydney Telegraph* in the 1880s because, as he said, the wood of the editor's desk was the same as the wood of the advertising manager's.

In search of the key issue

Government sanctioned standards are not, as such, what is really at issue. Efforts to stop the spread of the so-called mad-cow disease are supported across the board. They are a form of official and legal censorship of what we eat. I don't hear liberals or libertarians clamouring for the right of interested individuals to eat British beef. They might export it. They wouldn't eat it.

Quality control is another form of censorship that impinges on the 'rights' of individuals. In food and drink products, quality control sets

parameters for what can be processed and sold. In engineering projects quality control ensures that no harm comes to those who live and work and travel.

I don't hear proponents of radical individualism demanding the right to eat sandwiches infected with the bacterium that causes botulism, or genetically modified grains, or to drive through tunnels or over bridges built according to dubious engineering techniques.

It is standards of private, especially sexual, behaviour that lie at the heart of the ongoing debate. Issues like abortion, pornography and contraception are assumed by many liberals to belong to the realm of private conscience, and the individual's right to choose. They seem to assume that human society is no more than a collection of non-interrelated, non-interdependent individuals.

'What's wrong,' they ask, echoing John Stuart Mill's fallacious principle that in matters of private morality the individual's independence is

absolute, 'with people's being allowed to read or see whatever they want to'. In the real world, where human beings interact and are interdependent, and where the behaviour of individuals affects the wider community such assumptions are dangerously flawed. It is a small (and logical) step to individuals' demanding the right to *do* what they claim to have a right to read and see.

Market Forces

It would be interesting to know why Fox Searchlight Pictures acted as they did in the matter of *Quill*. Was it a pragmatic decision arrived at after complaints from parents of underage children, or one based on principle? One hopes it was the latter. Universally agreed-upon principles, rather than the passing of laws, hold the clue to a resolution of the dilemmas that confront society.

The few remaining links of the moral hawser that holds democratic society in place are being shredded by the commoditising of sex and violence that passes for popular culture. It is, one hopes, obviously in our best interest not to eat sausages laced with arsenic. If we think that it is in our best interest to consume a steady diet of computer-generated murder, rape, sado-masochism and pedophilia, there are those who insist that we be allowed to. Whose



Bureaucratic dilemma

NO, no, the official's duty is not an easy one! This is already evident from the fact that everyone knows that every native Chief over-steps the limit of permissible use of the labour and property of his subjects ... that all Assistant Residents take the oath to combat this ... and that nevertheless it is only very rarely that a Regent is charged with tyranny or misuse of power.

— Max Havaalar, or the *Coffee Auctions of a Dutch Trading Company*, by Multatuli, pen-name of Eduard Douwes Dekker. First published 1860.

best interest is such a diet *really* in? The community's? The individual's? or the web-site proprietor's?

The real agenda behind much debate on the supposed topic of censorship is not the much vaunted right of John Stuart Mill's individual to dispose of his body or mind or soul as he chooses, or to see and eat and go where he pleases, but the assumed and unspoken right of interested parties to teach or promote or to sell whatever they choose, to whomsoever they choose. Market forces are the Dr Faustus of our modern secular morality plays. They hold a universal appeal to risk-takers who, like Faustus, believe that the end justifies the means.

Self-styled opponents of 'censorship,' (who really are *proponents* of some *commodity*: book, video, pharmaceutical, or medical practice) usually defend their actions on the grounds that they are supporting and satisfying the individual's right to choose.

If they are correct, how different are they from drug pushers, cult leaders or arms manufacturers who justify what they do on the grounds that they are simply catering to a need?

To claim that no one is hurt by abortion or pornography or contraception is to beg myriad questions too complex and too important for the survival of truly free and democratic societies to be discussed in a magazine article or on a TV or radio programme.

The Right to Choose

The slogan 'individuals have the right to choose,' assumes that such people are free agents. Just as cocaine, heroin or prescription or illegal backyard drugs may be addictive and destroy freedom, so, in varying degrees, may the issues under discussion.

Were the individuals who logged onto the *Quills* site before the sex and violence was removed, exercising their freedom, or were they in thrall to forces over which they had little control? Many individuals who visit pornographic sites or buy pornographic videos are hooked on perverted sex, and not infrequently, on violence. Is it a matter of indiffer-

ence that some other individuals, for gain, demand the right to feed their habit?

Women seeking abortion are under physical and moral pressure to abort the child. If they were truly free, they would be allowed to listen to arguments against aborting. It is the abortionists who restrict their freedom, not those who would offer them an alternative to killing their child. Pro-abortionists have a stake in ensuring that the usually confused mother is not harassed by 'do-gooders,' and in making sure that the abortion goes ahead.

Individuals who live in a democracy and who show concern for the

common good have as much right to be heard as pornographers and abortionists who demand allegedly inviolable rights for the individual in the name of popular secular culture. It is a violation of the democratic freedoms of parents, teachers and concerned citizens for them to be held up to ridicule, or for them to be insulted because they dare to question received wisdom that originates from the PR machines of seriously compromised and self-interested parties.



1. 'Mr Doles Entertainment Guide,' June 2, 1995.
2. 'This Week with David Brinkley,' ABC News, June 4, 1995.
3. February 5, 2001



Spiritual and temporal supremacy

WHEN Henry VIII sealed this development by formally asserting in the Act of Restraint of Appeals of 1533 that 'This Realm of England is an Empire and so has been accepted in the world' governed by one sovereign in matters both spiritual and temporal, only a handful of people had retained the conviction or clarity of mind to stand against the triumph of the nation-state over the church which had fostered it. Thomas More, lawyer, civil servant and philosopher, went to his death precisely because he could not accept the unlimited claims of national identity: England cannot legislate against the world – 'For this one kingdom I have all other Christian realms.' Western medieval Christendom had both encouraged the nation and restrained it. From now on, for England at least, the national principle alone would reign supreme.

– Adrian Hastings, *The Construction of Nationhood*. Cambridge University Press, 1997.



How the Rosary guided a son to his mother

By PAUL ISCHLER, OMI

DURING the years after World War II, bricklayers and labourers worked for the same contractor in what was then West Germany. They knew each other only by name and where they lived, except for one who said he came from Silesia, a land situated in the southeastern corner of Germany. Before the war, one part of Silesia belonged to Germany, the other to Poland. Now it is all part of Poland.

One lunch hour, a young labourer swung a rosary around and asked, 'Hey, I found this thing on the ground next to the ladder. It doesn't belong to any of you, does it?' The man from Silesia stood up. 'Yes, it's mine.' All laughed, but he continued, 'Don't laugh. It means a lot to me.'

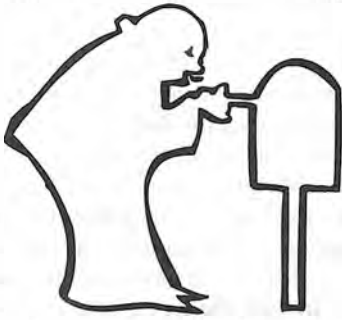
'During the war I was on the Russian front. I was captured, and sent to a camp in Siberia. When you live in Siberia's bitter winter cold and sweltering hot summer with mosquitoes carrying typhoid or other diseases, and when you see dying men who were once stronger and healthier than you, you realise there is no one who can help you but God. Then you start praying, and keep on praying. I'm not ashamed to admit I believe in God. I say the Rosary every day. And there is another reason: After seven years in Siberia, I and some other survivors were sent home to Germany through the efforts of our Chancellor, Konrad Adenauer. I returned to Silesia. Former neighbours of my family told me that my father had died, my mother was expelled to West Germany, and my brothers and sisters who had been sent to Siberia had all died. The Red Cross told me that the train carrying my mother unloaded refugees in this region. So I came here. Whenever I had time I would go from village to village looking for her. One Sunday evening as I approached a village, I saw a procession of pilgrims leaving the church and boarding the train. I went into the church. The organ was silent and the bells had stopped ringing. Darkness and peace enveloped me. I prayed that I would find my mother. When I got up to leave, I stepped on something. It was a Rosary. My mother's rosary. I recognized it, because as a boy I had cut my initials on the crucifix with my pocketknife.

'I realised that my mother had been here with the other pilgrims. I hurried to the railroad station where the stationmaster told me that if I waited fifteen minutes I could board a train that would take me to where the pilgrims were. When I got there I went to the police to get my mother's address. I explained the circumstances and the police took me to a house, knocked on the door, and called out, 'Police! Don't be afraid. Open the door! We have a pleasant surprise for you!' My mother opened the door. It was 12:30 a.m. Mother and I embraced.'

The man was silent a moment before he continued. 'Please give me the Rosary. It is a reminder of all the wonderful ways God helps us.' The men were quiet. Some wiped away tears. The labourer who found the Rosary handed it over respectfully. From that day on, they weren't mere acquaintances, they were friends.

- Translated from the German. Reprinted with permission from *Echo from Africa and Other Continents*, Jan-Feb 2001.

letters



Cricketing Clerics

In response to your correspondent, Terry Turner [*Annals* 9/10/2000] re 'Cricketing Clerics'.

I can shed some light on the Rev. Gerard Patrick (Paddy) Youll. He was a giant of a man (not in stature) and his life story would make a great article for any magazine.

He was born in Wallsend 9/10/1896; ordained Maitland 1/1/1920; Rector of Stockton Parish 1928 - 1939; AIF Chaplain (Number NX24) 1939 - 1943; Parish Priest East Maitland 1943 - 1969; died Mater Hospital, Waratah 15/1/1969; interred Catholic Cemetery, Sandgate.

I am in my mid-fifties and Paddy Youll was PP when I was a lad at East Maitland. Most of the stories that circulate about Rev. Paddy are of a humourous nature, however, they often have a sting in the tail. Above all he was a great man of God, devoted to the Blessed Virgin Mary, who just happened to like a drink, a bet, a game of cards, etc.

Parishioners arriving late for Mass were often greeted with 'If it had of been a train, you just missed it!' Likewise during the prayers for the conversion of Russia he often faced the congregation and if anyone dared leave early he would call out 'Tell us where the fire is and we'll all go.'

I have little knowledge of his military career except he was idolized by the local RSL. He was always in great demand for Anzac Day services and funerals, etc. His cruets were in a special box with his military number NX24 carved into the lid. A gift from his men I believe. It was stated that he was one of the last out of Crete, refusing to leave until he had buried the dead.

As young lads it was always a major achievement to gain entry into

the very exclusive RSL Club due to the highly vigilant doorman checking details such as age, etc. One Friday having successfully convinced the slightly inebriated doorman that we were all over 21 we headed for the pool room for a game of snooker only to be confronted by Paddy, billiard cue in one hand and whiskey in the other, who promptly told us all to get home to our respective mothers.

Upon Bishop Gleeson's instruction that priests were to refrain from being seen at venues such as hotels, the football, racetracks, etc, Father Paddy organized to have himself appointed as official chaplain to the racing fraternity and successfully sought a dispensation from the Bishop's instruction.

He was often seen at the saleyards buying and selling cattle on behalf of relatives who lived further up the valley.

Father Harold Campbell, a diocesan historian, was his curate for several years and he now lives at Mount Carmel Retirement Village, Dwyer St.,

Campbells Hill. 2320. I am sure he would be able to recall some stories about Father Paddy as well.

I hope this helps your correspondent, Terry.

East Maitland NSW 2323

PHILIP J. HEALEY

Wonderful

Please find enclosed a cheque for a further 12 months subscription and a small donation to such a wonderful Catholic Magazine.

Southport Qld 4215

MOIRA BLAU

Fresh Air

Apologies for the lateness of this renewal. I must have missed the first one.

Many thanks for an excellent journal which provides us with such positive support in the faith and traditions of our church and of the Holy Father.

In a world that is so negative and even hostile towards God and the Church, the *Annals* is like a breath of fresh air.

Ashwood Vic. 3147

MADGE FAHY

SEVENTEEN HUNDRED YEARS OF CHRISTIANITY IN ARMENIA 301-2001 AD

To celebrate the baptism of King Tiridates III and his court in the Euphrates River by St Gregory the Illuminator in 301 AD, Australia's Armenian Catholics have had a special candle made. It is available for \$10 [includes postage anywhere in Australia] from Fr Anton Totonjian: 0427 404 952, PO Box 682 Baulkham Hills 2153, stg@nareg.com.au

A unique concert featuring six young virtuosos - violinists, cellists and flautists [aged from 9 to 14] from Yerevan and Gumri in Armenia, who have performed throughout Europe and the USA has been arranged for Saturday March 10 at 7 p.m. in Willoughby Town Hall, Victoria Avenue Chatswood, NSW. Tickets \$20 adults and \$15 pensioners and students. Not to be missed. Tickets: contact Fr Totonjian on 0427 404 952.

A special performance during school hours is planned for March 13. Interested schools should contact Father Totonjian on 0427 404 952 for details.



Support

Many of the letters to you, published in the *Annals*, speak of an appreciation for your beautiful publication.

We Catholics, who have this precious gift our faith, owe so much to the good people who have influenced our lives in the faith. First and foremost our parents, especially our mothers. The parish priest in our little country town Condoblin, Rev. Father James O'Brien.

The wonderful nuns, the Sisters of Mercy, of the Wilcannia and Forbes Diocese, who encouraged our love of the Blessed Sacrament by allowing the school children help them arrange the flowers on the altar of Repose every Easter and the many little ways they had of including us in loving the 'hidden Jesus'. The list of good people is endless, I think of Miss Teresa Carlon of the famous Irish pioneering family whose descendants still live in Megalong Valley and the O'Reilly's of Lamington National Park, Queensland.

Your *Annals* continues the support given to us as children and which we dearly need.

Blaxland NSW 2774

RITA BLACKSTOCK

[The following letter has been held over for some months because of its length. Correspondence on the Enquiry on Women has now closed. Ed.]

Not Professional

The Bishops' social justice statement announced their intention to set up an Office for Australian Catholic Women, to perpetuate the enquiry on women in the Church which has been going on for the past few years.

That enquiry produced the report *Woman and Man*. Of that report, the Bishops say: 'We acknowledge that not all women believe their views are adequately represented in the report', but they go on to say: 'We nevertheless would wish to respond as well as we can to those women whose views are reported'.

Why? If *Woman and Man* is a one-sided and unrepresentative report, reflecting the opinions of only one group of women – those who agree with the authors – why should the Bishops pay any attention to it and ignore the opinions of all other women?

The Bishops say that the 'research' reported in *Woman and Man* was 'professionally conducted'. It was not. Anyone who has waded through *Woman and Man* (probably few people have) will have seen that it consistently minimises support for opinions different from those of the authors of the report, dismissing them as 'a minority', etc. But despite repeated requests that the authors publish the *numbers* of women who supported or opposed 'inclusive language', women's ordination, etc. in the public hearings and written submissions, these figures have never been revealed by the authors. We have no way of knowing, from *Woman and Man*, how many people were for or against anything.

This is not what most people understand by research 'professionally conducted'.

The Bishops' statement makes clear that the 'research' which will be



Ineradicable differences?

THE ineradicable differences between the sexes are not merely physical. 'Men are more aggressive than women,' James Q. Wilson writes. 'Though child-rearing practices may intensify or moderate this difference, the difference will persist and almost surely rests on biological factors. In every known society, men are more likely than women to play roughly, drive recklessly, fight physically, and assault ruthlessly, and these differences appear early in life . . . As they grow up, men are much more likely than women to cause trouble in school, to be alcoholics or drug addicts, and to commit crimes.'

— Judge Robert H. Bork, *Slouching towards Gomorrah*, Regan Books, 1996.

conducted by the new Office for Australian Catholic Women will be the same kind of non-research, the same kind of unbalanced opinion-promotion as *Woman and Man*. The related Commission for Australian Catholic Women will even include 'members with experience and knowledge' of the *Woman and Man* 'research' project. Not much danger of new ideas here!

There is to be 'research' on 'inclusive language' at Mass, though the Catholic Church Life Survey showed that only 3% of women are bothered by this obsession of the malcontents. And must we now brace ourselves for another round of restless, amateurish, illiterate tinkering with the Mass?

There is to be 'research' on married clergy and women deacons. What form could this research take? And what could be the point of such 'research', if not to promote unfounded expectations, and then discontent when those expectations are disappointed?

The enquiry on women in the Church was a response by the Bishops to a small but influential group of malcontents, many of them nuns. The enquiry absorbed far more time and money than it was worth, and produced, in *Woman and Man*, a grumpy and unrepresentative summary of clerico-feminist obsessions. That should have been the end of it. Instead, the Bishops have again given in to the same old whingers, agreeing to set up, at considerable expense, a new Whingeing Office, which, once set up, will never be abolished, since, if it were ever to stop digging up and publicising grievances, it would have no reason to exist.

Was there not a single Bishop who was prepared to dissent from this silly plan?

Claremont WA 6010

DR TED WATT

Catholic Heritage

My apologies for late payment, there is no way I would let my subscription lapse. I look forward to each issue of *Annals*, and may I join the great numbers of readers who congratulate you on your consistent efforts at keeping us all informed of the many interesting and important topics we need to constantly review and be reminded of, which form the basis of our Catholic heritage.

Congratulations also on your great editorials, I really enjoy the 'both barrels' approach you employ when you need to make your point against detractors, either of some previous information you have provided, or of the basics of our Faith. Our community and our country are sorely in need of lots more no-nonsense confrontation in debates on the essence of our daily lives. Keep up your great work, and thanks again for the obviously major efforts which go into the overall production of *Annals Australasia*.

Engadine NSW 2233

FG BURGESS

Terrific

Please find enclosed our subscription form for the next twelve months of your terrific magazine.

Epping NSW 2121

L & R AICKEN

Pass it on

We enjoy reading *Annals* and when we have finished pass it on to friends who enjoy it immensely.

San Marcos, CA, USA

KATHLEEN STEMPEL

MMs and PETs

We hear much about Irish influence in Australian culture, but two strands of this inheritance are seldom commented on.

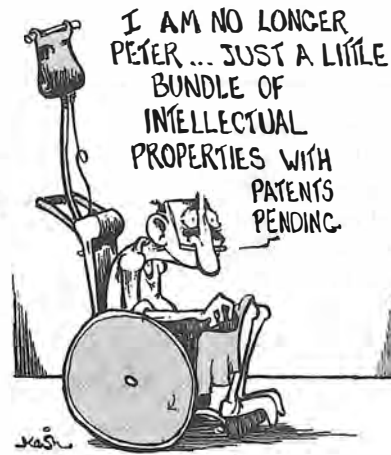
In Ireland, there were the *Castle Catholics*, who were ever-ready to tell their rulers whatever they wanted to hear. We in Australia have the *Media Micks* or MMs. Anytime they are needed, some priest, nun or 'leading Catholic' will be on radio, TV or in print, to tell the world what is wrong with the Church or the Pope.

Sometimes what they say may well be so, but often or not it is tailored to whatever anti-Catholic view the presenter or editor wants. Just as in the middle ages Irish poets gave praise-poetry to their rulers. They told the Irish Chief that the Normans would be swept back into the sea, but, to the Anglo-Normans, they sang of times to come when the Irish Kings and Chiefs would be crushed, and the invaders would all be within the circle of the sea.

During the Great Hunger, it must be said that many, Catholic and Protestant, landlords and others did what they could to try and feed the starving. However, a few extreme Protestant bigots would give aid, such as meat soup on Fridays only to those who would join them, thus the term *Soupers*.

While we have poor people whose first need is to survive, and there are people who are rich and powerful who put a price on their so called charity, we will have rich Christians and soupers. This is understood, but often those who join the ranks of their masters become more intolerant than those they joined.

In Australia many people for many reasons, become ex Catholics, many just drift away, find new beliefs or find that they can no longer believe. However some, like some of the soupers, find it helps to become anti-Catholic, as well, thus we have the PETs, or Professional Ex-Tykes.



Pundits, patents and patients

IN an era of unprecedented technological development, freely shared knowledge is becoming an endangered species. American politicians and pundits still spout platitudes about how public education and public access to information are the bedrock of a democratic society. But reality belies the rhetoric. These days, hospitals are battling with investigators over the right to control new treatments, universities are hauling faculty members into court to establish who will profit from their research, and genetic engineering firms are fighting over proprietary rights to techniques and materials. And private claims to formerly public information are appearing not only in medicine and biomedical science, but also in agriculture, software development and many other fields. Even Shakespearean scholars have gone to court over who owns the rights to a particular interpretation of *Hamlet*.

— 'Patent Absurdities' by Seth Shulwau. *The Sciences*, Jan/Feb 1999.

These, like the *Media Micks* are always on call, even if they are not needed, to tell us how backward, stupid, unjust or greedy the Church is.

This, as in Ireland, we in Australia are well served. The Irish had the 'Castle Catholics' and the 'soupers'. We are blessed with the MMs and the PETs.

Bondi NSW 2026

IAN WILSON

Relics

Thank you for your great publication. I have been reading copies left at St Mary's Buderim by one of your subscribers and have missed several issues so I decided that I had better get my own copy.

I have been following the series 'Whatever Happened' with extreme interest having visited the sites in Rome where the relics of the True Cross, Nails and Flagellation Pillar are venerated. Unfortunately I have only read 1, 3, 4 and 7 in the series. I wonder if with my subscription you could provide me with photocopies of the articles that I have missed.

Buderim Qld 4556

ANDREW WALL

Too good to miss

Annals is too good a publication to miss and I do look forward to receiving it each month and reading it from cover to cover.

Good luck in 2001 and keep the excellent work going.

Berala NSW 2141

MRS TF FORBES

Giving without Question?

There are poor people who do not deserve material assistance. Those who provide assistance without judging whether the recipient deserves it are living among the fairies. Cliff Baxter's friend (*Letters* 7/2000) who gives without question needs a dose of common-sense.

I am a member of Australia's largest charitable organisation, frequently giving assistance to those who claim to be poor. I give five cases and the decision I made.

1. A woman asked for \$300 in cash so that she could have an abortion. I refused.
2. A woman asked for food for herself and her son, a tertiary student. I asked how much he contributed to

the household from his student allowance. She said, 'He can't contribute because he is saving to buy a car'. I pointed out that she was really asking my organisation to pay for her son's car. I refused.

3. A man asked for food. He said that after he had paid \$70 a week for cigarettes, he had not enough money for food. I advised him to cut his smoking by half, because I was not in the business of supplying his habit.
4. A man aged 18 reported that he was about to be rendered homeless. He frankly admitted he refused to pay the rent because he needed the money so that he could spend most of the day smoking marijuana. I refused assistance.
5. A man said all his money had been stolen. He admitted he had given his PIN number to a friend who emptied the bank account. I said, 'This is a great opportunity to learn something'.

I never refuse those who are mentally ill. They lack the capacity to be responsible. They are among the most deserving poor.

Cliff Baxter says we do not talk of the 'deserving or the undeserving rich'. Deserving of what? - material assistance? Of course we do not talk such nonsense.

Gosford NSW 2250

FRANK MOBBS

High Standard

I pray that *Annals* continues to maintain the present high standard.

Turrumurra NSW 2074

L DURRANT

King Ned's Helmet

Reference King Ned [*Annals* 8/2000] and his helmet.

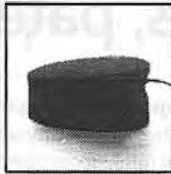
In about 1968 I was President of Jerilderie Shire in southern NSW when Council decided to apply to the appropriate authority for an approved Coat-of-Arms.

A Local Government Coat-of-Arms has in it, among other things, a Local Government helmet.

The Shire Clerk of that time, Mr I C Gilbert BEM, asked that Ned Kelly's helmet be adopted.

Their Lordships declined the offer saying that Ned's helmet was not heraldic. Instead they suggested

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another heraldic helmet which they said resembled Ned's helmet and we went along with it.

After a couple of years and much to-ing and fro-ing with respect to sheep and cattle heraldic heads, Jerilderie Shire Council received from the approving authority Garter Clarenceux and Norroy and Ulster Kings of Arms an approved Coat-of-Arms dated 19 March, 1970.

Jerilderie Shire is one of the few Shires and Local Government authorities in NSW with a properly approved Coat-of-Arms.

The helmet, by a big stretch of imagination, resembles Ned Kelly's helmet.

Tocumwal NSW 2714

KEVIN O'NEILL

The best

Still the best magazine printed. Please accept the small donation added to my cheque - wish it could more.

Lots of informative reading in the last couple of issues but must say my favourite stories have been the 'what happened to ...'

In my senior years I'm still learning about our Catholic faith and you Father are the teacher through the many articles you contribute to *Annals*.

Sans Souci NSW 2219

CAROL WOODS

Wise and witty

We do enjoy and profit from the wise (and witty) content of *Annals*.

God bless you in your valuable work.

Lindisfarne Tas. 7015

MRS M PRICE

Stimulating

Thank you for yet another stimulating and informative *Annals*. I and my friends at Beauty Point always appreciate the thought and research you obviously put into your writing. We are most grateful.

Mosman NSW 2088

PAT FLYNN

[We have been able to print only a small fraction of the letters to the Editor received since Christmas. We beg our contributors and our readers to bear patiently with us. Ed.]

The Olympics come to the Eveleigh Railway Workshops

ON A DIFFERENT TRACK

The brilliance of our Olympic volunteers remains incandescent long after their work finished last year. Before Sydney's Games commenced last September, TONY MURPHY visited the accreditation centre located in former railway workshops in Redfern, where most volunteers were outfitted.



ONE DAY last August, I arrived at Redfern Rail Station – just outside Sydney's city centre – walked along Platform 10, out through the south-western corner, past the Water Tower and followed bright yellow UDAC signs to the Sydney 2000 Olympic and Paralympic Games Uniform Distribution and Accreditation Centre at Eveleigh. This was where volunteers and other officials were outfitted and accredited for the Games.

I walked past a dozen vast brick workshops where powerful locomotives – the pride of NSW Railways – were once built. Great beasts of glistening black iron, equipped for work and branded with gleaming brass numbers, spluttered and hissed into life here to whistle the song of Steam across the countryside.

I sensed the ghosts of a Dickensian age as I moved through huge sheds where, from 1887, Eveleigh was home to the *dirty* trades of Foundry and Blacksmith, where boys were thrust into manhood before their time. No childhood as we know it; work and noise and blistering molten steel. Danger and sweat. Six days a week. No aircon. Want some hot water to wash off the day's grime? Sure – the apprentice will heat it with a red-hot rivet dropped into your basin of water. Had WorkCover been around it would have had a blitzkrieg. Romantic notions of steam trains take on a different hue.

New-fangled electricity saw a change of focus for these workshops, gradual winding down and eventually, almost 100 years later, NSW State Rail vacated them completely. These one-time purgatories have been transformed.

At Eveleigh, the industrial age has surrendered to the technological. The buildings have been converted and reborn with stylish apartment and loft-like architectural design to serve as a base for the National Innovation Centre, and as inventive premises of, among others, Fuji-Xerox, Elcom, Cances ATP, Cyber Sydney, NSW University Graduate School of Engineering and TAFE.

In almost every sense, the finesse of tensile titanium has outsmarted the brute-force of yester-year's obdurate compression. And the satanic cacophony that once pounded and echoed through the hellish furnaces of these ancient manufactories is replaced by cool celestial melodies of the Sydney Conservatorium of Music temporarily relocated here. A small part of Eveleigh has also become a rail museum and a small hobbyist blacksmith school.

As I approached the far boundary of old Eveleigh there was the welcoming white marquee entrance of the UDAC. I passed through to the enormity of an aircraft hanger-like building (but several times the size) reinforced with massive silver pillars of steel. The site of 8,500 square metres was developed in close consultation with Olympic and Paralympic Games sponsors. Chairs by the hundreds, row after row.

Scores upon scores of flashing and blinking computers (more than 250 – supplied by IBM) and large colourful sponsors banners 8 metres long hanging from high ceilings.

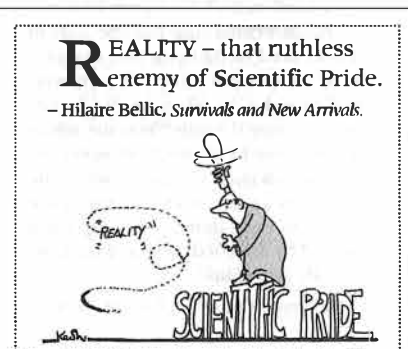
Inside, across the huge cement floor, blue and green lines directed the throng, some running parallel with old rail lines but with coded meaning: uniform fitting, photography, identity passes and so on.

The following facts and figures may be of interest:

- This was the largest single clothing distribution project in Australia's history;
- Of the total 150,000 Olympic workforce, the UDAC outfitted about 80,000 people by August in their free Games uniform;
- Bonds produced about 1.1 million items of clothing for the Games workforce. This included 198,310 polo shirts, 90,143 casual jackets, 157,980 pairs of casual pants, 142,000 pairs of socks, 20,000 pairs of shorts and 35,000 T-shirts;
- Nike produced 56,000 hats;
- Woolmark supplied the wool for 6,250 blazers for Games judges and officials.

Also of note was the different 'look' of office furniture – desks and shelving made from reconstituted cardboard, which looked very smart; and the use of environmentally friendly 'stand-alone' natural gas cylinder heaters.

Walking away I mused that the past – however grim was the reality of life in these former workshops – only preceded the present; it did not determine it. Thankfully.

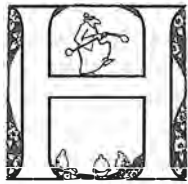


TONY MURPHY is a cartoonist, caricaturist and copy writer who is presently putting together a children's animation series to be totally produced in Australia for the world's kids. He can be reached on murtoon@tig.com.au

Sadism and sentimentality in Ancient Rome

SAINT SEBASTIAN, THE COBBLER'S CROW AND *DIVUS REDICULUS*

By PAUL STENHOUSE, MSC, PhD



HANNIBAL the Carthaginian general who almost captured Rome after bringing an enormous army, including elephants, across the alps, halted his troops and pulled back in 216 BC at a spot on the Via Appia near what is today called the *Porta San Sebastiano* or the Gate of Saint Sebastian. It is said that the Romans mocked the great general from the ramparts, saying that the piece of ground where his army stood was fetching a high price in the Roman Forum.¹

Not far from where Hannibal's army camped, just a little further along the road, the Basilica of Saint Sebastian was to be built in 367 AD, over the Catacomb named after the young martyr because he was buried in it. Sebastian, a young Gaul from Narbonne, was a Christian soldier under Diocletian, martyred for his faith by being tied to a stake and shot to death with arrows.

A pagan temple had been erected on the spot where Hannibal stopped on the Via Appia, to commemorate the event. The temple was dedicated to *Divus Rediculus* the god of 'Return' – presumably referring to the 'return home' by Hannibal who was recalled to Carthage in 203 BC to face, and be defeated by, the army of the Roman general Scipio.

Worth crowing about?

This spot, according to the Roman historian Pliny,² was also to be the site of a curious saga involving a talking crow and an enraged cobbler.

There was a shoemaker in the Roman Forum who had a pet crow who was a great favourite with the

Romans, especially the younger ones, to whom it would bid 'good day' as they passed.



A creditable suit

MUSEUMS and art galleries are a rich source of credits. There is no harm in J. Smith FRS linking his name to a collection of Roman earpicks, if that is the sort of immortality he seeks. Many will be gratified, and their appreciation will be increased, by the knowledge that such-and-such an exhibit was lent by a member of the Royal Family. But odd things are beginning to happen in the glass show-cases. The Costume Museum in the Bath Assembly Rooms now has a trendy male model with the inscription '1971 Suit by Blades. Gift of Mr Rupert Lycett-Green. Model of the Earl of Lichfield by Adel Rootstein.' How did all this come about? Was the suit specially made for the Earl of Lichfield, or is it a second-hand suit of Mr Lycett-Green's? How much persuading did the Earl of Lichfield need to figure in this charade? Was Mr Rootstein specially commissioned to make the effigy, or did he just happen to have it handy? Was the whole plot conceived by Blades? Whatever the facts, connoisseurs of credits will note that here is an acknowledgment to the maker of an earl's dummy wearing a suit presented by somebody else and made by somebody else again.

— ES Turner, *The Listener*, June 28, 1970.

The crow eventually became a well-known figure in the Forum, sitting on its perch and chatting with the passers by. One day it pecked at some new leather belonging to one of its owner's rivals, and spoiled it, and the angry cobbler killed it with his hammer.

The citizens were so outraged by this that they attacked the cobbler, and killed him, and a public funeral was decreed for the dead bird. The crow was carried to the grave on the right hand side of the Via Appia next to the second milestone, in the field named after the *Divus Rediculus*.³ The bird was placed on a bier adorned with crowns of honour, preceded by pipers and carried by two Nubians out of deference to his colour.

It is not unusual to hear the temple of the *Divus Rediculus* called the temple of the *Divus Ridiculus*, as if the word means 'laughable' [ridere] instead of 'return' [redire].

Sadism and sentimentality

Yet there is nothing laughable about a whimsy that could care about a talking crow and yet cruelly shoot to death a young soldier just because he was a Christian as the martyrdom of Saint Sebastian shows.

Sadism went side by side with sentimentality in the Rome of the Caesars. Seneca relates of Caligula that once when walking by torchlight near the Vatican he amused himself by having some Roman Senators and high-born Roman ladies slaughtered.

Caligula when twenty-five, adopted his seventeen-year-old cousin Tiberius, and the sole remaining heir, as his son. He gave



flowers on the heads of his guests that some of them died – unable to escape the suffocating atmosphere of this avalanche of flowers.

He would let leopards, lions and bears loose among his drunken friends, extinguish the lights and lock the doors. The animals were harmless, their teeth and claws had been removed, but the drunken guests didn't know that. Many of them died of fright.

When the Roman satirist Juvenal lamented 'judgement in the courts favours the crows and frowns on the doves' he may not have had the crow of our story in mind. He was

deploring the glaring injustices in Rome in the late-first and middle-second century AD. But his metaphor becomes doubly credible when we compare how the cobbler's crow was treated, with the treatment meted out to St Sebastian.

Hannibal, brilliant general that he was, did well to turn back.



1. See Lampriere, *J A Classical Dictionary*, London 1855. p.53.
2. *Natural History*, lib.x, 60.
3. ...ad rogiim usque, qui constructus dextra Viae Appiae ad secundum lapidem in campo Radicali appellato'.
4. Satire ii, 63: ['Dat veniam corvis, vexat censura columbas'].

him the title 'Prince of Youth' and then ordered him to kill himself.

Claudius on one occasion had thirty-five senators and more than 300 Roman knights put to death. Being absent-minded he forgot that he had executed them, and grumbled when, after inviting some of the dead men to dinner, they didn't turn up.

Domitian who was as cruel as Caligula, is said to have been a fine archer. He used to shoot poisoned arrows between the outstretched fingers of young slaves without hitting them. He said once 'the sad thing about emperors is that if they discover a conspiracy no one believes them until they are murdered'. He was murdered in his bedroom by a messenger with a concealed dagger hidden under a bandage on his arm.

When Nero built his circus between the Vatican and Janiculum hills he would nail Christians to crosses there, sew them into the skins of animals and let dogs tear them to pieces, or cover them in pitch and set them alight to act as torches for his evening entertainment.

Nero ordered a man called Thrasea to commit suicide 'because he had an expression like a cross school-master'.

Heliogabulus, who was only 18 when he was killed by his soldiers, used to have vast mounds of roses, lilies, violets and hyacinths strewn around his banqueting halls, and would happily wade through oceans of blossoms. He installed a moveable ceiling in his dining room and tipped such quantities of violets and other

More and more, or better and better

PROGRESS. The word 'progress' is a modern word. It was not used in the ancient and medieval world. But what the word signifies did have some bearing on the philosophy of history that developed in antiquity and in the Middle Ages.

In the ancient world, one view of the pattern of human history was that it was cyclical – an everlastingly recurrent pattern of growth and decline.

Another ancient view was that the golden age of mankind was in the far distant past. Since then there has been a steady decline.

In his *City of God*, Augustine tells us that divine providence operates in the opposite direction. Man's relation to God will have a brighter future.

For both Aristotle and Aquinas, no individual thinker contributes to

improvements in thought – improvements in science and philosophy. By the collaboration of many, advances are made.

With regard to progress itself, as that is discussed in modern times, certain questions should be in everyone's mind. One is the question of whether there is any progress

in human nature – whether in the course of historical time, human beings are improved in the traits that all human beings, as members of the same species, share.

Another basic question is whether such progress

as has been achieved is entirely in human institutions. If so, the next question to be considered is whether this institutional progress is quantitative or meliorative – whether the institutional improvements are in the direction of more and more or in the direction of better and better.



THOUGHT FROM THE LITURGY OF THE DAY



MARCH

1 Thursday *Lent* Deut 30:19
Choose life that you may live,
loving the Lord, your God.

2 Friday *Lent* Psalm 51:19
A humbled, contrite heart, O
Lord, you will not spurn.

3 Saturday *Lent* Psalm 86:11
Show me, Lord, your way, so
that I may walk in your truth.

4 Sunday *Lent Week 1* Mat 4:4
To live on every word that
comes from the Lord.

5 Mon *Lent Week 1* Psalm 19:8
The precepts of the Lord
gladden the heart.

6 Tues *Lent Week 1* Psalm 34:5
Look to the Lord and be
radiant.

7 Wed *Lent Week 1* Psalm 51:10
A pure heart create for me, O
God, put a steadfast spirit
within me.

8 Thurs *Lent Week 1* Esther 4:17
Come to my help, O Lord, for I
am alone and have no one but
you.

9 Fri *Lent Week 1* Psalm 130:6
My soul is waiting for you, O
Lord, more than watchman for
daybreak.

10 Sat *Lent Week 1* Luke 8:15
Blessed are you who take my
word to your heart and yield a
harvest.

11 Sun *Lent Week 2* Psalm 27:8
Of you my heart has spoken:
seek his face.

12 Mon *Lent Week 2* Lk 6:36
Be compassionate as your
Father is compassionate.

13 Tue *Lent Week 2* Isaiah 1:16
Cease doing evil and learn to
do good.

14 Wed *Lent Week 2* Ps. 31:17
Save me in your love, O Lord.

15 Thurs *Lent Week 2* Lk 15:18
I will leave this place and go to
my Father.

16 Fri *Lent Week 2* Mat 21:43
The kingdom of God will be
given to a people who will
produce its fruit.

17 Sat *Patrick* Acts 13:46
I have made you a light to the
nations, so that my salvation
may reach to the ends of the
earth.

18 Sun *Lent Week 3* Ps. 103:11
As the heavens are high above
the earth, so strong is his love
for those who revere him.

19 Monday *Joseph* Psalm 89:1
I will sing forever of your love,
O Lord, and always proclaim
your truth.

20 Tue *Lent Week 3* Daniel 3:42
Treat us gentle, O God, for you
are gentle and very merciful.

Thoughts compiled by Father Michael
Fallon, MSC.

21 Wed *Lent Week 3* Deut 4:9
Do not let what you have seen
slip from your heart. Tell it to
your children and to their
children.

22 Thu *Lent Week 3* Psalm 95:8
O that today you would listen
to his voice. Do not harden
your heart.

23 Fri *Lent Week 3* Psalm 81:6
A voice I did not know said to
me: 'you called in distress and
I saved you'.

24 Sat *Lent Week 3* Hosea 6:4
Your love is like a morning
cloud, like the dew that
quickly disappears.

25 Sun *Lent Week 4* Luke 15:31
My child, you are with me
always and all I have is yours.

26 Mon *Annunciation* Jn 1:14 1
The Word was made flesh and
pitched his tent among us.

27 Tue *Lent Week 4* Psalm 46:1
God is a refuge for us, a helper
close at hand in time of
distress.

28 Wed *Lent Wk 4* Isaiah 49:15
Even if a mother were to forget
the child at her breast, I will
not forget you.

29 Thur *Lent Week 4* Ps 106:21
The forgot the God who was
their Saviour.

30 Fri *Lent Week 4* Psalm 34:18
The Lord is close to the broken
hearted, to those whose spirit
is crushed.

31 Sat *Lent Week 4* Psalm 7:9
Make the just stand firm, you
who test mind and heart, O just
God.

CHALLENGES FOR CHRISTIAN WITNESS IN AMERICA

The dichotomy between what people say they believe, and the way they act is analysed by MARY ANN GLENDON. She identifies a populist ploy that has led to what she calls 'moral anaesthesia' on the part of simple people who are bamboozled by slogans.



HAVE been asked to offer some comments regarding the Challenges to Christian Witness in North America, with particular reference to the role of the United States in the ambiguous process known as globalisation, globalisation of culture and globalisation of the economy.

Fortunately, the recent Synod on the Church in America provides us with a concise starting point for reflection: The main challenge is a set of habits and beliefs that are so deeply entrenched that they amount to a 'culture.' The Holy Father calls it 'the culture of death' and warns us that it is spreading with alarming speed. Indeed, it seems to be borne along on the currents of the phenomena known as globalisation.

The main elements of the culture of death are easy to enumerate (materialism, consumerism, secularism, relativism and hyper-individualism), but if one is actually immersed in such a culture, it's not always easy to recognise the forms they assume. Often it is the poet or the novelist who sees more deeply than the rest of us and who is thus able to hold up a mirror showing the true face of our society, as Charles Dickens did in 19th-century England.

Last year, the American author Tom Wolfe offered us a disconcerting portrait of the United States in his best-selling novel, 'A Man in Full.' Late 20th-century America, as Wolfe depicts it, has some uncomfortable similarities to Rome in the time of empire. The old Republic of our ancestors is fading from memory; its democratic elements are diminishing; we now have a polity that is more like an oligarchy than a republic. To be sure, this new polity has its excitement and attractions: There is far

more wealth and social mobility than in the Republic. And there is far more personal liberty, if you're not fussy about the distinction between liberty and license! Manners are relaxed; behaviour formerly frowned upon is now tolerated, marriage is easily terminated. Games and spectacles abound.

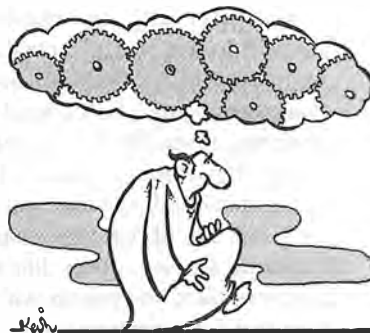
Wolfe shows us a society that has become unusually careless about its 'moral ecology' – the moral foundations upon which both a free market and a free polity depend. The fabric of customs that once helped to civilise the relations between men and women is frayed, and motherhood receives little support or respect. Children spend more waking hours with the TV, the Internet, and in government-run schools than with their mothers and fathers. Technology has, so to speak, democratised the vices, in the sense that forms of self-indulgence once known only to emperors are now available to persons of modest means.

This prosperous, permissive society is thus a new kind of mission territory, but quite different in one important respect from the pagan lands that Christians evangelised in former times. Paganism at least had the virtue that it was open to mystery and transcendence! But in the affluent countries of North America, paganism and Christianity alike are increasingly being displaced by an arid secularism, materialism and nihilism. And a society that has banished transcendence, we are beginning to realise, can be a pretty frightening place.

The bleakness of that picture, however, is relieved by the continuing presence of unusual opportunities for Christian witness. The United States still has a much larger proportion of regular churchgoers than any other country in the world. And the endless opinion polling that took place prior to the recent election revealed that the majority of voters consider the most important issues

Agnostics lose their way

IN the Victorian age the agnostics were not really agnostics. They might be better described as reverent materialists; or at any rate monists. They had at least at the back of their minds a clear and consistent concept of their rather clockwork cosmos; that is why they could not admit the smallest speck of the supernatural



into their clockwork. But today it is very hard for a scientific man to say where the supernatural ends or the natural begins, or what name should be given to either. The word agnostic has ceased to be a polite word for atheist.

– The New Jerusalem, by G.K. Chesterton, 1874-1936.

facing the country to be moral issues and that they perceive the country in a moral decline. But the same polls also show a great reluctance to embody moral positions in public policy. That strange mixture of attitudes prompted the Catholic novelist Walker Percy to begin a story this way: 'Once upon a time in the latter-day, Christ-haunted, Christ-forgetting United States ...'

That disconnect between popular sentiment and public policy led secular political analyst Francis Fukuyama to contend in *The Wall Street Journal* last week that, despite their expressed concern about moral decline, 'the greatest moral passion of contemporary Americans as demonstrated in their voting is hostility to 'moralism' in areas related to sex and family life.'

Many religious leaders see it differently. They regard the disjunction between what Americans say they believe and what emerges from the political process as evidence of a culture war: a war of ideas between different segments of a divided society holding different values – with secularism, materialism and individualism more pervasive among the elites than among the population at large.

There is a good deal of truth to the culture-war theory. The values of the men and women who hold key positions in governments, political parties, corporations, mass media, foundations and universities are often quite remote from the concerns of the average citizen. Strong ties to persons and places, religious beliefs, attachment to tradition and even to family life are apt to be less important to those at the top than to the men and women whose lives they affect. (And, incidentally, the elements of American culture that spread most rapidly around the world tend to be the values of these elites; they find a ready reception within the global technocratic class whose members often have more in common with their counterparts in other countries than with their own fellow citizens.)

But the culture-war image, which is especially popular among evangelical Christians, has its limitations. Those who see society through that lens often see themselves as engaged



Who's in charge of St Peter's Barge?

FOR none did ever more oppress,
Or persecute the Church than Bess.
This by the bishops b'ing foreseen,
Not one of them would crown her queen;

Til Oglethorp, to gain esteem,
Set on her head the diadem.
Nor was this done, 'til first she took
A solemn oath upon the book,
To keep religion as she found it,
And not by alterations wound it.

Yet she had not the least intent
To keep her oath: for all she meant
Was only to acquire a crown,
That well she knew was not her own.

Thus crown'd and seated on the throne,
The domineering Amazon
Waves round her head the sceptre royal,
As if she threatm'd to destroy all
That should oppose her in the least,
Or not comply with what she prest;
Tho' 'twere to set her up for head
Of holy Church, in Peter's stead.

Tho' I, says she, possess the crown,
And tho' the sceptre is my own,
Yet in the crown I want one gem,
More worth than all the diadem.
My father was the church's head,
So was my little brother Ned,
Who, tho' a child, yet took the charge
Of steering great St. Peter's barge.

– *England's Reformation*, by Thomas Ward
(1652-1708) – Elizabeth I betrays her
coronation oath and sets about dismantling
the Catholic Church in England.

in a struggle along the lines of the old western movies with good guys in white hats on one side and bad guys in black hats on the other.

Recently, after a number of setbacks in that struggle, notably the Supreme Court's decision holding that states cannot ban partial-birth abortions, several Protestant evangelical leaders publicly declared their belief that the bad guys had won. They announced that they would no longer be active in public life; that it was time for Christians to withdraw from that corrupt sphere.

The fact is, however, that the culture war is more complicated than a fight of white hats against black hats. The fact is that most American Christians who take their missionary vocation seriously have been operating with two theories that are on a collision course: On the one hand, we keep insisting that the majority of the American people possess more good sense and common decency than comes through in media images and public policies. But for years we have maintained that the American character is being adversely affected by the abortion mentality, the divorce mentality, sexual promiscuity and indifference to the poor. Now, it stands to reason that if the second proposition is correct, it will at some point undercut the first. The balance at some point will shift in favour of the culture of death.

I do not believe, as some of the more pessimistic evangelicals do, that we have reached the point of no return. And even if I did it wouldn't matter because our duty to witness remains the same. But I do believe that if you want to be a missionary, you have to know the territory. And if you want to know the territory, you'd better remember that there's nobody here but us Americans. And no American has been untouched by the effect of living in a society where for nearly 30 years abortion on demand has taken one and a half million lives a year.

My point here is that the culture war is real, but it's not just a struggle between different groups in society; it's a war within the mind and heart of every American. The difference between what we say we believe and what we do is the same old moral impotence of which Paul wrote to the Romans: 'I do not do the good I know.'

The wordsmiths of the culture of death have been quick to exploit that weakness of human nature. About 30 years ago, they came up with one of the most insidious slogans ever invented: 'Personally, I'm opposed to [here you may fill in the blank], but I can't impose my opinions on others.' That slogan was the moral anaesthesia they offered to people who are deeply troubled about cultural decline, but

who don't know quite how to express their views in public. The anaesthesia worked: That's why we have these strange polling results where the same people who say they consider abortion to be an unspeakable moral crime say 'yes' when they are asked whether the decision to have an abortion should be left up to the woman.

The Christian witness of countless good men and women has been silenced by that diabolically clever little phrase. Only recently have a number of Catholics, Protestants and Jews stepped forward to reclaim their right to a voice in public affairs. They point out that when we advance our religiously grounded moral viewpoints in the public square, we are not imposing anything on anyone. We are pro-posing. That's what citizens do in a democracy: We propose, we give reasons. It's a very strange doctrine that would only silence culturally conservative viewpoints. But the anaesthesia was very effective. And of course the slogan was a bonanza for cowardly and unprincipled politicians.

When all is said and done, the challenge for Christian witness today is the same as it was when Our Lord told us 2,000 years ago that we must be the leaven in the loaf, the salt of the earth, and lights upon a hill. Though it is still a daunting challenge, at least it's a familiar one – part of our regular job, so to speak. That should be encouraging. It's also encouraging to know that great works can grow from little seeds. As St. Paul told the Corinthians: 'Do you not know that a little yeast has its effect all through the dough?' (1 Corinthians 5:6)

So, some of you may be wondering, what's the matter with American Catholics? After all, 62.4 million in the United States is a lot of yeast. But, as you may recall, St. Paul had some other things to say about yeast. Just as good yeast spreads all through the dough, so can bad yeast. He told the Corinthians, a prosperous, self-satisfied, commercial people, that they had to get rid of the bad yeast, and that it was in themselves, as well as in their community (5:7). To us Christians living in North



No need to worship idols

MAN can protect himself from the consequences of his own madness only by creating a sane society which conforms with the needs of man, needs which are rooted in the very conditions of his existence. A society in which man relates to man lovingly, in which he is rooted in bonds of brotherliness and solidarity, rather than in the ties of blood and soil; a society which gives him the possibility of transcending nature by creating rather than by destroying, in which everyone gains a sense of self by experiencing himself as the subject of his powers rather than by conformity, in which a system of orientation and devotion exists without man's needing to distort reality and to worship idols.

– Erich Fromm, *The Sane Society*, 1968 edition.

America, he would surely say what he said to the Corinthians: 'Do not conform yourselves to the spirit of the age.' In other words, when you're trying to transform the culture, make sure that the culture is not transforming you!

Having painted a rather sombre picture, I want to conclude by saying why I remain confident that with prayer, witness and determination we can overcome these obstacles. Our Catholic social and moral teaching corresponds to all that is best in American traditions. Our social teaching gives us a vision of a society that welcomes the stranger, that supports and honours motherhood, that lends a hand to the needy, that honours families engaged in the task of raising children because it knows that good parents are not just doing something for themselves but for all of us when they raise their children well. Our moral teaching resonates

with the cherished American belief in the possibility of a fresh start.

We believe that there is no sin that can't be forgiven if one faces up to it, sincerely repents, makes amends, and reforms one's life.

The challenge for Christian witness is first, to live those teachings by example, and second, to find ways suited for our times and places to articulate our Catholic vision in its fullness. We have to find and build on what is true and good in the culture, and denounce and reject what is false and harmful. That is what Christians have always tried to do, in and out of season, in good times and bad. That is what Christians will do in North America regardless of what history has in store for that continent.



MARY ANN GLENDON is Learned Hand Professor of Law at Harvard Law School. The National Law Journal named her one of the 'Fifty most influential women lawyers in America' in 1998.



(Source: CRTN Information Service, edited by Catherine Ancion for Aid to the Church in Need, Königstein, Germany.)

Brazilian youth pastoral intends to help East Timor

The Brazilian Episcopal Conference's Youth Pastoral, which has been nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize this year, will send volunteers to help the afflicted population of East Timor. 'The country is devastated, there are no roads, schools, or means of communication', Zilda Arns, coordinator of the Youth Pastoral and a member of UNICEF told Brazilian journalists. 'The population is undernourished and will remain that way for at least two generations'. Arns announced that her organization would send three teams, which would start working in East Timor within the next three months. The Brazilian Youth Pastoral numbers a total of 152,000 volunteers in 3,200 Brazilian localities.

Cardinal Nguyen Van Thuan addresses business leaders

At a conference in Rome on the future of the workplace, attended by major business personalities including Bill Gates, Archbishop Francois- Xavier Nguyen Van Thuan, President of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, stressed that the economy should remain respectful of human dignity. 'Our social and economic institutions cannot be submitted to an exaggerated and savage competition. No market system that ignores the dignity and the needs of man will be able to survive,' said Archbishop Van Thuan, who was made a cardinal in February. Mentioning the many abuses in the workplace, particularly against migrant workers, women and children, Archbishop Van Thuan

deplored the fact that current economic systems 'do not value the potential and the needs of persons.' Criticizing the 'weak political will' to confront problems like exploitation, marginalization and unemployment, Archbishop Van Thuan, expressed his concern with the 'diminution' of the role played by trade unions, 'to which the Church has always attached great importance.'

Hong Kong Legion of Mary to start new Rosary campaign after 150,000 prayers in 2000

After completing a rosary campaign in 2000, which led to 149,929 prayers for vocations and the Catholic missions in China, the Hong Kong Legion of Mary has announced that it would launch a new rosary chain this year. Prayer intentions would be determined this month, Father Lok Hung-cheong, spiritual director of the Legion's Hong Kong Comitium told UCA News. The Legion of Mary, which is an international lay missionary organization, headquartered in Dublin, was introduced to China in the 1930s and '40s

by an Irish missionary, Columban Father Aedan McGrath. Jailed in 1951-1954 by the Chinese government, Father McGrath used 13 months in isolation to prepare talks for the Legionaries in French and Latin. The Legionaries of Mary were severely persecuted in China. Their organization was considered 'counter-revolutionary and reactionary' and 'an agent of foreign imperialism.' Currently, the Legion of Mary in Hong Kong has 158 praesidia (chapters), numbering 1,789 Catholics.

Sri Lanka bishops deny reports of church burnings by Buddhists

The Catholic bishops of Sri Lanka have denied Internet reports that the country's Buddhist community has burned 34 churches and persecuted local Catholics during the past two years. 'No such persecution has been unleashed against the Catholic community,' said a statement of the Sri Lankan bishops. Bishop Malcolm Ranjith of Ratnapura, secretary-general of the bishops' conference, admitted that there had been some minor disagreements between Catholics and Buddhists on the island, but that this was part of any healthy relationship between communities.

House of Lords votes in favour of cloning for medical research

Despite repeated warnings from religious leaders of all faiths, a large majority of the British House of Lords have voted in favor of human cloning for medical research. During the debates preceding the vote, Lord David Alton, a Catholic and a strong opponent of the new legislation, warned against reducing the human embryo to 'another accessory to be created, bartered, frozen, or destroyed.' He also questioned the usefulness of human clones in the search for cures to genetic diseases. 'Since 1990, when miracle cures were promised for 4,000 inherited diseases, between 300,000 and half a million human embryos have been destroyed or experimented upon,' Alton stressed.

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PAUL FREGOSI – HOME FROM THE SEA

By JAMES MURRAY



N Scotland's Lyle Hill overlooking the Firth of Clyde stands a granite anchor, its stem the Cross of Lorraine, commemorating the thousands of Free French sailors who put to sea during World War II for the honour of France.

One of those sailors was Paul Fregosi, a 17-year old volunteer, fresh from the English Benedictine school Downside, his father French, his mother English, and following a tradition of freebooting established by his Venetian, Corsican and French ancestors.

Now Paul Fregosi is home from the sea in the port of everlasting mercy to which by faith, hope and charity he always steered. His death was headline rather than headline news to his many friends throughout the world, particularly journalists.

He died on January 31 in Brazil at Fort Alesa to which he was a generous benefactor during previous visits as a film company publicist. His son Edouard was with him. The cause of death was deemed to be a heart attack, caused by superbug



PIG: Jacqueline Bisset

Paul Fregosi

latent after earlier treatment in London and triggered by gastric debilitation. He was 79.

His funeral service was Catholic. His body was then cremated so that his mortal remains could be returned to France for interment with the remains of his first wife Olive.

Paul Fregosi was voyaging to the end, for it was his plan to be reunited with his daughters Lindsey and Isobel, living in Bondi with his second wife, Maria. His third daughter, Eva, lives in Paris.

In the Free French navy, he rose from ordinary seaman to lieutenant,

his service aboard corvettes and destroyers taking him to the Pacific. There one of his actions was to help evacuate Australian forces in the disastrous early days of the war against Japan, a reason why he was always proud to march on Anzac Day.

The freedom for which he fought characterised the whole of his life and spirit. He first came to Sydney when his ship put in for repairs, an operation that took longer than expected. He fell in love with the city, returning after the war with his young wife Olive. His aim was to be a farmer.

While at the Mitchell Library researching agricultural techniques, including possibly how to use a spade, he met a journalist working on one of the historical features, then and for years, a staple of *The Daily Mirror*.

Verbiage appeared to be a more lucrative crop than cabbages, spuds or carrots. Paul Fregosi duly wrote a feature in quick time. It was accepted.

So began a career in journalism that took him throughout the world working as the peer (and boon companion) of such Australian all-stars as Ted Morrisby, Murray Sayle and Phillip Knightley and such organisations as Independent Television News and Agence France Presse. Among the many publications to which he contributed was *Annals*.

He was in his fifties when he went to Vietnam as a war correspondent and saw action with the US Marine Corps. He also covered the quieter, more effective but no less lethal *confrontasi* between Indonesian and British Commonwealth forces in Borneo.

All this, however, was but a curtain raiser to more enduring work. His early education, reinforced by writing *Daily Mirror* historical features, caused him to research and write *Dreams of Empire: Napoleon and the First World War 1792-1815*.



It's up to the individual

THE medieval social system was destroyed and with it the stability and relative security it had offered the individual. Now with the beginning of capitalism all classes of society started to move. There ceased to be a fixed place in the economic order which could be considered a natural, and unquestionable one. *The individual was left alone; everything depended on his own effort, not on the security of his traditional status.*

— Erich Fromm, *The Fear of Freedom*, 1960. pp 49-50.

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— Editor, *Annals*

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In this venture as in others, he was generously supported by another of his many friends in London, the actor Stanley Meadows and his wife Annabel.

Dreams of Empire was deservedly praised for its scope and readability. Graham Greene and Conrad Black both reviewed it. Greene noted how appropriate its sub-title was since Napoleon's strategy was global and included plans for the conquest of Australia, modestly marked on campaign maps as *Terre Napoleon*.

The success of this work led to Paul Fregosi's being commissioned by Little Brown, London to write another sweeping narrative, this one to be entitled *Jihad: Muslim Conquests from the 7th to the 21st Century*.

Fregosi's invincible *joie de vivre* did not prevent his focusing on a task with a kind of calm ferocity and writing with deadline swiftness.

But by the time he completed the work, Salman Rushdie had incurred the wrath of Islamic fundamentalists and a fatwa for his fiction *The Satanic Verses*.

Little Brown decided against publication of *Jihad*, citing inadequacies in the narrative. Both sides reached for their lawyers.

This can be said: If anyone's nerve failed, it was not Paul Fregosi's. He fought on until his work was published by Prometheus Books, New York in 1998.

Gifted though he was as a writer, Paul Fregosi's genius was for friendship. He had the ability to magnify the talents of friends and minimise their faults. He was an incredible, volatile mix of Anglo-French and Franco-Saxon. He was champagne and he was ale. He was coq-au-vin and he was toad in the hole.

He made one bottle of wine seem like three. And a case of wine like a never ending party. He never entered a house without cheering it, or a life without enhancing it.

His own life was lived in accord with the dictum of his paternal compatriot Danton: *L'audace, toujours l'audace et encore l'audace.*

May he rest in peace.



JAMES MURRAY is a Glasgow-born Catholic. A Sydney-based writer, his career includes ten years in Fleet Street, and contributions to Australia's major publications.

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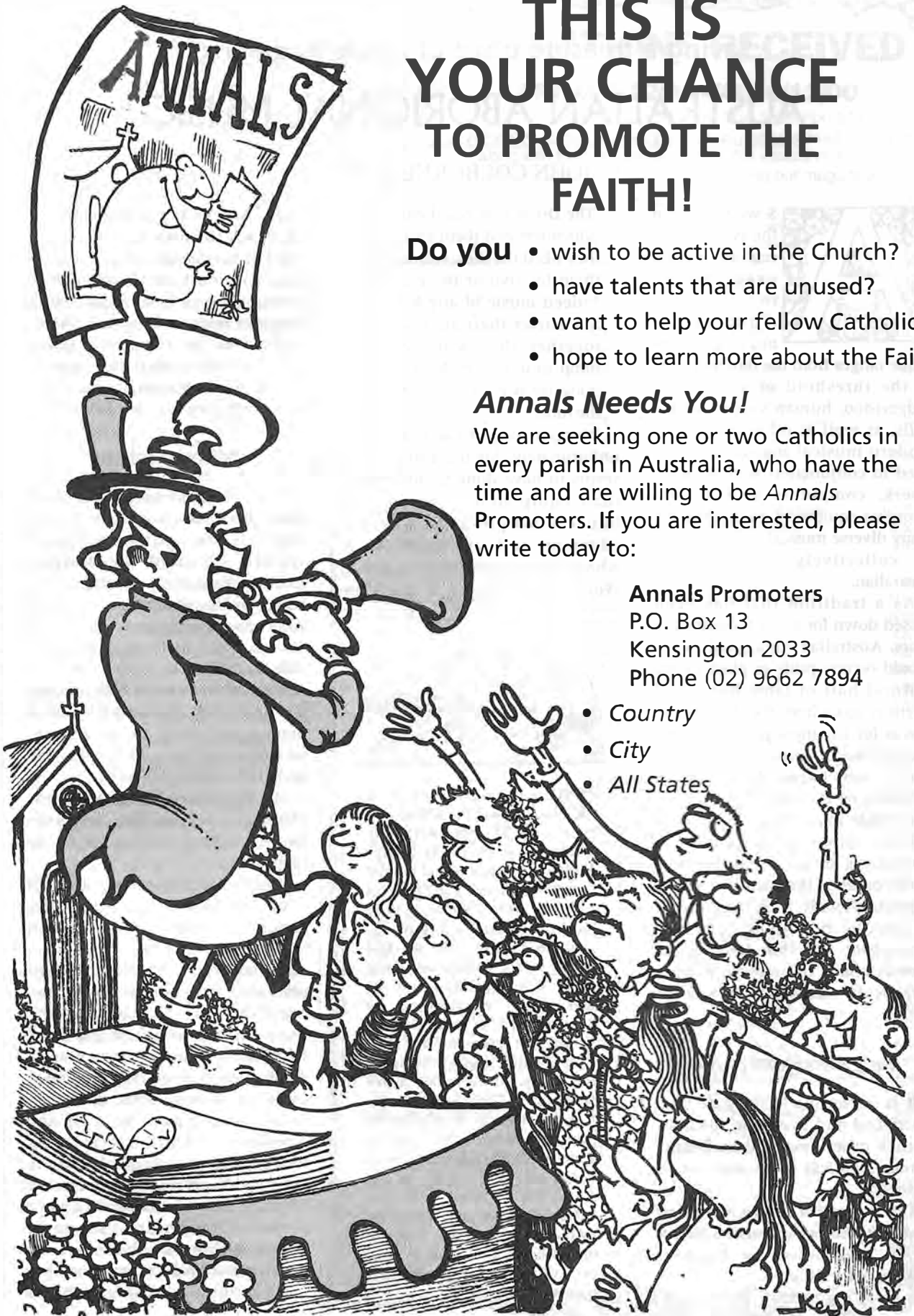
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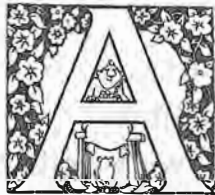
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Saving a treasure trove of music traditions

AUSTRALIAN ABORIGINAL MUSIC

By JOHN COLBORNE-VEEL



As we move into the twenty-first century, it is no exaggeration to say that Australia's musical technique ranges from the dawn of time to the threshold of space. The didgeridoo, human voices, sticks, bells, as well as other ethnic and modern musical instruments are used in conjunction with synthesisers, computers and digital recording equipment, to produce the many diverse musical styles that can be collectively identified as Australian.

As a tradition that has been passed down for many thousands of years, Australian Aboriginal music should occupy pride of place in our cultural hall of fame but, until recently, apart from the didgeridoo, it was for the most part neglected and dismissed. Shamefully, over the last ten years increased Government spending on the arts seems to have done little more than develop the cultural cringe to the point that Australians are now told that they can be proud of their achievement in importing totally irrelevant foreign art music for the Olympic Games. By comparison, very little funding has been allocated to preserve what is perhaps the most ancient music on earth.

Early Aboriginal music

It is interesting to compare both Aboriginal and European reactions to each others musical traditions when the First Fleet arrived in Australia.

The Australian Aboriginal's first reaction to European musical instruments was noted by Surgeon Worgan of the *Sirius*:-

The Drum was beat before them, which terrified them exceedingly; they liked the fifes, which pleased them for two or three minutes. Indeed music of any kind does not attract their attention long together, they will sometimes jump to it, and make a grunting noise by way of keeping time to the tune.¹

Worgan played the piano but, unfortunately, his musical training seems to have done nothing more than equip him with a set of blinkers that prevented acknowledgment and appreciation of Aboriginal music. In fairness to Worgan, his inability to appreciate

the Australian Aboriginal's approach to music was shared by most of his contemporaries and are still very much in vogue today as Aboriginal traditional music culture struggles between a gradual disintegration as the remaining tribes disperse and its own development and modernisation as an expression of aboriginality.

Mixed reactions

The first Europeans to write about Aboriginal music had a mixed reaction to it. The First Fleet's Captain Watkin Tench of the Marines recorded many Native customs in his book, *Sydney's First Four Years*; Of Aboriginal music he wrote: - 'We always found their songs disagreeable, from their monotony; they are numerous, and vary in both measure and time. They have songs of war, of hunting, of fishing, for the rise and set of the sun, for rain, for thunder, and many other occasions.'²

On the other hand, Matthew Flinders heard groups of Morton Bay Aboriginals singing and wrote they were:

'Musical and pleasing, and not merely in the diatonic scale, descending in thirds, as at Port Jackson.'³

In January 1788, while the transports were sheltering at Botany Bay, one of the officers, 'to dissipate their fears and remove their jealousy' whistled 'Malbrooke'⁴ to a group of Aboriginals who quickly responded by imitating him.⁵ Some time later, George Thompson said of the Aboriginals:- 'When in their canoes they keep constantly singing while they paddle along; they have the French tune of Malbrooke very perfect: I have heard a dozen or twenty singing it together.'⁶

Governor Phillip remarked that the Aboriginals, 'Are very fond of



THE first book printed in Glasgow was *the Abjuration of poperie* by Th. Abernethie in 1638. The printer was George Anderson. He had begun to print in Edinburgh 'in King James his college' (1637-8) and in 1638 he moved to Glasgow taking his press with him. He worked chiefly for the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. He was much encouraged by Zachary Boyd, minister, Dean of Faculty, Rector and for long Vice-Chancellor of Glasgow University. Of the books which between 1638 and 1646 bore the name of George Anderson as printer in Glasgow the majority were by Zachary Boyd. Among books by other authors which Anderson printed was the *Hebrew Grammar and Vocabulary*, by the Rev. John Row. This was probably the first book printed in Scotland in which Hebrew type was used.

any very soft music and will attend to a song, any of the words which they very readily repeat.⁷

Less than twelve months after Phillip had made this entry in his journal, Marines kidnapped an Aboriginal called Arabanoo and placed him in chains as a means of introducing the poor man to civilised behaviour. On New Year's Day 1789 Tench observed that Arabanoo showed 'pleasure and readiness' in imitating tunes but, when one of the company sang in a 'soft and superior style' the 'powers of melody were lost on him' - he fell asleep.⁸

For a short time Aboriginals continued to perform their traditional rites and ceremonies in a clearing between the town and the Brickfield, and, on some holidays, 'large parties of convicts of both sexes' went to a nearby cove to watch a native family sing and dance.⁹ This should have given the settlers an ideal opportunity to study the Port Jackson Aboriginal's culture first hand but, from a musical point of view it was lost because the Englishmen were too steeped in European tradition to appreciate the sophisticated abstract subtlety of aboriginal music.

Much Aboriginal music lost

For 150 years after the First Fleet's arrival aboriginal music was ignored and misunderstood until E Harold Davies made a study of some central and southern Australian desert singing. From 1949 on, anthropologist A.P. Elkin mounted expeditions to record music in Arnhem Land and this was followed by others until the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies was established by the government in Canberra during 1964. Unfortunately a great deal of aboriginal music had been lost before then.

As a part of Aboriginal culture, music is inseparable from dance, painting and mythology. The culture has been maintained for thousands of years, with paternal relationships and mythology being passed from one generation to the next in cycles of songs that are known as 'The Line of the Dreaming'.

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— Editor, *Annals*

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In discussing Dreamtime song cycles, Dr. M.J. Meggit noted that a line of the dreaming, 'may include from 100 to 500 separate songs recounting the travels and exploits of the dreaming-creature, and it should be sung in the temporal-geographical order laid down in the myth. If a misplaced song 'breaks the line', the singers should start the cycle again.'¹⁰

There are literally hundreds of sung 'Lines of the Dreaming' in Aboriginal culture; and in these, man's relationship to himself and his environment is carefully and accurately preserved in mythical song.

In relation to oral culture which is preserved and passed down in song it is important to understand that where a song is held to be sacred and possessing mystical power it is very unlikely that it will be changed as it is handed down over thousands of years. Evidence of this was documented in the early part of the twentieth century by Jewish musicologist Abraham Idelsohn in a comparative study of remote Jewish tribes from secluded areas who had preserved their customs in song since the destruction of the Temple in 72 AD.¹¹ Just as these tribes believed that disaster would follow if the songs were sung incorrectly so do the Desert Aborigines, who start a song cycle again rather than make a mistake.

Antiquity of the music

Because the sacred nature of the Dreamtime song cycles forbids error, it follows that the songs are possibly many thousands of years old and that the culture that they preserve is the oldest in the world. They represent an irreplaceable treasure trove that should be preserved at all cost.

In recent times there has been much talk by politicians of making it mandatory for every Aboriginal child to learn to read, write, and speak English, but, for the following reasons this may not be in the best interests of their culture. Before the nineteenth century Wales had preserved its culture, genealogy, history and heritage in song. In the 1830's the Methodists moved throughout Wales and the Channel



Art and truth

The first play I ever saw, when I was 11 or 12 was Esmé Percy doing *The Doctors Dilemma*. And that was the moment when the penny dropped. The magic started. I said: 'My goodness, how I'd like to be someone like Esmé Percy, and come on to the stage and say the lines that Shaw had given him to say, about believing in art and the mystery of Michelangelo and the wonder of beauty.' And I suddenly realised what it was all about: that you could be unattractive, and you could be disliked and unpopular, and you could still be an artist; have a very bad character and still be an artist, because that is what Shaw said. You didn't have to be a fit man, or a good man at running, or a good man a sums, to be an artist, to be the server of truth. This little message dropped into my idiot brain, and I thought: 'I want to be an artist.'

— Robert Morley, *The Times Literary Supplement*, September 18, 1971.

Islands banning bards from everyday life and teaching Welsh children to read and write English (for socio-economic reasons of course). As a result of the so called 'Methodist Revival' the musical culture of Wales was completely destroyed. The children used English text books to gain knowledge rather than the songs of their ancestors. Once the pattern of Welsh oral culture had been broken its heritage was lost for all time.

In my opinion, in view of the lessons of history, the idea of teaching every aboriginal child to rely on English for knowledge is little more than another sly attempt to destroy their culture – a new form of Methodist Revival to perpetrate the Anglo-Saxon ideals of Prime Minister Howard and his absentee Land-Lady.

Perhaps a better way to ensure the well-being of aboriginal children would be for every Government Administrator to be forced to learn the language of the community for which he or she is responsible. After

all, we are supposed to be a multi-cultural country. Aboriginal children are taught their moral and social obligations as well as their cultural identity in song; any attempt to undermine this will result in another lost generation.

In 1973 writer-producer Doug Craig asked me to write music for a television pilot programme on Aboriginal land rights called 'Spinifex Breed'. The aboriginal cast was organised by Bob Mazza and Kath Walker was one of the song writers. I mainly worked with Zac Martin who had hitch-hiked down from Queensland to sing in the film.

While writing a melody and accompaniment for a poem which began 'My son you're troubled eyes meet mine, old and black by colour line', Zac suggested using his special tuning for the guitar accompaniment where the bottom string was tuned a little more than an octave below the A string, the result being a very strong and definite beating caused by the dissonance. Zac enthused about this idea because he had found this technique very popular with 'the old people back in the styx'.

Essential elements

What Zac Martin actually gave me here was a very important lesson in the appreciation and understanding of Aboriginal music – dissonance and the sound of each note reacting against and with its musical environment is an essential element. By comparison, in Western music we tune the strings of an instrument until they stop beating (consonance). To appreciate traditional aboriginal music you have to listen to the humming beating and buzzing effect of each note as it reacts either against or with its accompaniment.

In 1977 while touring Western Australia and the Northern Territory with Graeme Bell and his All Stars I was fortunate to stumble across a family of aborigines singing under some Boab trees several miles out of Derby. After nearly forty years as a professional musician I still regard this as one of the musical highlights of my life. The sound and effect of their music in its proper environment was spellbinding.

On the same tour I saw a corroboree at Katherine and was taken out into the Great Sandy Desert to see rock carvings. For some time I stood looking at the rocks and couldn't see anything and then suddenly I noticed a little man carved into a rock. Almost immediately the rocks revealed themselves to be completely covered in artwork, perception plays strange tricks.

Music and rock carving

In many ways Aboriginal music is similar to rock carvings, if you listen the right way you find something of inordinate beauty, every note, every nuance, every rhythm and every sound has its proper place. Together they combine to produce a sophisticated abstract tapestry of sound that has no counterpart in Western music.

Aboriginal music, art, and dance all interlock to form a complete structure which must be viewed in perspective with its geographical location and mythology. The performers spend a lifetime learning the various degrees of overlay that each song contains. Members of a tribe have to be initiated into their culture to understand the real meaning of each song. The meaning of each song is different for each individual depending on their degree of comprehension. For instance Grove's Dictionary give the following example of various levels of meaning in aboriginal song:-

'In one example the text refers to two emus travelling along a creek bed. The first level of meaning is the exoteric one; it merely describes the scene. The second level of meaning is erotic, and will be known by only one sex; it presupposes that the women in this performance knew that the two emus were in fact Emu Women, and that they were attempting to attract a man. The third level is the esoteric and is known to the most knowledgeable of the group: in this case, the singers were 'holding the song a Indulkana', that is they understood that, by the performance of this verse at this point in the ceremony, they were 'naming' and

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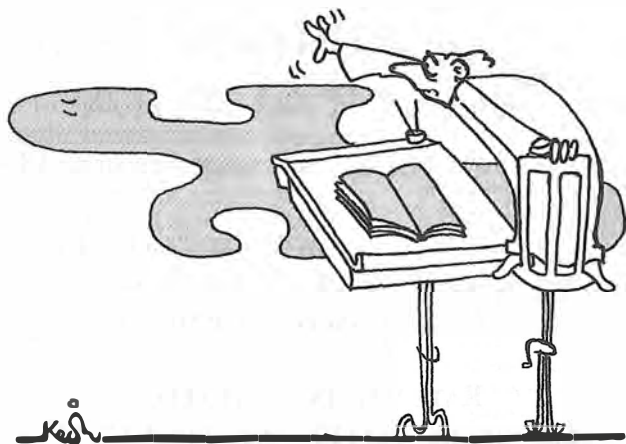
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drawing on the power of the sacred site to which the two ancestral Emu Women belonged.'

At Anson Bay South of Darwin in the nineteen fifties Professor A.P. Alkin recorded a song of the Wagaitj tribe in which abstract music is used to enhance a family's reflections and meditations for an absent loved one. The song, which is accompanied by didgeridoo, sticks, and periodic thigh clapping is a wordless melismatic chant in which melodic pauses and long silences are used as 'periods of recollection for the absent youth and the countries through which he passes.'¹² To me, this song represents a very sophisticated use of abstract

music and silence for spiritual purposes which has no parallel in comparative European culture.

Modern Aboriginal music provides an interesting and accessible insight into the ancient traditional culture. While theatre works such as 'Bran Nue Dae' (1990), 'Corrugation Road (1996) and 'The Sunshine Club' (1999) have given an insight into the problems that confront aboriginal society, a number of contemporary performers such as Harold Blair, Jimmy Little, Christine Anu and Mandawuy Yunupingu have maintained the public face of aboriginal artistic expression and musical proficiency.



Cooking the books

WHERE the population does not increase, the fact is attributed to the inaccuracy of the censuses of previous years. Where the revenue from taxes does not rise, it is counted a merit: the intention is to encourage agriculture by low assessments, since it is only now beginning to develop and will soon – preferably when the writer of the report has left the district – yield fabulous results. Where riots have taken place that *cannot* remain concealed, they are the work of a few ill-disposed persons, who need no longer be feared, since there is now *general* contentment everywhere. Where distress or famine has thinned out the population, it is owing to failure of crops, drought, heavy rains, or something of the sort, but never to misgovernment.

– *Max Havaalar, or the Coffee Auctions of a Dutch Trading Company*, by Multatuli, pen-name of Eduard Douwes Dekker. First published 1860.

Jimmy Chi's musical 'Bran Nue Dae' (1990) was an important milestone in the history of Australian Music Theatre in that, for the first time subject matter of traditional Aboriginal music culture was presented in a form that allowed its imaginative mixture of charm, wit and devastating reality to be readily appreciated by all. Like the Dreamtime song cycles, 'Bran Nue Dae' explores man's relationship to his environment. The musical ends like a Dreamtime song cycle with the whole cast, regardless of their alleged racial lineage, discovering that they are all in fact blood relatives.

Yothu Yindi

In 1993 the Aboriginal band Yothu Yindi achieved international recognition for their work in presenting Aboriginal culture to the world. In the Sydney Daily Telegraph Mirror of August 2 that

year Fiona Wingett wrote:– 'Australian band Yothu Yindi sent British fans into a frenzy with the first concert of their European tour. Its message of black and white reconciliation at London's Queen Elizabeth Hall had concert-goers on their feet.

Ushers gave up trying to stop the audience cramming to the front of the theatre and dancing to the reverberations of didgeridoo and electric guitar of old favourites like 'Tribal Voice' and tunes from an upcoming album.

Reconciliation and land reform

The slow confident rhythm of 'Marbo', a song that lead singer and Australian of the Year Mandawuy Yunupingu said was written by his brother Galarrwuy about last year's Australian high court decision on Aboriginal land rights, was among

the first to rouse the audience. 'My brother wrote it to remind people about the situation through the medium of music because we don't have any negative feelings,' Yunupingu said. 'We don't want any violence, bad feeling or a situation like in South Africa.'

Sadly, despite international recognition of Aboriginal culture and the best intentions of its adherents, the cause of Aboriginal reconciliation seems to have been steadily undermined in the last few years, partly because of the Prime Minister's political agenda and partly because of both sides' inability to publicly admit to the fact that the Queen as Head of State is the only person who can apologise for her administration's failure to protect the basic human rights of her subjects. In being part of a living culture, no form of musical expression can live in isolation from the political reality of the people who create it. In this, aboriginal music is no different from any other living tradition.

In both its ancient and modern forms, Australian Aboriginal music and culture has much to offer the world. Australia is unique that it can lay claim to a cultural tradition that is many thousands of years old. We should do everything we can to protect and preserve the ancient traditions while nurturing the development of contemporary Australian Aboriginal culture.



1. Worgan G. B. Letters and journal concerning the settlement of New South Wales in 1788. ML (also reprint).
2. Tench Watkin *Sydney's First Four Years* p. 289.
3. McGuire P. *The Australian Theatre* p. 5.
4. A French tune similar to 'For He's a Jolly Good Fellow'.
5. Tench p. 37.
6. Tench p. 97 notes quoted from *Slavery and Famine Punishments for Sedition* (1794 p. 14) by George Thompson.
7. Tench Notes p. 98 from *Extracts from a Journal* bound with his letters (MS) dated February 14 1788.
8. Tench p. 142 in this account Arabanoo is sometimes called Mandy.
9. Collins David *An Account of the English Colony in New South Wales*.
10. *The Desert People: a study of the Walbiri Aborigines* by M.J. Meggin, MA, PhD Department of Anthropology University of Sydney. Angus and Robertson Sydney 1961 p. 221.
11. Idelsohn Abraham Z. *Jewish Music Its Historical Development*.
12. Taken from the cover notes of *Arnhem Land Vol 1*, released by EMI Australia.

JOHN COLBOURNE-VEEL is a regular contributor to *Annals*. For six years President of the Fellowship of Australian Composers. John is a distinguished jazz musician, composer and librettist.

A Rite of Passage in praise of Infertility

LOVELESS LIES

By MARY-HELEN WOODS



URRENTLY, among Australians, there is an interesting and at times intense debate about immigration. This debate is an important one. With

a rapidly-falling birthrate amongst Australians, immigrants are the only reason that our overall population level is not falling. People from other lands tend to have more children than native-born Australians, which is a fascinating fact in itself, and may, when studied, tell us lots about ourselves as a nation.

Why are Australians generally not having children? Are the reasons economic? Social? Are our young people now so selfish and inward-turning that they cannot conceive of sharing their lives with children? Or is it that their parents' singular propensity towards breaking-up and divorcing each other has left a bitter taste in the mouths of their children and the desire not to inflict on a new generation the unhappiness which they themselves had to suffer?

Undoubtedly, there are many reasons for our current state of childlessness. And of course, as long as humans have been on the earth, there has been the desire to limit births – and often for very legitimate reasons. But it took until midway through the 20th Century for a form of contraception to arrive which virtually guaranteed childlessness. When the first oral contraceptive pills arrived, women took them enthusiastically and have been taking them in increasing numbers ever since. This fact is in itself quite astonishing. Why was it that women allowed themselves to be human guinea pigs? What about men? Did they not have some responsibility here? Why wasn't there a demand for a male contraceptive pill? It is a little known fact that there was a male pill developed but

Contraception – The Hidden Truth

Christine de Stoop
220pp rrp \$13.50

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Castle Hill NSW 2158

as men were not willing to take it, it was quietly shelved. Meanwhile, the contraceptive pill for women was set to earn its makers countless millions of dollars. And women, knowing little of the consequences, medical, emotional, physical or psychological, embarked on a pharmacological journey which would ultimately mean childlessness for many.

By now, oral contraception is so universally used that it has become a

sort of rite of passage for young women. On leaving school, or often considerably before, the first discreet prescription is obtained. Taking the pill has become a way of life for young Australian women. Extraordinary as this may seem to many of us, it then becomes a terribly difficult decision for these young women to stop taking the pill. Their self-view is one of infertility. Fertility has become something to fear, stopping the pill a huge step, too big a step for many to take. What a long way we have come in just a few short years!

In 1968 Pope Paul VI wrote the famous encyclical *Humanae Vitae*, subtitled *On the Regulation of Birth*. Delivered in what we now know was a fraught atmosphere in Rome, it was clearly an act of great personal courage by Paul VI. He wrote that the 'most serious duty of transmitting human life' had posed 'grave problems of conscience for married persons, but, with the recent evolution of society, changes have taken place that give rise to new questions which the Church could not ignore, having to do with a matter which so closely touches upon the life and happiness of men and women'. Clearly, Pope Paul was alluding to the contraceptive pill and to the contraceptive mentality which with great prescience, he knew would develop as a result of it.

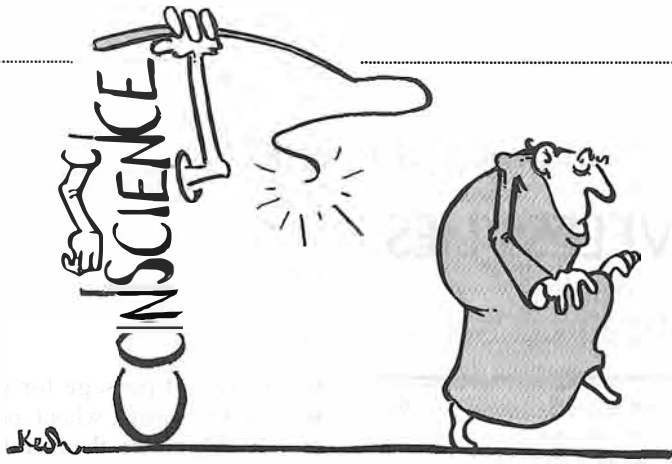
Humanae Vitae was surely one of the most controversial and highly politicised encyclicals ever written. Its delivery, just after the momentous Vatican II, signalled tumultuous times within the Catholic Church. Already turbulent with the changes, both real and imagined, of the Council, the Church was also struggling with the social changes of the notorious '60s. The release of *Humanae Vitae* triggered a widespread disobedience to the Church's



Like the vicar of Bray

MEANWHILE the irrepressible Trebitsch (ex Darlington MP and self-confessed spy) went on exhausting the gamut of human experience. He who had been intended as Rabbi and became, instead, a Lutheran, then assistant in a Presbyterian mission to convert the Jews, was, when last reputedly heard of, passing himself off as a monk with the good Chinese name of Chao Kung. One oriental definition or another – what did it matter? Yet, he had been better advised to have stuck to his original honest, Jewish name of Isaac.

– *He Laughed in Fleet Street*, by Bernard Falk, London, 1933.



'Duty' and contempt for others

THE sense of 'duty' as we find it pervading the life of modern man from the period of the Reformation up to the present in religious or secular rationalisations, is intensely coloured by hostility against the self. 'Conscience' is a slave driver, put into man by himself. It drives him to act according to wishes and aims which he *believes* to be his own, while they are actually the internalisation of external social demands. It drives him with harshness and cruelty, forbidding him pleasure and happiness, making his whole life the atonement for some mysterious sin. It is also the basis of the 'inner worldly asceticism' which is so characteristic in early Calvinism and later Puritanism. The hostility in which this modern kind of humility and sense of duty is rooted explains also one otherwise rather baffling contradiction: that such humility goes together with contempt for others, and that self-righteousness has actually replaced love and mercy. Genuine humility and a genuine sense of duty towards one's fellow men could not do this; but self-humiliation and a self-negating 'conscience' are only one side of an hostility, the other side of which is contempt and hatred against others.

— Erich Fromm. *The Fear of Freedom*, 1960, p. 84.

teachings, not only among the laity, but also, both in the US and in Australia, among some of the clergy. 1968, the year of social revolution, became the year also of revolution in Catholicism, as *Humanae Vitae* was reviled, ridiculed or ignored.

Christine de Stoop's *Contraception, the Hidden Truth* explores many of the issues surrounding the vexed question of contraception, particularly from a Catholic perspective. This book is a bold counterstatement to current thinking. Written in an accessible question and answer format, it is eminently readable and has great clarity of style. The author does not believe in beating about the

bush. She attacks contraception and the contraceptive mentality because she links both with a 'continuing moral decline'. She writes that 'though impossible to prove, evidence does suggest that contraception can inflict marital and social harm'. She believes that 'a woman's human dignity has been diminished, her character and spiritual soul stunted and her natural inclinations have been thwarted physically, economically, socially and psychologically' with the ubiquitous use of contraceptive devices.

Just how counter-cultural such a statement is can be measured by the fact that universal contraception was

one of the earliest and most strident demands of the radical feminist movement in Australia. The feminists who swarmed into the bureaucracies in the early '70s and whose influence became so pervasive saw contraception as the way in which women could achieve their full potential without the burden of bearing children. Australia's most famous feminist Germaine Greer ultimately saw the error of their ways, memorably pointing out some years later that contraception had been much more in the interests of unscrupulous males and multinational pharmaceutical companies than it had been in the interests of women.

Now, far more is known about the medical, social and psychological effects of contraception. Christine de Stoop explores each of these thoroughly. As well, she expounds knowledgeably the basis of the Church's teachings, showing clearly how prescient *Humanae Vitae* was, and how deeply the Church cares about the well-being of its members. She goes much further, too. There are interesting sections on natural moral law, on marriage, life and love, on conscience and clear thinking. She discusses natural family planning in some depth. Here Australia had a very special contribution to make to the dialogue within the Church about having children, for it was two Australian doctors, Lyn and John Billings, who pioneered the search for understanding of the female fertility cycle and how regulation of birth could be achieved using entirely licit means. It is a great irony that their method, known worldwide as the Billings method, has been greeted with greatest approval and usage by peoples who have no moral objections to contraception.

Humanae Vitae should be re-read. And this excellent book, which will be useful in homes and families, in secondary schools, in discussion groups, in parishes and in libraries, deserves to be read.



MARY HELEN WOODS is a Melbourne Catholic mother of five. She is the National Vice President of the Australian Family Association, and is one of the writers of the new Melbourne Archdiocesan RE text.

MEDIA MATTERS

By James Murray

Global Secularisation

In the global village, there are no coincidences. Accordingly, few will be surprised to hear that the British like the Australian Government (or vice versa) has undertaken a survey of charity organisations with supervision in view.

Perhaps of mutual interest is the observation of Mark Elvins (OFM Cap) who helps to run the St Thomas Fund for The Homeless with more than 20 years experience in the field. Writing in *The Tablet*, London, he questioned whether a Catholic charity protected its ethos by having the word Catholic in its title.

He added: 'The important place for a Catholic identity to be mentioned is in the constitution which I believe has been somewhat overlooked by most Catholic charities.'

He himself redrafted the St Thomas constitution to emphasise the organisation's Catholic ethos, knowing that however sympathetic government intent, its effect on charity tends to be secular.

Pillage

The recent SBS documentary *The Pill* was widely puffed by mainly women journalists. Yet there was scarcely a reference to The Pill's test advent in Australia, surely the most revolutionary initiative by the conservative government of Robert Menzies.

The Canadian-made documentary concentrated on the American experience with a passing glance at the United Kingdom. No mention that the reason for the introduction of The Pill in Australia was similar to its introduction in Puerto Rico: both involved compliant people and were a strategic distance from the headquarters of respectively the Searle and Schering companies.

The documentary's verdict on The Pill as presently constituted was that it was safe. No mention of the possibility of transgenerational effects, studies suggesting that the daughters of

women who have taken The Pill are more liable to uterine cancer. Nor of the prime, natural alternative method as refined by its developers, the Australians Evelyn and John Billings.

Given the above, it is ironic that the great novelist John Le Carre should have turned his attention to pharmaceutical companies and their marketing strategies in his new novel *The Constant Gardener*.

His material includes the way in which doctors accept free samples from drug companies and then administer them to their patients, part of the *modus operandi* when The Pill was introduced in Australia.

Ironic, too, that the Howard Government should have begun the process of emasculating the committee that oversees the release of pharmaceutical products in Australia. Perish the thought of a connection with the pharmaceutical industry's highly paid lobbyists.

In further marketing strategies (read pill pushing rather than dispensing), the pharmaceutical industry is seeking to by-pass its old allies doctors and chemists through direct contact with patient groups and automatic sales.

Human memory is short. Hence recorded history. And the record shows that it was slack supervision of drugs that allowed the initial use of thalidomide in Australia.

Due to the work of Dr William McBride, who first alerted the world to the risks of thalidomide, the supervising committee's procedures were made more rigorous.

The truth is that the ruthlessness of drug companies in pursuit of profit (ostensibly to finance research) surpasses that of oil companies.

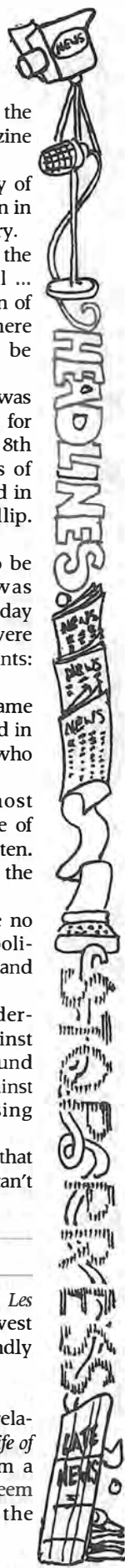
At the core of this ruthlessness is the belief of the industry's scientists that they will always be able to find a cure for any iatrogenic or teratogenic effects of their formulations.

Therein could lie the seeds of a hubristic catastrophe for the human race. If hubris seems too strong a term for rational scientists, consider Per



Sheepishly Drunk

In the early days of white settlement in New South Wales, the Sydney Abattoirs were situated on an island. An old bell wether used to lead the flocks across the bridge to their doom. The sheep became well-known around Sydney Town when it developed a taste for beer and tobacco. It slept on the wharf but each morning could be observed waiting outside a hotel for the doors to open and impatiently butting its head against the door. All the slop beer was saved for it. One day, when it had consumed more alcohol than usual, the sheep staggered onto the wharf, fell into the harbour and was drowned. - Bettina Cummins



Pinstrup-Andersen, director general of the Washington-based International Food Policy Research Institute.

He made a case for genetic modification of crops (*The Australian*, Jan 23) on the basis that such modification was necessary to feed the world's hungry poor.

Fair enough. But an equivalent justification was used almost 50 years ago by British scientists who fed meat protein to herbivorous cows to increase their milk yields. It did. And it also set in train the conditions for mad cow disease.

For the record, your correspondent edited and found a publisher for William McBride's memoirs *Killing the Messenger*.

Modest Proposal

The Shier static surrounding the operations of the ABC was one reason the Chief Justice of the High Court of Australia, Murray Gleason's Boyer Lectures, did not receive the attention they deserved.

In particular Gleason's modest proposal that judges should be the Commonwealth's ultimate custodians even over parliament was greeted with jingle bells rather than jangling alarums.

The Australian Constitution as originally promulgated has been deprived of a key part. This recognised the capstone authority of Parliament through final appeal to the Law Lords (read super advocates) of the House of Lords.

In calling for supremacy over the elected parliament by unelected judges, Gleason appears to be following the precedent which has evolved in America's Supreme Court.

But the American's court's supremacy is arguably down to the failure of the people's elected representatives to carry out their legislative tasks.

But at least in the US, candidates for the Supreme Court are subjected to close and public scrutiny by the people's representatives. No such scrutiny attends the elevation of lawyers to Australia's High Court.

Until it does, Murray Gleason's proposal should remain a pipe dream. Better to consider some method by which the members of the highest court are also members of the parliament, possibly through senatorial status.

Lawyers after all are not the only repositories of wisdom. Australia has its share of high-powered, sagacious journalists. As a counter to Gleason's modest proposal, your correspondent suggests ultimate authority be vested in a junta of resident journo's, comprising the likes of Paul Kelly, Alan Jones, PP McGuinness, Phillip Adams, Les Carlyon, Frank Devine, Ted Morrisby, Peter Coleman, Mike Carlton and Paul Stenhouse (Chief Journo?).

Round the Horne

Apropos high-powered journalists, Donald Horne is a prodigy. Occasionally, however, he

makes a remark that inspires the suspicion that the unregenerate hack who edited *Everybody's* magazine for Frank Packer is still lurking in his psyche.

Called on for a piece to mark the Centenary of Federation, the Sage of Sydney rose to the occasion in *The Australian*. And fell flat on his fudging of history.

He wrote: 'It wasn't in the Constitution but the Commonwealth of Australia was born liberal ... There was an understanding that free expression of opinion is an essential part of governing ... There was also an understanding that there should be checks on government.

'What was to be the most entrenched check was invented in the Roman Empire. It was forgotten for more than 1000 years; then in the 17th and 18th centuries, it was put into new form in parts of Europe – notably in our case in Britain. It arrived in Port Jackson in 1788 with Governor Arthur Phillip. This is the rule of law ...'

Eh? And again eh? What Horne appears to be implying is that the Roman rule of law was forgotten from about 600 AD until – oh, happy day – the Age of Enlightenment whose offspring were to include the 20th century's most noxious tyrants: Adolf Hitler, Joseph Stalin and Mao Tse Tung.

The rule of the law was never forgotten. It came under intense attack. But it was always defended in Christendom, notably by the monks of Ireland who fed its flickering flame during the Dark Ages.

Charlemagne (742-814) was only the most notable of the monarchs who lived by the rule of law in the period when Horne says it was forgotten. The whole Arthurian legend cycle is enriched by the ideal of the rule of law.

In a lesser fudging, Horne wrote: 'There are no longer entrenched underground employment policies carried out against each other by Catholics and Protestants'.

Horne can doubtless cite examples of underground employment policies by Catholics against Protestants. But there was nothing underground about the employment policies of Protestants against Catholics. They inflated the public advertising revenues of newspapers throughout Australia.

What Horne proves with this kind of tripe is that you can take the hack out of *Everybody's* but you can't take *Everybody's* out of the hack.

Murray-Go-Round

Reviewers of Peter F Alexander's biography, *Les Murray: A Life in Progress* tended to share a lowest common denominator: Alexander was too friendly with his subject to achieve critical objectivity.

It's a point.

There again, both Alexander and Murray (no relation) may take comfort from James Boswell's, *Life of Dr Johnson*, an enduring classic, written from a perspective that makes modern, popstar fans seem like, well, Lytton Strachey who invented the debunking profile with his *Eminent Victorians*.

Silly Sobs

One of the odd links between Australian and British journalism is the 'Silly Season'. Odd because the Australian version occurs in the heat of the antipodean summer December-January and the British version in the podean summer June-July-August.

The point? The Silly Season is a convenience devised by hacks to cover the fact that if they are not actually on holiday, they are in holiday mood.

Its greatest invention is still the Loch Ness Monster, created by *The Sunday Express* in the 1920s on a slow news day from a dim snapshot and a dimmer myth.

Next year what about an authentic snapshot of Bunyip, taken by a passer-by (who if he or she has any sense won't deal with Reuters, notoriously rich and mean in paying for picture rights).

Anything, anything but the Millennial Moaning of a less than a total sample of Federal MPs about their lot in life (as featured in *The Australian*). Ninety thousand-odd a year plus car, plus cheap tucker, plus cheap grog, plus expenses, plus as many postage stamps as you can lick isn't bad. Oh, almost forgot, instantly available superannuation on a Midas scale.

What seems to have happened is that the moaners no longer see being a member of parliament as a calling but a cash, perks and super-driven career.

Yet the job is voluntary. Like surf life saving, bush-fire brigading and emergency rescuing. And servicemen and women, long-distance lorry drivers, seafarers as well as missionaries are frequently also a long way from home and family.

MPs who can't hack it should resign. They can then pick up the fabulous money supposedly available to them in private industry, thus leaving a vacancy which even the most choosy of Tony Abbott's job-snobs wouldn't reject.

Alternatively, MPs at tether's end should be able to employ temporary reserves. Your correspondent is

available. He would be happy to renew his acquaintance with the wining and dining facilities of Parliament House after asking a Dorothy Dixier or looking vigorously po-faced (big ask) when his leader is on his feet.

Press Freedom

Attacks on Freedom of the Press are rightly always the subject of vigorous rebuttal. Less scrutiny

is given to the ways in which the Press can subvert its own freedom.

During the Cold War the Press of Soviet bloc countries was justifiably scorned, internally and externally, because it allowed itself to become effectively an instrument of the State. The scorn was distilled in the joke about there being no truth in *Izvestia* (*The News*) and no news in *Pravda* (*The Truth*).

Essentially the same risks applies to media organisations, seeking marketing advantage through exclusivity agreements with government and quasi-government bodies (such as the International Olympic Committee) and their instrumentalities.

Reporting Bravery

The most impressive Murdoch in current journalism is not Rupert (sorry, old mate) or Lachlan (sorry, kid) but Lindsay of that ilk who works for the John Fairfax Group.

Lindsay Murdoch's reportage on East Timor last year was exemplary for courage and clarity. He has continued to exhibit these qualities in his coverage of matters in Indonesia's outlying islands, and specifically the forced conversion of Christians to Islam in Ambon.

It also says something for democratic elements within the Indonesian Government that he has been allowed to travel to Ambon to report on these matters.

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When all else fails, attack the French

JEFFERSON, burning with the jingo zeal of a retired pacifist, had been in favour of taking Canada as an indemnity for English outrage (the British attack on New Orleans) and then making peace, in order that the hands of the administration might be left free for a war with France - an occupation which has always seemed to possess a singular attraction for those who believe in peace at any price. However, as he sadly admitted, 'peace is better for us all.'

- Christopher Hollis, *The American Heresy*

Breakthroughs in devilment on the social and religious scene

A DEVILISH SUGGESTION

By GILES AUTY



SINCE I am far from an avid watcher of television I am uncertain whether the long-running series of Australian shows called 'hypotheticals'

has or has not now finally been laid to rest.

If it has not, I have an entertaining suggestion to make to its producers for what could be an appropriate final program.

Remember the Devil?

If we proceed from the highly unfashionable hypothesis that the Devil still exists this would give us a chance to debate what his most effective means might be for controlling the thought-processes of modern, western societies.

Putting myself in the role of Devil's Adviser – rather than Devil's Advocate – where do I personally think God's sworn enemy should start?

If the world we live in were one in which belief in God were still a cornerstone, an obvious first, devilish step would be to sow seeds of doubt not just about God's purposes for humankind but about his very existence. However, luckily for my demonic patron he is not obliged to make any such uphill start because religious doubt has become much more the norm than the exception in the modern world. Indeed, announcements of the death of God have been quite commonplace since the 19th century, with very little regard ever having been shown for the feelings of the deceased.

Major philosophical and socio-political programs have been developed specifically around the certainties expressed by some that the idea of God has outlived its usefulness or, better still, that God never existed in the first place. One need look no further here than the teach-

ings of Nietzsche or Marx and the profound influence these have had on many millions of lives – or should that be deaths? – during the greater part of the 20th century.

Some 2000 years after the birth of Jesus, there is certainly no shortage of disparagement both of his deeds and influence.

While some staunch spirits might admittedly strike the Devil as lost to

his cause, wonderful opportunities nevertheless exist in modern life for our hypothetical Prince of Darkness to cast his shadow over anyone who is either inexperienced or uncommitted.

If the Devil were seeking an example here, in terms of effective strategy, he could hardly surpass the model set, in the Sixties, by the German Leftist agitator Rudi Dutschke.

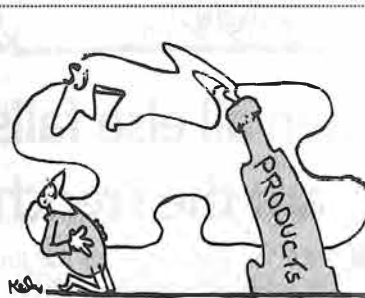
After their dreams of direct political revolution faded – in the western world, at least – followers of Dutschke and his ilk began what Dutschke himself described as 'the long march through the institutions'. By this he meant working against established western institutions while working within them – acting like a kind of corrosive cancer, in fact, in universities and schools, cultural institutions, churches, government agencies and the like.

What were some of the revolutionary programs the radicals of the late 1960s – the so-called *soixante-huitards* – had in mind?

The total overthrow or undermining of western liberal democracies was certainly part of their agenda as was the projected replacement of these with generally ill thought-out Marxist governments and programs. Of course, the fall of the Berlin Wall still lay 20 years away then along with the belated revelation this brought to many of the palpable horror of the communist regimes which had effectively enslaved most of Eastern Europe.

But why should the Devil rejoice at the success or failure of this or that type of political or economic regime? After all, capitalism still strikes many – particularly the young – as an even more ungodly system than communism.

But we overlook an especially vital difference here.



A devil of a problem

ALTHOUGH man has reached a remarkable degree of mastery of nature, society is not in control of the very forces it has created. The rationality of the system of production, in its technical aspects, is accompanied by the irrationality of our system of production in its social aspects. Economic crises, unemployment, war, govern man's fate.

Man has built his world; he has built factories and houses, he produces cars and clothes, he grows grain and fruit. But he has become estranged from the product of his own hands, he is not really the master any more of the world he has built; on the contrary, this man-made world has become his master, before whom he bows down, whom he tries to placate or to manipulate as best he can. The work of his own hands has become his God. He seems to be driven by self-interest, but in reality his total self with all its concrete potentialities has become an instrument for the purposes of the very machine his hands have built. He keeps up the illusion of being the centre of the world, and yet he is pervaded by an intense sense of insignificance and powerlessness which his ancestors once consciously felt towards God.

– Erich Fromm, *The Fear of Freedom*, 1960 p. 101.

Whatever moral shortfalls western democratic systems may have, they nevertheless remain predominantly open and liberal, showing toleration for religious beliefs of almost every kind. Here is where contrast with European communist states was most marked since the Christian faith, among others, was widely and deliberately oppressed under communist regimes. If the Devil really exists – and is the enemy of a Christian god – then communism has to be seen as directly serving a diabolic purpose in this respect, at least.

Overt repression of Christianity for supposedly political ends would evidently have to be regarded by our hypothetical Devil as a wonderful bonus, but what about all those modern western states where no overt kind of religious repression takes place?

What could the Devil do with those?

In short, how could religious faith and social cohesion best be disrupted or destroyed in western liberal democracies?

For our hypothetical Devil, the so-called cultural revolution which swept America during the Sixties would have to be seen as another huge windfall rooted, as it was, in the encouragement of unrestrained sexual promiscuity and an explosion in the manufacture and use of mind-warping and often addictive drugs. Whatever valid social protests originally underpinned this supposed revolution, these were inclined to disappear in a miasma of mindless rhetoric and generally senseless, hedonistic behaviour. The seemingly insoluble problem of drug abuse is a legacy handed down from that era to every western government of today.

But rationality, which is one of the more vital forces which protects and promotes civilisation, was not under concerted assault solely or simply from those whose minds had been warped or finally unhinged through substance abuse, it was also under more clinical attack from the laboratories of neo-Marxist social theorists. Rationality and coherent use of language soon found themselves under fire, in France especially, for being deliberate tools used by bour-



Sunday observance

MEMBER of the Massachusetts General Court. – 'You are not to do unnecessary work on the Sabbath'.

Indian chiefs. – 'That will be easy: we haven't much to do any day, and can well take our ease on the Sabbath'.

– Discussion c. 1643, quoted in S.E. Morison, *Builders of the Bay Colony*, p. 290.

geois or patriarchal power groups against the interests of weak minorities. Here was further opportunity for the encouragement of total social breakdown as minority groups, each more vocal and virulent than the last, blamed anyone and everyone in

authority for their often imaginary or self-inflicted plights.

In place of a single, traditional and all-important polarisation – good versus evil – we were now encouraged to understand the world solely in terms of newer, and purely social oppositions: between owners and employees, men and women, blacks and whites, homosexuals and straights or other forms of mindlessly simplistic grouping. Whatever causes most of these so-called post-modernist social initiatives served they were seldom those of rationality.

From information beamed to him from some of his favourite branch offices in Los Angeles and Paris, our hypothetical Devil could hardly avoid hugging himself with glee as news of these events reached him. Here were real breakthroughs in devilment which were being achieved even in prosperous countries in times of peace. If only the strange codes of political correctness could come in time to usurp the position occupied previously by divine laws, our Devil's cup would be full.



GILES AUTY was born in the UK and trained privately as a painter. He worked professionally as an artist for 20 years. Publication of his *The Art of Self Deception* swung his career towards criticism. He was art critic for *The Spectator* from 1984 to 1995 when he became national correspondent for *The Australian*.

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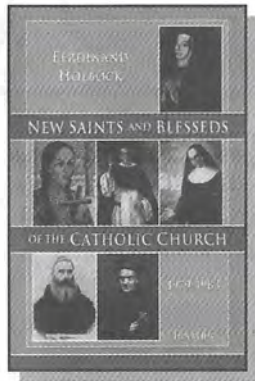
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Australia, the Yartz, and the French Connection

MY DINNER WITH ANDRÉ

Kim Beazley's arts policy could be set to repeat the spectacular errors made four decades ago in France by cultural commissar André Malraux. R. J. STOVE details Malraux's influence on Labor's cultural views.



WHEN George Santayana wrote his famous words about those who ignore the lessons of history being condemned to repeat them, he could have had in mind the Australian political scene

With his *Knowledge Nation* speech in Hobart last August, Kim Beazley achieved the hitherto impossible: he made the John Bannon Premiership look like a monument to cheeseparing fiscal realism. The latter-day Beazley, like the latter-day Blair, is consumed by class-war ideation; again like Blair, he no longer makes any but the shallowest pretences to interest in economic management.

What *Knowledge Nation* offered was not even a throwback to Whitlamite squandermania. It was worse. Despite Beazley's own commendable shortcomings in the spitting-hatred department, *Knowledge Nation* springs from a world-view that in its essentials is purest Eddie Ward. Eddie's rasping tones of yore live again in Beazley's comment about students having to *pay* (shock, horror) for university entrance.

Given Australia's didactic 'standards' prevalent since the 1970s, what conviction can any political party crawling with teachers possess when demanding a *Knowledge Nation*? As well ask Ku Klux Klansmen to advocate a Tolerance Nation, or pædophiles a Chastity Nation.

The purely economic problems of Labor's recent statements have received considerable media coverage.¹ Largely ignored, save for a stray *Age* feature,² have been the rami-

fications of Labor's arts dogmas. Even less discussed – in fact, not discussed in print at all – has been the derivative nature of these dogmas; in particular, their reliance on strategies that laid one almighty egg in France when tried there a mere forty years ago.

Shadow Arts Minister Duncan Kerr let what would have been the cat out of the bag if anyone present (including Kerr) had known that the cat existed. 'We can't think of ourselves', Kerr informed a presumably rapt audience,

as Australian without the aid of the reflections we get back from reading Australian authors and newspapers ... The draft platform puts an emphasis on accessible forms of art and culture rather than on elite performances by the major companies catering to 'the big end of town'.³

To those conversant with the career of André Malraux, such incantations, once translated from their original

mixture of yartzspeak and yobspeak into something approaching English, become eerily familiar. They describe exactly what Malraux attempted, and failed, to do in his term as Minister for Culture under President De Gaulle.

Malraux (1901-76) was celebrated even among Gallic intellectuals for his loquacity – in an updated *Pilgrim's Progress* he would undoubtedly acquire the name Mr Talk-Under-Wet-Cement. Malraux parlayed his awe-inspiring wordiness into a career spanning four continents.

In his youth he babbled on behalf of the Spanish Republic, whose air force he joined despite his regrettable inability to fly a plane, and Stalin's USSR. Later, after losing faith in Stalin, he babbled until his death about Leninism, Trotskyism, Buddhism, Hinduism, pornographic publishing, an especially profitable sideline of his, art history, De Gaulle, or any combination thereof.



Light on a Dark Horse

THE terrors of the Rome under the Caesars reached a climax in the recitation of the poets. All the literature of the time especially Pliny's letters and Martial's epigrams show what a nuisance the verse writer had become and what immense demands he made on the time and patience of his friends whom he invited (corrogabat) to hear him read his own verse.

– J.D. Duff, *D. Iunii Iuvenalis Saturae XIV*, Cambridge, 1957, p.137. [Corrogare] however means much more than he 'invited'. It is more like 'he pestered,' 'importuned,' or 'bludgeoned', Ed. *Annals*.

Death Metal, Gangsta Rap and Grunge

SO FAR, one low point has been followed by another even lower. It is hardly surprising that rock was followed by such delightful art forms as punk rock, heavy metal, speed metal, death metal, rap, gangsta rap, and grunge. And it is hardly to be doubted, as Martha Bayles says, that these have effects on their vulnerable target: angry, troubled adolescents. 'Only a fool would argue that music – especially music combined with gut-wrenching spectacle – has no impact on audiences. Yet this is exactly what the defenders of heavy metal do when they



suggest that a steady diet of gleeful sadism does no harm.' The music industry executives are most assuredly not fools, but they must think the rest of us are.

The tastes cultivated by gleeful sadism may be the reason we have now come to 'hate rock', which the *New York Times* reviewer John J. O'Connor calls 'a racism-and-violence virus in pop music that has become an international infection.' (Since O'Connor wrote this review, the egregious Michael Jackson put out a record with anti-Semitic lyrics that caused such an

uproar that Jackson had to re-record at least one song.) Reviewing an MTV documentary on the subject, O'Connor says that MTV straddles the fence: 'Should these rockers be silenced? No. Should they be monitored carefully? 'According to what we learned,' says MTV, 'absolutely'. O'Connor asks, 'And then what?'

It is a question we all must soon

ask, and not just about the racism and violence of hate rock, the violently obscene and brutal lyrics of rap music, and the obscenities and wild violence of motion pictures. Technology is now bringing worse material than we

have ever seen or imagined, and, as technology develops further, the material will become still worse. The Internet now provides users access to what Simon Winchester calls 'an untrammelled, uncontrolled, wholly liberated ocean of information.' He thought it wonderful. Then one day he came upon a category which has fifty-five groups including the pedophile bulletin board, and a snuff site, (the killing of the victim), which includes sub-categories for bestiality, torture, bloodletting, and sadistic injury.

– Judge Robert H. Bork, *Slouching towards Gomorrah*, Regan Books, 1996.

Additional babbling on his part included passionate defences of Bangladeshi independence, tributes to that great humanitarian Chairman Mao, and seemingly endless denunciations of 'Western colonialism' – this last a particularly priceless attitude from one whose earliest achievements had included risking gaol for nicking temple statues from Cambodia.

Between these orgies of monologue were interspersed other, less systematic bouts of verbiage too numerous to catalogue here; the topic on which Malraux could not bombinate has yet to be invented. Historians agree that he reached his apotheosis of ear-bashing as French Culture Minister, a job he acquired in 1958.

Malraux's Ministry gave him his best chance for indulging the creed he shared with many another clever, over-bookish, flaccid intellect: the Religion of Art, so much less demanding on the believer than any religion of religion. In this creed's service he could – he *did* – spend weeks on end churning out rhetoric like this:

Does the *Roncalli Pietà* differ more from an 'antique' than a Byzantine bas-relief from an Achemenidean bas-relief? When, the warlike chants of Sargon's palace having died away, Persia was at last delivered of Assyria, the treasures of the Iranian past, having reappeared with the Sassanides, will deliver Byzantium from its babbling, and the vultures perched on the Towers of Silence will, through the smoke of sacred fires, watch the Christianity of the Orient petrify itself according to old familiar forms ...'

And so on for hundreds upon hundreds of pages. As the great man observed, 'In an argument one must always win.' No-one disputed Malraux's erudition or proselytising zeal, but what such burbling left unclear was the concrete form the great thinker's plans would take. France soon enough found out. In practical terms, Malraux's policy on how to run the Yartz consisted of (a) handing absolutely everyone lots of taxpayers' money, (b) shoving Little Mates with no previous relevant experience into all conceivable

bureaucratic interstices, (c) giving the people Art if it killed them, preferably via – again taxpayer-funded – *Maisons de la Culture*, and (d) disclaiming all responsibility for the resultant foul-ups.

These policies' outcomes were illustrated with special vividness by their application, first, to the Paris Opéra: an application in which Malraux did not feel remotely abashed by his musical ignorance.

In 1965 Malraux proclaimed that 'France is not a musical nation';⁶ this remark surely surprised anyone with even a passing knowledge of Couperin, Rameau, Berlioz, César Franck, Debussy, Saint-Saëns and Ravel.

Once Malraux had guaranteed subsidies for even the most outlandish Opéra stagings – how about a *Carmen* production requiring for each performance fifteen horses, two donkeys, parrots, a monkey, and a human cast of 473? – the results in morale terms read like a description from yesterday's paper of New South Wales' public transport. Strikes would shut down the Opéra on the tiniest pretext, or better still on no pretext whatever – 'protected by inextricable collective agreements, the personnel were a law unto themselves' – while even when 'working', the instrumentalists thought it beneath their dignity to turn up for more than four days per week. Most of Paris' best operatic singers simply left France altogether.

Yet this was actually among Malraux's more coherent administrative performances. He dreamed of dotting *Maisons de la Culture* all over France. Ultimately he had to content himself with only ten such *Maisons*, but his original vision was of dozens.

That the punters might not have given the square root of a tinker's curse for the art he was forcing down their throats – and the *Maisons'* definition of 'art' soon included everything from Racine to roulette wheels – did not cause him a moment's discernible unease.

His gospel of compulsory largesse resembled that of the proverbial Bolshevik spruiker in Sydney's Domain, who promised hearers 'Come the revolution, you'll all get caviar!', and who when someone



'HOW is Rogers?' asked someone. 'He is not very well,' replied Sydney.

'Why, what is the matter?'

'Oh, don't you know he has produced a couplet? When he is delivered of a couplet, with infinite labour and pain, he takes to his bed, has straw laid down, the knocker tied up, expects his friends to call and make inquiries, and the answer at the door invariably is 'Mr Rogers and his little couplet are as well as can be expected'. When he produces an Alexandrine he keeps his bed a day longer.'

– Sydney Smith, [1771-1845] wit, co-founder of the Edinburgh Review and Anglican Clergyman, quoted in *The Smith of Smiths*, by Hesketh Pearson, 1934.

piped up 'I don't like caviar!', threateningly responded 'Come the revolution, you'll all like caviar!'.

Much of Malraux's crusade derived from his – and De Gaulle's – constant need to outbid the French Communist Party, Western Europe's reddest, most truculently Stalinist and, save for Italy's, most electorally successful. Indeed, his arts policy could well have worked in the same hideous way that Stalin's own arts policy 'worked': that is, if, and only if, he had enforced it by assuring its opponents of years in the gulag or bullets in the brain-stem. Since Malraux, to his credit, shrank from such murderous measures, he constantly tried to combine Stalinist-style bribes with muddling democratic processes. The outcome was summed up a couple of thousand years ago in Æsop's motto, 'Try to please all and you will please none.'

Simply by joining De Gaulle's Cabinet, Malraux had permanently

antagonised the Stalinists; and the events of 1968 showed him no better at endeavouring to propitiate Paris' Maoists. He appointed the great actor (and incredibly naïve politician) Jean-Louis Barrault director of the Théâtre de France, then dismissed Barrault for making common cause with the student revolutionaries.

Finally, in case there remained a few French artists whom his high-handedness had failed to enrage, Malraux kicked out the country's leading film archivist Henri Langlois from control of the French Film Library. Result: all French film-makers, and many film-makers abroad, slapped a boycott on official French distribution of their products. The following year De Gaulle stepped down, and took Malraux down with him. Never again did even the most sanguine French arts commissars dare to throw public money around like so many drunken sailors, or to assume that millions would relish Shakespeare who could scarcely find their way around *Babar the Elephant*.

Believe it or not, there are some countries where the lessons of Malraux's failure might actually have been learnt. Then, by contrast, there is Australia, where what passes for public debate rests upon the assumption that other countries simply *do not exist*, except as ignorant objects of disdain or, as with Indonesia 1975-99, equally ignorant love-objects.

Is there not a certain grotesque irony in the fact that every Yartz-related recommendation in Beazley's platform derives, all unwittingly, from the land that the ALP – to judge by its 1995 yells against French nuclear testing – loathes more than any other?



1. See e.g. Michelle Grattan, 'Beazley's mettle detector', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 7 July 2000.
2. Robin Usher, 'ALP thinks big on arts', *The Age*, 5 August 2000.
3. Usher, op. cit.
4. Curtis Cate, *André Malraux: A Biography* (Hutchinson, London, 1995), p. 372; André Malraux, *La Création Artistique* (Skira, Geneva, 1948), pp. 105-106.
5. Cate, op. cit., p. 125.
6. John Ardagh, *The New France: A Society in Transition, 1945-1973* (Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, Middlesex, 1973), p. 605.
7. Cate, op. cit., p. 387; Charles Dupêchez, *Histoire de l'Opéra* (Éditions Perrin, Paris, 1984), pp. 271-272.

R.J. STOVE is editor and publisher of the Sydney-based internet magazine *Codex* [www.codexmag.com.au]. He is a well-known contributor to Australian literary and political journals.

THE PATRON SAINT OF CANCER SUFFERERS

By JOHN PRATT



CATHOLICS have a special place in their spiritual lives for Patron Saints. In discussing the sacrament of Baptism, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* suggests that by taking the name of a saint, 'we are assured of the saint's intercession'. How easy to forget that valuable assurance! There are other ways that the saints can help us, many of them having been traditionally accorded the patronal care of the professions, trades and callings of our Catholic world, responding to those who seek the saints' intercession in heaven on their behalf. In the 1992 edition of *Annals Almanac of Catholic Curiosities* is a comprehensive list of these valued intercessors.

Today, the incidence of those suffering from cancer or similar malignancies seems very wide spread. There is a Patron Saint of those sufferers – St Peregrine (pronounced to rhyme with *terrapin*) – Peregrine Laziosi, born in Forli, Italy in 1265. As a young tearaway,

he was involved in a fracas during which a priest was assaulted. Ashamed of his conduct, he sought out the priest and asked for his forgiveness. His life changed and gradually he became a man of peace and prayer. At the age of thirty, he joined the recently founded Order of Friar Servants of St Mary, or Servites, as they were called, as a lay brother. His duties centred on visiting the sick and the poor in Forli, the major work of the Servites, and during the many epidemics and even the plague that swept through the town, he worked tirelessly in nursing his charges.

Over the years, the long hours of work on his feet led to problems with his legs, one of which worsened, becoming ulcerated and malignant. The doctor decided amputation was the only way to save his life, but such operations then before anaesthetics were grim affairs and survival was doubtful. In agony the night before the operation, Peregrine dragged himself out of bed and collapsed in front of the crucifix in the monastery chapter room. An old history of the

saint written in the fifteenth century records how Peregrine dreamed Jesus came down from the cross to him. He awoke and made his way back to bed and when the doctor arrived in the morning to perform the operation, he was astonished to find Peregrine's leg was healed. This news of his dramatic recovery spread like wildfire through the town.

After a long life of work among the poor and the sick, Peregrine died in 1345 at the age of eighty. News of the saintly man's death attracted record crowds to the monastery chapel to pay their respects. Now, his fame as an intercessor developed, and spread to other cities, Venice, Turin and Bologna among them. In the early seventeenth century, his case for canonisation was entrusted to the Jesuit Cardinal, Robert Bellarmine, and he was beatified in 1609. In 1726, he was canonised by Pope Benedict XIII at the same time as the Carmelite mystic, St John of the Cross. He is now co-patron of the city and diocese of Forli, and thousands of visitors visit the chapel built in his honour and where he is interred. His feast is celebrated on 4 May.

In the years following World War II, Fr Daniel Lord SJ was a well-known Catholic writer and broadcaster. Before he died in 1955, he wrote: 'When the doctor informed me I had cancer of the lungs, St Peregrine came smiling into my life. I had a problem on earth and was presented with a special advocate in heaven. I was touched with a dreaded disease and blessed with a new and very inspiring friendship. I have not received a miracle from St Peregrine but then I have not asked him for a miracle. I have worn his medal over my heart and carried and said his prayer ... but the peace, the peace: this is miracle enough.'



JOHN PRATT is a retired RAAF Group Captain who has run a book shop and has an abiding love for mediaeval history. He lives in Kings Point South Australia.

Age-old complaints

TO the Roman patricians, the opportunist foreign physicians were the object of scorn and even hatred. Cato the censor wrote to his son: 'The Greeks are a hard and perverse race. They have sworn to kill us all by means of drugs. Remember, I forbid physicians for you.' Much later, Pliny the Elder was still bemoaning the fact that there was no law to punish ignorant physicians, and that capital punishment could not be inflicted on them. In spite of this hostility, the Greek doctors flour-

ished and, in 46 BC, Julius Caesar granted them citizenship for the first time. They were still fair game for a number of Latin poets, especially Martial. One of his epithets has a very

contemporary ring to it that might well arouse sympathy from the long suffering patients in a teaching hospital today. 'I'm ill,' he says, 'send for Symmachus, the physician. Here he is, a hundred students following in the rear. All paw my chest with hands as cold as snow. I had no fever – but I have it now.'

PRESCRIBING ALL THESE PILLS... HE MUST BE GOOD



By James Murray

Rosetta

A raw gem with a natural edge which cuts to the heart. Against much touted opposition, it deservedly won the Best Picture award at the 1999 Cannes Film Festival for its producers/writers/directors, the brothers Luc and Jean-Pierre Dardenne of Belgium.

In addition, Emilie Dequenne, in her title role debut, won the best actress award as a city fringe dweller determined to win and keep a job, any job, despite having to look after her boozy mother.

This makes it sound like a tract, written by a job-snob employment minister, half dreary sociological stodge, half-stale economics. But the Dardenne brothers focus on the persistence of the working poor who support all the glitz of the world. Dequenne projects courage in a way that transmutes the material into a film of enduring quality. *MA15+*



Cast Away

Yet another variation on Andrew Selkirk's true story. From it, hack (and English spy) Daniel Defoe created *Robinson Crusoe*, inspiration of so many desert island flicks (including a fine documentary by *Annals* contributor Ted Morrisby).

Regrettably, unlike Morrisby, the movie's star Tom Hanks doesn't credit the Defoe source. Hanks, whose major talent is not acting but picking strong parts within his limitations, is Chuck Noland, a clock-ruled trouble-shooter at Federal Express (for which the movie is a sustained and presumably paid for plug).

After a horrendous plane crash, Noland finds himself marooned and creates an ingenious variation on *Crusoe's Man Friday*: a painted volleyball.

Helen Hunt plays the woman who waits for Noland. But not long enough. Thus Noland has to find a

new way forward, his only clue the angel wings on a FEDEX packet which sustained him spiritually during his isolation.

Robert Zemeckis directs and William Broyles Jr scripts. The movie is notable for one amazing omission. Despite his plight, Noland doesn't resort to basic Anglo-Saxon or blasphemy. Daniel Defoe and Andrew Selkirk would be proud of him. *MA15+*



Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon

Martial arts violence has a balletic quality in director Ang Lee's superlative entertainment, partaking more of the wire-flying of Peter Pan than blood-boltered warfare. The plot and the principals (Chow Yun Fat, Michelle Yeoh, Chang Chen and Zhang Zhi Yi) mix the legends of ancient China with the less ancient myths of the Hollywood western.

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Love scenes of porcelain delicacy are blended with steel-clashing mayhem in which Lee (influenced perhaps by his recent western *Ride With The Devil*) sets up confrontations where you half expect John Wayne to enter and hit some with a breakaway chair while muttering, 'a man's gotta do, what a man's gotta do'. *MA*



Vertical Limit

With more than a little help from his scriptwriters, including Terry Hayes, director Martin Campbell piles peaks of excitement on mountains of thrills.

From the heart-stopper, opening climbing sequence in Colorado's Monument Valley to the final scenes (with New Zealand's Mount Cooke substituting for Nepal's K2), Campbell increases the tension.

Ropes and tempers fray. Crampons and teeth bite. Nerves and ice-bridges collapse as a team led by Chris O'Donnell races against time and temperature to rescue a group of lost climbers.

The team includes Oz's own Ben Mendelson and Steve Le Marquand as intrepid ocker siblings who make John Singleton sound like a product of Eton, Oxford and the Guards.

An ecumenical touch, maybe inadvertent, is provided by Scott Glenn, as a maverick climber who says Bhuddist prayers in front of a cross. *MA15+*



Bedazzled

Is that movie rarity: a remake superior to the original. Even more surprisingly main credit goes to its producer/co-star Liz Hurley, hitherto known mainly for a frock combining the maximum of safety pins with the minimum of fabric.

She plays the Devil. Brendan Fraser is Elliott, the amiable nerd she tempts with seven wishes. Frances

O'Connor is Alison, the demure yet mischievous object of his unrequited desire.

Veteran scriptwriter Larry Gelbart led the team which updated the original Peter Cook-Dudley Moore version, in turn a variation on the Faust legend.

The episodic, multiple role-playing of the stars and supporting players is, well, bedazzling. But director Harold Ramis doesn't linger as he creates a pacey 90-minute classic.

The movie's take on the Devil is broadly comic with a serious subtext – as was the take of mediaeval morality plays.

Hurley's Devil gets the best line. 'All men think they are God including the one upstairs', she says. 'And He is right'.

In a final twist, Elliott escapes damnation through an act of selfless generosity involving Alison. And in giving her up, wins her. PG



Titan AE

Cartoon science fiction created by former Disney whiz Don Bluth. Some characters (voiced by the likes of Drew Barrymore, and Bill Pullman) are reminiscent of *Star Wars*. The storyline is stronger: a future where survivors of earth's destruction, scattered across the galaxy, are in danger of extinction.

The hero Cale (voiced by Matt Damon) is the earthling with the key to the secret of re-creating planet earth as a new Eden, thus thwarting The Dredge, an alien life-form.

The cartoon has its own soaring musical score. But the crunching of popcorn and the gurgle of cola in the audience provide more appropriate sound effects. PG



Mail Boy

Kane McNay triumphs over the presumption of being miscast. The *SeaChange* novice who looks as if he'd never missed a square meal or a hug in his life turns in a totally convincingly performance as a wistfully-sullen member of the

underclass, not supposed to exist in egalitarian Oz.

Nell Feeney is even more compelling as his desperate, worn-beauty mother, virtually abandoned by an ex-con husband.

Writer/director Vincent Giarrusso, working from his experience as a social worker, pulls no punches. Some of them (inadequate editing? shortage of funds?) don't quite connect. His publicists do him no favours with the promotional line: 'The Brady Bunch would turn over in their graves'.

This implies that the movie has comic overtones. No way. It is as funny as the burial of the Australian egalitarian myth in an non-society where the rich get richer but the poor don't even get children. MA



Charlie's Angels

Refurbishing an antique television concept with the star polish of Drew Barrymore, Cameron Diaz and Lucy Liu, creates what is potentially another long-running franchise, a kind of feminist Jane Bond series.

These women, however, are not passive but active, indeed hyper-active. There are moments when they appear to need a dose of Ritalin to soothe them.

The plot mixes software theft with Vietnam war revenge and is so convoluted that our heroines still look slightly baffled even after they have resolved matters.

John Forsythe, as in the television series, provides the off-camera voice of Charlie, urbane, dry and slightly condescending, the voice of a fine actor wondering why he is mixing so much tosh with so many years of *Dynasty* hokum, following his initial brilliance with Shirley MacLaine in Hitchcock's great comedy *The Trouble with Harry*. PG



What Women Want

Mel Gibson is a natural charmer. So when he plays a charmer, his character can occasionally have one layer of marzipan too many. Nonetheless he and Helen Hunt make a neat team in this romantic, albeit hackneyed comedy (both are divorced, he with a teenage daughter, she with a reputation as Adland's Maggie Thatcher).

The comedy turns on Gibson's gift for picking up women's thoughts to the benefit of his career as a rakish copywriter. The gift, of course, is by no means unusual. But the Gibson character also has the uncanny ability to act on his knowledge before the woman in question changes her mind. MA15+



Princess Mononoke

Surpassingly enthralling cartoon parable, deriving from the time when the Japanese were beginning a primitive iron industry without thought for the environment.

All right. Little has changed. But that's the point of parables. In this one, the animal gods of the forest, led by the wolf-reared Mononoke (shades of Romulus and Remus and Rudyard Kipling's Mowgli) oppose the people.

Acting as mediator between them and the supreme Deer God is Ashitaki, surely a boy avatar of greenie-guru David Suzuki.

As noted, enthralling. The only problem is the cartoon's maker Hayao Miyazaki and his team fall in love with their material. Result: a running time of more than two hours. Okay for cineastes fascinated by computerised animation. But problematic, not to say bathromatic, for others. MA15+



Shadow of the Vampire

Willem Dafoe's performance teeters between *tour de force* and *tour de farce*, at once queasily macabre and blackly comic. He plays Max Shreck, the unknown actor who in turn played the vampire Count Orlock in FW Murnau's silent movie *Nosferatu*

which invented the vampire genre for Bela Lugosi and old uncle Boris Karloff and all.

The film within film structure enables director E. Elias Merhige to satirise movie culture, including method acting. When Shreck/Orlock ostensibly deep in character attacks crew members, the suggestion is made that the most expendable of them be sacrificed: the writer.

John Malkovitch as Murnau doesn't equal Dafoe. But what director ever matched his star? MA15+



Anatomie

Franka Potente, star of *Run, Lola, Run*, is again running. This time as a medical student pursued by members of a Masonic-medical secret society after she discovers they are pushing the limits of anatomical science by dissecting living patients.

Potente, like the rest of the cast, is all too convincing in locations combining the mediaeval serenity of Heidelberg with modern hi-tech anatomy laboratories.

Writer/director Stefan Ruzowitsky creates a dramatically plausible linkage between the Masonic ethos of the so-called Enlightenment, the experiments of the Nazi death camps and current ruthless, scientism.

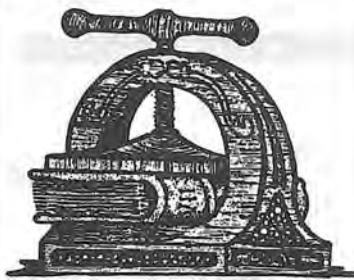
If he follows Shakespeare's title *All's Well that Ends Well*, he leaves a lingering fear that resonates eerily between the old activities of grave-robbers Burke and Hare and such modern concepts as brain death in the context of transplant surgery. MA



Harry: He is Here to Help You

At the end of a remote road in idyllic France sits an old, stone farmhouse: a renovator's delight. But before this psychological thriller is over, the delight has turned to nightmare as fate intervenes in the benignly sinister shape of Harry (Sergi Lopez).

His intervention threatens the precarious domesticity of Michel



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(Don't forget to mention *Annals Australasia*)

(Laurent Lucas) and his wife Claire (Mathilde Seigner). Dominik Moll directs with Hitchcockian mastery of character, location, and timing as well as a final twist.

An example to all film-makers that small budget does not necessarily mean minor art. MA15+



Lucky Numbers

In this Nora Ephron comedy, John Travolta, shorn of his *Battleship Earth* dreadlocks, is back in form as a TV weatherman with ambitions to be Tony Barber (or at least a gameshow host).

His personal forecast gloomy because of money troubles, he resorts to a scam aided by the station lottery dolly (sorry, person).

She is played by Lisa Kudrow as a cross between a honey-pot and a cut-throat razor. Ed O'Neill is the conniving station manager who seeks to benefit from the scam. And Tim Roth, now the world's classic Sassenach baddie, is the scam master.

Adam Resnick's script makes witty play with the fame game as played on local American television stations. No resemblance, of course, to the same game as played on Australia's metropolitan television stations by the world's most talented performers. MA15+



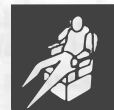
The Sixth Day

The title refers to the Genesis account of man's creation. Thereafter, the movie descends to an uneasy mix of science fact (the cloning of the sheep Dolly) and science potential (the cloning of human beings).

As the film opens, human cloning has been made illegal. Enter the amiable Arnold Schwarzenegger (living proof that Neanderthal man has left his DNA in Beverley Hills). He plays an intrepid helicopter pilot who finds he has been cloned by a genius scientist (Robert Duvall) backed by an insanely rich tycoon.

In the midst of the obligatory, demolition derby/shoot-em-up, the rights and wrongs of cloning rate a passing mention. Hollywood follows its own iron ethic: all cloned baddies must perish. But the clone of a star like Schwarzenegger must live, albeit exiled in Patagonia.

Patagonia? Why not exile in Australia, possibly as caretaker to Sydney's Olympic precinct? MA15+



Bring It On

Kirsten Dunst is a throwback blonde: Lana Turner, Betty Grable or Betty Hutton's grand-daughter or possibly great-grand-daughter. She plays the captain of a mixed cheerleader team engaged in a round of contests where crowds cheer cheerleaders and their acrobatic routines. The content is as high in energy as a bowl of muesli. And occasionally as soggy. M



Train of Life

The philosopher George Steiner in *Language and Silence* suggested the Holocaust was so appalling that it should never (repeat never) be subject to fictionalised treatment.

Generally, credit for creating the fantasy sub-genre of Holocaust cinema goes to comedian Roberto Benigni for his Academy Award winning, *Life is Beautiful*.

The credit is misplaced. Director Radu Milhaineanu's *Train of Life*



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the songs of the Appalachian mountain people to the ballads of their Scottish and English ancestors.

Janet McTeer plays the musicologist with undaunted authority, Aidan Quinn is the mountain man who initially objects to her quests and then joins her in it.

Unfortunately, his performance appears to mimic George Clooney's caricature hillbilly in *O Brother, Where Art Thou?*

But happy-ever-after is in prospect as they leave the Appalachians to bring hillbilly music to the city and the world. *MA*



Cunnamulla

Denis O'Rourke's documentary about a railhead, outback township is not warts and all. It's all warts. O'Rourke turns his ruthless camera and questions on the township's most marginalised people. Yet his camera also gives fleeting glimpses of a town centre that suggests another, less nihilistic community.

No one is suggesting that small communities, here or anywhere else, are of their nature idyllic. But documentary is about balance. Without balance, it risks being another slice of social schlock-horror. *MA15+*



Little Nicky

No point in calling this puerile. Its star Adam Sandler's aim is total puerility. Talented players, including Reese Witherspoon, take part, presumably for a laugh. The laugh is on them. So abysmal is this comedy about hell, you expect to hear a vintage TV comedy laugh-track attempting to trigger a few chuckles. *M*

Nutty Professor II The Klumps

Comedian Eddy Murphy wears so much rubberised make-up playing so many parts in this hectic comedy that you could use him to erase most of the script.

A pity someone didn't. *M*

script predated Benigni's (and was read by him). In Milhaineanu's original, a whole Jewish community escapes from the Nazis by acquiring a train at the suggestion of the community fool (the part Benigni was supposed to play). They then pass themselves off as Jews being transported to a death camp.

Jewish stereotypes abound in an ambivalent mix of *Fiddler on the Roof* and *Schindler's List*.

Comedy can be a way of creating distance from reality. So it is fair to ask whether Milhaineanu and Benigni have used it to distance their respective nations from the part they played in the moral catastrophe of the Holocaust. *M15+*



The Adventures of Rocky and Bullwinkle

Jay Ward's titular, cartoon squirrel and moose are teamed with Robert De Niro, Renee Russo and Jason Alexander in a spoof about a Hitlerite dictator's grab for world power.

The animation is ingenious. The pace and excitement as unrelenting as a Big Dipper ride. De Niro, Russo and

Alexander keep topping each other like acrobats of caricature. And the movie raises one important question: when are we going to see Hitler's quondam partner in crime, Stalin, similarly caricatured? *PG*



102 Dalmations

Cruella de Vil is back, seemingly cured of her obsession with animal pelts. But as the plot and the Dalmation spots thicken, she regresses to sartorial misbehaviour.

Glenn Close plays Cruella so stratospherically that you might think, it would be impossible to top her. Garard Depardieu does, as her French couturier partner in crime.

The final scenes involving Cruella being turned into a pie are imaginative. But the junior critic across the aisle with her parents found them so overwhelming she hid behind her jumbo-size cola. *PG*



Songcatcher

Evocative title for a film that does not quite match its subject matter: the quest of a musicologist to link

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by Marist Father Paul Glynn



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Fr Paul shares stories about the people he met while visiting famous healing shrines in France, Poland, England, Ireland and Mexico. He not only talks with those who have been healed but he meets with relatives, doctors and Church authorities.

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Bishop David Cremin of Sydney writes: “This is a book that can keep you awake into the ‘wee small hours’. Through his previous writings Paul Glynn has taught me so much about reconciliation and about the Book of Psalms. Now he has reopened my heart to the God who heals the broken, the wounded and the most wretched of the earth. People who claim to be agnostics or even atheists will certainly be challenged in their unbelief. Men and women of faith will have their faith strengthened. I can envision those in a state of depression being lifted up and given new direction.”

We especially thank those who buy Fr Paul’s book, which costs \$10 and who give a charity donation* to help the vital work of the Catholic Church in East Timor. A complimentary set of Vatican Rosary beads will be given to those who give a charity donation for East Timor*. Please tick the box below if you would like to receive the Papal Rosary beads.



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(Source: CRTN Information Service, edited by Catherine Ancion for Aid to the Church in Need, Königstein, Germany.)

MTV edits religion out of reality show

Participating in an MTV reality show could have been an opportunity for Matt Smith, a 22-year-old Catholic student from Georgia Tech University, to share his faith with television viewers, if most references to religion had not been edited out of the program. Matt Smith became an overnight celebrity, after participating in 'The Real World', a show produced by the international music channel MTV, about young people of different backgrounds, who have agreed to have their daily lives broadcast on television. Smith's teammates included young people of various faiths and lifestyles, such as a gay man and Mormon woman. Several accompanied him to daily Mass during the show. 'I opened my roommates' eyes to a different kind of faith', Smith said, while mentioning that sharing his religious beliefs had been one of his motivations to participate in the reality show. However, Smith deplored the fact that MTV had not broadcast any of the participants' religious experiences or discussions. 'What you see [on television] is manipulated; they have that power,' he told CNS. Smith noted that his moments at Mass with his roommates and their positive comments on the Mass had not been shown. Smith also deplored the fact that visits of the show participants to young cancer patients had been cut out. 'You never see the spiritual renewal and shifting that we had in the house. You don't hear (roommate) Danny saying, 'I went to Catholic Mass for

the first time, and I've never felt so welcome and felt so good about myself in a church in my whole life,' Smith noted.

Students and professors expelled from Chinese seminary for boycotting Bishops' consecrations

Some 70 students and professors were expelled from China's national seminary in Beijing for boycotting last year's bishops' consecrations, UCA News reported. According to the agency's sources, over 100 professors and seminarians did not show up at the January 2000 consecrations, because they had been organized without the Vatican's approval. As a result, lectures at the seminary were suspended and the absentees interrogated. China's January 2000 consecrations took place a few hours before Pope John Paul II ordained 12 new bishops in St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican. Some Church officials saw the timing of the Chinese ceremony as an open provocation to Rome's authority. In China, all Catholics are required to belong to the Catholic Patriotic Association, which does not have any official links with the Vatican. All other Catholics are mercilessly persecuted. However, according to sources inside the Chinese Church, many bishops belonging to the Patriotic Association have remained secretly loyal to Rome.

Guatemala: five to be tried for Bishops' murder

Three military officers, a priest and an elderly housekeeper will be tried on February 15 for the controversial 1998 murder of Auxiliary Bishop Juan Gerardi Conedera of Guatemala City. The bishop was murdered a few days after publishing a report on human rights abuses by the military during Guatemala's 36-year civil war. Various individuals were arrested and re-arrested, while Church

authorities kept insisting that Bishop Gerardi had been the victim of a political crime. Judges, witnesses and prosecutors involved in the Gerardi case received death threats. Some had to leave Guatemala. This month's defendants will include Retired Col. Disrael Lima Estrada, a former head of military intelligence, his son, Capt. Byron Lima Oliva, a former presidential guard, Obdulio Villanueva, Father Mario Orantes and Margarita Lopez. The fact that high-ranking officers are among the accused is a first in Guatemalan judicial history.

Sant' Egidio community receives UNESCO's Peace Prize

UNESCO has awarded the Felix Houphouet-Boigny Peace Prize to the Sant'Egidio Community, a Rome-based Catholic lay organization. The prize, which includes a gold medal and US\$ 160,000, was presented to Sant'Egidio's President Andrea Riccardi at the UNESCO headquarters in Paris on February 1. In announcing the prize on Jan. 27, former US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, who presided over the jury, said that the Sant'Egidio Community had been chosen for its work in favor of 'ecumenical reconciliation among all religions and for their work in Algeria, Mozambique, Guinea Bissau and Yugoslavia.'

Destruction of beef 'borders on perversion'

The Environmental Commission of the Archdiocese of Salzburg and 'Catholic Action' in Austria have criticized a decision of the European Commission to destroy millions of cows to stabilize meat prices and regain consumer trust within the framework of the mad cow disease crisis. 'To destroy healthy beef in Western Europe, while millions of people in Eastern Europe cannot afford meat, borders on perversion,' a Church statement said. The Salzburg Archdiocese and 'Catholic Action' also criticized the reduction of living creatures to goods or means of production and called for a transparent and environmentally friendly agrarian policy.



Vietnam: spiritual leaders call government to respect human and religious rights

Two Catholic priests and two Buddhist leaders from Vietnam have sent a joint appeal to their government to recognize human and religious rights as stipulated in UN charters. The signers of the appeal included Redemptorist Father Chan Tin, Father Thaddeus Nguyen Van Ly of Hue Archdiocese, Venerable Bhikkhu Thich Hanh, regional leader of unified Buddhism and Le Quang Liem, leader of Hoa Hao Buddhism. 'After the conquest of southern Vietnam on April 30, 1975, the Communist Party imposed inhuman restrictions on religions,' the religious leaders wrote. The four priests and monks denounced the suppression of religion in general, the nationalization of religious properties, the arbitrary detention of community leaders and the presence of Party infiltrators in religious groups. Despite this difficult situation, the spiritual leaders noted, 'religions have continued to resist peacefully and without violence, demanding full religious freedom, and they are determined to struggle to reach the authentic religious freedom that exists in most of the world's civilized countries.' One of the Catholic priests who signed the appeal to the government, Father Van Ly, is still under house arrest, after years of imprisonment and various court trials.

Slovakia: Orthodox and Byzantine-Catholic churches reach agreement on property issue

Slovakia's Orthodox and Byzantine-Catholic Churches have ended decade-long property disputes by signing a government-approved agreement. The property disputes focussed on more than 400 buildings of Slovakia's Byzantine-Catholic Church, which were transferred to the Orthodox in 1950, following the liquidation of the Byzantine-Catholic Church by the Communist government.

When the buildings were returned to the Catholics following the Velvet Revolution of 1989, this led to severe tensions with the Orthodox community, which had to give up 85% of its churches. The new agreement, signed in December by Byzantine-Catholic Bishop Jan Hirka of Presov and Orthodox Metropolitan Nikolai (Kocvar) of Michalovce-Slovakia, states that both communities agree to abandon current property demands and all related lawsuits. Instead, the Slovak government agrees to pay a total of 53.9 million Crowns (US\$1.3 million) to the two Churches to compensate for lost properties. Orthodox and Byzantine-Catholic spokespeople expressed their hope that the new accord would help solve similar property conflicts between Orthodox and Catholic communities in Romania and Ukraine.

Congo: population fears further escalation of violence

Although Kinshasa has remained relatively quiet following the assassination of President Laurent Kabila, the local population remains afraid of an escalation of violence, Sacred Heart Missionary Andreas Steiner told Kathpress. The vice-president of Caritas Congo, Bruno Meteyo confirmed that the airport of Kinshasa has remained open and that soldiers have remained in their barracks. The atmosphere in the country's other dioceses also continues to be peaceful, according to Meteyo. Congo's main rebel movement, the 'Rassemblement Congolais pour la Democratie' (RCD) has announced that they would not recognize Kabila's son Joseph as the country's new head of state. The Democratic Republic of Congo is not a 'monarchy', a RCD spokesman stated in Brussels on Thursday. However, in apparent contradiction to this statement, Joseph Kabila, 32, was called by the RCD to engage in dialogue with the warring factions which control other parts of Congo.

Indonesian Foreign minister promises to protect Christians against sectarian violence

During a Friday January 19 visit to the Vatican, Indonesian Foreign Minister Alwi Shihab emphasized his government's commitment to stop the sectarian violence against Christians in his mostly Islamic country. Shihab promised that his government was going to do 'everything possible' to re-establish Indonesia's 'traditional religious harmony.' During his meeting with Foreign Minister Shihab, Pope John Paul II expressed his concern with the 'recent tragic incidences of religious intolerance' in Indonesia. He also discussed the situation in East Timor, which recently gained its independence from Indonesia.

Sudanese army continues slave raids

Sudanese government troops continue to carry out slave raids, according to a recent statement of the Zurich-based humanitarian organization, Christian Solidarity International (CSI). The group denounced the enslavement on Jan. 12 of at least 103 women and children during coordinated army raids on the villages of Chelkou and Mabior in Aweil West County, Southern Sudan. According to CSI, the troops mostly belonged to the Popular Defense Forces (PDF), a branch of the Sudanese army. Local community leaders estimate the number of slaves living in northern Sudan at 100,000. Most were captured by soldiers or professional slave traders with the approval of the fundamentalist Muslim government of Khartoum within the framework of its Islamization and Arabization campaign of the mostly Christian, Animist and African South of the country. Once they arrive in the north, the Southern Sudanese slaves are divided among their masters and are regularly subjected to beatings, sexual abuse, work without pay, and forced conversion to Islam, according to UN sources.



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