

ANNALS

Australasia

Journal of Catholic Culture



2003 — 1
\$3.30*

PRINT POST APPROVED PP256003/01005

ANNALS AUSTRALASIA

Journal of Catholic Culture

Volume 114, Number 1 January/February 2003

[Sunday Year B/weekdays Year I]

Australia's Leading Catholic Magazine

Published by the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart (MSC) since 1889.

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Fantasy v. Reality about Iraq

As we go to press, most nations are holding their collective breath as the world's only superpower gears up for military action against Saddam Hussein's secularist regime in Iraq. OUR EDITORIAL looks at the background to the conflict, and raises some issues relevant to the debate.

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Cross - very Cross - writers in hot Ecclesial Pursuit

Books attacking the Catholic Church, and criticising the Holy Father and the Holy See are plentiful these days. We review for Annals readers a recent Australian edition of this genre.

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Final Farewell to the founder of Aid to the Church in Need

Annals pays tribute to the extraordinary achievements of Father Werenfried van Straaten, the Dutch Premonstratensian monk who died in his ninety-first year on Friday January 31 last in Bad Soden, near Königstein, Germany.

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Ghost Legions in Cyber Space

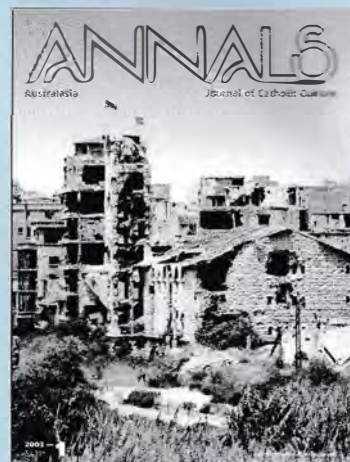
Latin is being taught in fewer and fewer of our schools, and [at least in Anglo-Saxon countries] Mass in Latin has been largely replaced by Mass in the vernacular. PAUL STENHOUSE maintains that the stately language of the Romans still exerts an influence that would surprise Julius Caesar and his legionaries.

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Almanach de Wagga: Tichborne Revisited

Roger Charles Tichborne, heir of an ancient Catholic English family from Hampshire, was never seen again after the ship *Bella* sank off the Brazilian coast in 1854. R.J. STOVE reviews a recent study of the notorious Tichborne claimant - a certain Arthur Orton, alias Tom Castro, a butcher from Wagga Wagga NSW.

Front cover photo: Paul Stenhouse MSC.



Front Cover: Beirut, before April 1975, was the jewel of the Mediterranean. Syrian invaders and their supporters among various Lebanese factions soon reduced a large part of the city and the once beautiful country, to ruins. Lebanon today has, for all practical purposes, been annexed by Syria with US and French approval. Our cover photo, taken in 1990, shows part of the ruined suburb of Chiyah, on the border between East and West Beirut. The ruined church with its mortar-riddled tower is the Maronite Church of St Michael.

Back Cover: A selection of books published by Chevalier Press. Ideal as Christmas or Easter gifts for relatives and friends interested in the Catholic Faith, for RCIA groups following catechism courses in preparation for baptism at Eastertime, or as school prizes.

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Executive Editor Chevalier Press: **Editor** *Annals Australasia*: Paul Stenhouse, MSC Ph.D; **Artwork**: Kevin Drumm. **Layout and Design**: Paul Stenhouse MSC. **Administration**: Hendrikus Wijono. Subscription: Bank/Visa/Master Cards accepted. Please make cheques, money orders payable to The Manager, *Annals Australasia*, 1 Roma Avenue (P.O. Box 13), Kensington, NSW Australia 2033. Correspondence: The Editor, P.O. Box 13, Kensington NSW Australia 2033. Phones: (02) 9662 7894/9662 7188 ext. 252. Fax: (02) 9662 1910. **Unsolicited material**: We regret that unsolicited material cannot be returned unless accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

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Printed by National Capital Printing, 22 Pirie Street, Fyshwick, ACT (02) 6280 7477.

Colour Separation David Graphics, 54 Rosebery Avenue, Rosebery, NSW 2018 Phone: (02) 8344 6700.

ABN 40 938 805 168 Dewey Number. 248-88 AT ISSN 0812-9355. Recommended Retail Price only.

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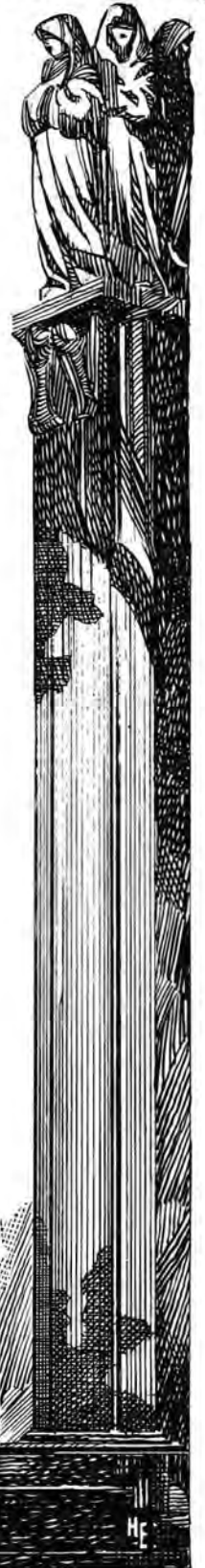
n the name of the Father,
and of the Son, and
of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.


Importance of the Sacrament of Penance

IN October 1983, in St Peter's Square, Pope John Paul II canonized a Capuchin priest, St Leopold Mandic. This diminutive priest had spent the entire span of his priestly life in the ministry of the confessional, day after day for fifty-two years. In this demanding work he was noted for his patience, gentleness, his ability to listen and to form consciences. His greatness, the Holy Father said, lay "in his fading into the background to give place to the true Shepherd of souls".

'There is also the danger that when the practice of confession diminishes, it will be followed by a decline in the theological and pastoral quality of the exercise of this ministry. Such an attitude is reflected in reconciliation services where the need for integrity in confession is played down with a view to making the sacrament more accessible for people. This approach betokens a false pastoral zeal because it undermines the conditions for the validity of the sacrament.'

— Thomas J. McGovern, *Priestly Identity*, 4 Courts Press, Dublin 2002, p. 247.





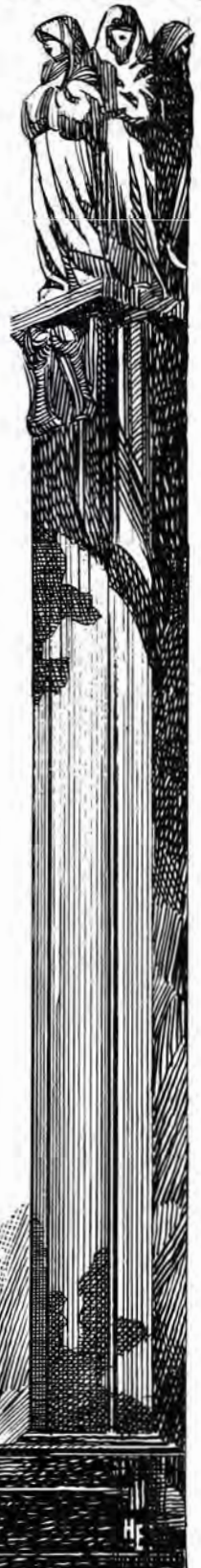
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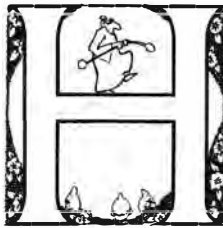
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US and her allies move towards war

FANTASY v. REALITY ABOUT IRAQ

As we go to press, most nations are holding their collective breath as the world's only superpower gears up for military action against Saddam Hussein's secularist regime in Iraq.

PAUL STENHOUSE looks at the background to the conflict, and raises some issues relevant to the debate.



HOW divisive the propaganda war for and against US and allied military intervention in Iraq has become can be illustrated by an insulting letter sent from the Netherlands to the Holy Father in the name of the Iraqi Kurds, but evidently written by others with a different agenda.¹ This letter claims that the Holy Father 'seems to be neglecting' appeals for help from the oppressed people of Iraq because of his opposition to the war, and the recent audience given to Tariq Aziz. It repeats slanders against Pope Pius XII in his dealings with the Nazis.

Annals Australasia supports the Holy Father in his opposition to military intervention against Iraq, and in his unceasing calls for an end to oppression of the Iraqi people by the Saddam Hussein regime, and in his desire for peace in the region. Had the Holy Father's opposition to the first Gulf War received more support, we would not now be facing the horrendous dilemmas and uncertainties conjured up by those who would unleash, yet again, the dogs of war.

The status quo

All decent-minded people breathed a sigh of relief when the US – still reeling from the September 11 attacks – managed to pull most of its troops safely out of Afghanistan after a relatively short and successful intervention against Usama bin Laden and his fanatical hosts, the Taliban Islamic militia, last year.

Such good as was achieved was in large part due to the cooperation of the wily General Musharrif in Pakistan [who has his own arsenal of weapons of mass destruction], and the temporary cessation of vendettas between Afghanistan's traditional war-lords and tribal factions. Without that support one can only speculate what might have happened – granted the millennia-long record of failure by foreign powers intervening in that highly

tribalised and mountainous country. World attention is now focussed on Iraq. The US and its allies are marshalling forces aimed at toppling this troubled country's current dictator Saddam Hussein, who seems hell-bent on inventing new superlatives for terms like 'insane,' 'cruel' and 'sadistic'. General Wafiq Samarai who was Saddam's Chief of Intelligence during the 8-year Iran-Iraq war and who later escaped the country, last year described the Iraqis as 'a divided and ruthless people. It is one of the most difficult nations in the world to govern'.² This may well prove to be true, but its paranoid leader, who has lived a relatively charmed life since he seized power in 1979, has re-written the textbooks on bloody repression and torture.³

Baghdad has been playing a dangerous waiting game ever since its invasion of Kuwait in 1990. Its situation took a turn for the worse as claims surfaced that it has been and is still supporting Usama bin Laden's al-Qa'ida ['model'] organization that claimed responsibility for the atrocities of September 11, 2001.

To compound the issue, Iraq's nuclear, biological and chemical warfare capacity, which had been preoccupying the US and the UN since before the first Gulf War, also resurfaced, and has become a major element in calls for a second war against Iraq.

Saddam Hussein al-Takriti is no stranger to the game of 'blind-man's buff' – the blind men, in this case, being the UN nuclear weapons Inspectors who have been led a merry dance as they try to discover whether Iraq [in the terms of UN Resolution 1441] really has an



Source of Human Misery

'I am sorry that I did not, in the execution of my self-created office as a reviewer, take an opportunity... to descant a little upon the miseries of war... There is more of misery inflicted upon mankind by one year of war than by all the civil peculations and oppressions of a century. Yet it is a state into which the mass of mankind rush with the greatest avidity, hailing official murderers, in scarlet, gold and cocks' feathers, as the greatest and most glorious of human creatures. It is the business of every wise and good man to set himself against this passion for military glory, which really seems to be the most fruitful source of human misery.'

– 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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— Editor, *Annals*

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arsenal of weapons of mass destruction. As they carry out their mandate to the best of their ability, they are led up many a dead-end designed ultimately to drain the US of its resolve, and of the support of some of its allies.

Beware the Winds of Spring and Summer

Spring is just around the corner in the Iraqi war zone, and so are the north-west winds that blow sand, according to travellers who passed that same way ages ago, as 'from a glass furnace,' and fill the eyes and lungs with grit that is a perpetual torment.

If the Allied forces are unwise enough to be in the desert in June, the 'continual wind that blows from the desert,' called by some the 'poison wind,' the south-east wind, is so devastating that even desert Arabs die from inhaling it if they do not keep their mouths and noses covered.⁴ The damage that these winds, and the sands they drive, can do to the mechanical offspring of today's Dr Strangeloves, is well known.

The heat in spring and summer can go up to 46.7°C [116 F] and beyond, with predictable consequences for soldiers rugged up in the body armour of today's fighting men and women.

Saddam Hussein's complex Background

Far from an evil and gigantic Goliath seeking to destroy innocent Saddam Hussein cast in the role of David [as some of the peace-niks would have us believe, and as the deceptively uncritical TV images imply], the US [if you can believe George Bush and his post-September 11 allies] is a 21st century version of Michaelangelo's larger-than-life David, pitting himself against the pint-size evil Golem a.k.a. Saddam Hussein who is just mad enough to enjoy a waiting game.

Neither view is wholly correct. What is certain is that Saddam Hussein is playing a waiting game;

and that the US and many in the West are tiring of playing it on his terms.

The Iraqi President has been playing this game since October 7, 1959 when he took part in an unsuccessful assassination attempt on the then Iraqi Prime Minister, Abdul Karim Qassem. On that occasion he was shot in the leg.

He grew up dirt-poor in a Sunni Arab village called al-Ouja located on a bend in the Tigris river about eight kilometers from Takrit in northern Iraq, the birthplace of Saladin whom Saddam has taken as a model [conveniently forgetting that Saladin was a Kurd].

None could have predicted that Saddam Hussein would become the 'sheikh' or patriarch of his clan, or that the ill-educated and unwanted child born in a mud hut, into an impoverished and notoriously violent clan of the al-Bu Nasir tribe, would turn into the powerful and cruel tyrant that he has become since seizing power from his cousin Ahmad Hasan al-Bakr, in June 1979.

His father reportedly deserted his family, and Saddam's step-father didn't like him. His mother reportedly didn't want him, and showed him no love.

'His own people'

Representatives of Western Powers aligning themselves against Saddam Hussein were recently reported as saying that if he is not stopped, Saddam Hussein will go on committing atrocities against 'his own people'. This phrase needs to be approached with caution. 'His people' are his family and clan relations, and tribal relations, and fellow townsmen from Takrit who are loyal to him. 'His people' belong to a kinship group that is narrowly defined, and not just by blood-lines. Those whom he has been responsible for killing would not fall within the parameters of 'his people' in his mind. Westerners may find this hard to grasp, but it is the reality.

Most of the circles of power that surround Hussein and protect him [and themselves] are made up of family members, close relatives,

Need for Constant Witness

AS a Bishop from the American continent who has resided in Europe for 20 years, I am deeply grateful for continental Synodal Assemblies. They are moments rich in substance and of inestimable value in fostering fraternal relations and affective collegiality. At the risk of over simplification, I want to emphasize that many of the challenges and problems in Europe are found already in my own nation.

We Americans also are faced with the question of how to confront the culture in which we live. We have adapted ourselves, often too successfully, to a pluralist, and today corrupt, culture.

We are today speaking not so much of inculturation as of building also a Christian Catholic culture that will be more effective in evangelizing the wider culture in which we live.



More than ever we see the necessity of reaffirming our Catholic identity, We must not be seen as a useful accessory in a multicultural society.

St Augustine's famous expression can enlighten us: 'Two loves built two cities: the earthly one by love of self to the point of contempt of God; the heavenly one by love of God to the contempt of self' (*De Civitate Dei*, XIV, 28).

The two cities have coexisted and will coexist until the parousia. The great questions will always be: 'What say you of Christ?' Our

response to this crucial question must always be clear, unambiguous, bold not timid. The mystery of iniquity must be combated by our profession of faith in the Incarnation: Passion, Death and Resurrection of the Eternal Son of God, coupled with the consistent witness to him before God and man.

- Cardinal William Baum, *Osservatore Romano*, 17/11/1999.

members of his clan, members of his tribe, and finally members of the ruling Ba'ath [Resurrection] party.⁵ All have a stake in his survival, and none will long survive his fall. All are 'his people'.

The same cannot be said for the rest of the Iraqis. More than 65% of the population of Iraq is Shi'ite, and the rest of the population is Sunni Muslim [Arabs or Kurds], or Christian. Other Sunni Arabs suffer under the heel of the Takriti clans and the more than 15 tribes affiliated with the al-Bu Nasir; as do the Kurds and of course the Shi'ites whose cousins across the Shatt-al-

Arab in Iran are playing their own waiting game.

Iraq's Bloody Past

On July 14, 1958, the entire Iraqi Royal family was murdered in a bestial fashion in a pro-Nasser coup. Abdul Karim Qassem murdered 23-year-old King Faisal II, his uncle the Regent, several women of the royal family, the prime minister Nuri Said Pasha, Nuri's son and others.⁶

Qassem went on to become the first Prime Minister of the Republic of Iraq. He was put to death on July 8, 1963 by, among others, Abdul

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Salam Arif, who assumed the presidency of Iraq, and died mysteriously in a helicopter accident on April 15, 1966.

Abdul Rahman Arif, his brother, succeeded Abdul Salam as President, but was ousted in a coup d'Etat on July 17, 1968. He lived in exile in Istanbul and later returned to Baghdad. He was succeeded by Saddam Hussein's cousin Ahmad Hasan al-Bakr proclaimed President on July 30, 1968, who stepped down, citing 'ill health' as an excuse on July 17, 1979, and was succeeded by Saddam Hussein whose lamentable record of violence, murder, assassinations and

cruelty is well documented. Had he not invaded Kuwait in 1990 he would probably have gone on oppressing the Iraqi people uncriticised by the West apart from isolated articles, and sporadic appeals from Iraqi dissidents abroad, all largely unheeded.

Does 'Silence Give Consent'?

September 11, 2001 has highlighted an unpleasant side to our national character – too common among all nations: we intervene militarily and decisively usually only when atrocities, terror and

mass-murder are perpetrated against us on our home turf.

The oppression of the Iraqi people has been going on ever since the British occupied that part of the old Ottoman empire in 1918. Faisal I was Iraq's first king in modern times, and a wise one by all accounts. But he died in 1933 of heart problems in Switzerland. His son Ghazi I died mysteriously on April 3, 1939 when his car hit a lamppost. The regent who succeeded him during the infancy of his son King Faisal II, was murdered along with the young king in 1958. Since then Iraq has suffered from generations of psychopaths and power-hungry monsters posing as Prime Ministers and Presidents. Where were the voices in the West loudly raised in protest during those years?

Recently I listened to UK Prime Minister Tony Blair outlining the 'moral' [as against the 'military'] grounds for intervention against Iraq. Without doubt there are strong grounds for moving against Saddam Hussein's regime. On April 5, 1991, the UN [notoriously selective in such matters] finally brought down Resolution 688 that noted the violations and called for an end to repression, and immediate access by humanitarian organisations.

In the same news broadcast I heard that Uday Hussein, Saddam's eldest son, by all accounts a sadist if not completely mad, had Iraqi Olympians who did not meet his expectations, tortured. Yet, reports of a prison and torture chamber in the headquarters of the Iraq Olympic Committee have been circulating for some time. If the Weapons Inspectors can't find evidence of a nuclear or biological arsenal, maybe they could check the Olympic Committee's Building and help implement UN Resolution 688.

Is a War called for Now?

The Sunni minority [especially the minority Takritis] do not have a firm hold on power in Iraq; disaffected Sunnis, the Shi'ite majority and Kurdish minority are white-anting the Takriti strongholds as troops move into position. No outsiders need inter-

vene, for the days of Saddam Hussein, along with his dreams of dynastic rule through his son Qusay, his clan and his tribes, are numbered. Saddam doubtless remembers, even if the US and its allies never knew, that in the year 946 AD three former caliphs of the 'Abbasid dynasty – al-Qahir, al-Muttaqi and al-Mustakfi – were to be seen in Baghdad, deposed and blinded, begging in the streets they had once ruled. Foreign intervention now – however well-intentioned – can only further muddy the murky and noisome waters of the Iraqi quicksand.

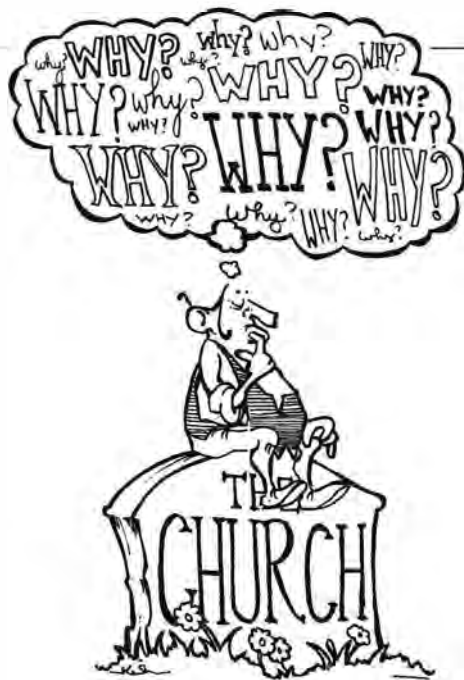
Numbered, too, are the days of the Alawite minority that dominates the Sunni majority in Syria, and rules [ironically with US approval] through surrogates in Lebanon. The Nusayr clan of Hafez al-Assad [now dead] clings to power in the person of Assad's son, Bashar. They dare not relax the reins of power, either, for fear of the terrible consequences as Sunnis wreak vengeance for years of oppressive domination by this Ishma'elite sect of the Shi'a.

So, too, are the days of the Wahhabis numbered, in what today is called pretentiously 'Saudi' Arabia. The followers of Ibn Saud and Abd al-Wahhab, for all their puritanical fervour and skill in dissimulating [before they came out of the desert and seized Mecca in 1924 and Medina in 1925 the Wahhabis were regarded as non-Muslims by Sunni Muslims, and prohibited from entering Mecca] have won no hearts among the Muslim poor and oppressed. They will not long outlast their Platinum credit cards.

Arguments against the war

As mentioned above, Saddam's store of weapons of mass-destruction are a major refrain in the pro-war mantras ringing out in the West. Some points, seldom raised, that deserve consideration, are:

1. It was conventional weaponry [not nuclear, biological or chemical weapons] that destroyed large parts of London, Liverpool, Coventry and Glasgow, razed Tokyo and the German cities obliterated during World War II.



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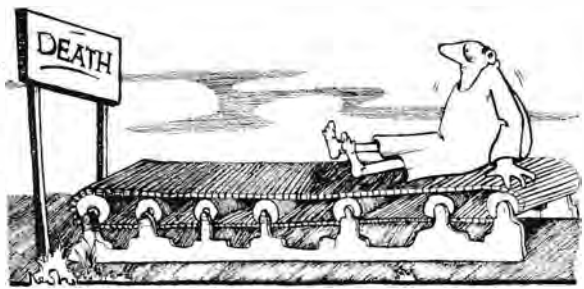
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2. It is overstating the case to say that 'Iraq' possesses weapons of mass-destruction. If it be proven that such weapons exist, Saddam Hussein and his cronies are not 'Iraq'. Attacking centres of high population density like Baghdad, Mosul, Basra and the Iraqi populace *en bloc* [and inevitably causing what is euphemistically termed 'collateral damage'] can only further distort the image of the US and the West in the minds of the mass of the Muslim poor, who want and deserve to be saved from Saddam Hussein and his ilk, even more than George Bush does.

3. Assuming that allied bombing puts Saddam to flight or succeeds in killing him, it is naïve in the extreme to think that there won't be bloody reprisals against the Sunni Arabs who have exercised minority rule since Ottoman times, by the oppressed majority Shi'a, and minorities like the Sunni Kurds. It is also a pipe-dream to think that the Iraqi people will tolerate yet another 'outsider' to be foisted on them. And as for US plans for a military regime to be set up, as reported in the press recently,⁸ one can only wonder who is responsible for these nightmarish scenarios.

4. King Faisal apart, all of Saddam's predecessors since 1918 were murdered, executed or deposed. Saddam shows every sign of revelling in his defiance of the US and the UN; he seems to want Bush to attack Iraq in order to kill him. 'Do not think you will get revenge,' Saddam told a family that complained that one of their members had been unjustly executed, 'by the time you get to us there will not be a sliver of flesh on our bodies'.⁹ The unwanted, sad child from the tiny village of al-Ouja, seemingly gone mad, wants like some modern Pharaoh, to be accompanied in death by as many corpses as modern warfare can supply. It would be unwise of the US and the West to oblige him.

5. If the war goes ahead, it is more than likely that someone from the Shi'a majority will seize power.



What we humans find hardest to bear

WHAT are these 'necessities' from which we pray to be delivered? Can they be listed? Can anyone worthily exaggerate their importance? Can anyone rightly encourage others to avoid or flee them?

The first and hardest necessity for human being is not being able to know another's heart: to think evil often of a faithful friend; and to think well, often, of an unfaithful friend. This is difficult to endure. What means have you of seeing into another's heart? What kind of eye does weak and wretched mortality possess? What can you do, today, to see into the heart of your brother? There is nothing that you can do to achieve this. And there is an even greater constraint upon you: for you can't even see into your own heart: or what you will be tomorrow.

Another 'necessity' is that we must die. No one desires this of course. But it is indeed a painful thing to be unwilling to accept what cannot be avoided. If we could, we would will not to die, and become like the angels, but by a kind of change other than death. We want to go to heaven, but not by way of death. And yet necessity says to us: come this way. Can we hesitate to take this way, when God himself took this path to us?

Yet another 'necessity' is the conquering of primaeval lusts and evil habits. You cannot be unaware how hard a fight it is to conquer habit. You see how evilly you act, how detestfully and unhappily, and yet you continue: you did so yesterday, and will act thus today. Is there not a certain force in your members that fights against the law of your mind?

Cry out therefore, 'What will free me from the body of this death? The Grace of God through Jesus Christ Our Lord.'

— St Augustine of Hippo, 354-430 *In Ps xxx, II, 13* preached at Hippo, in 392 A.D.

Were that to happen it is at least possible that Iraq and Iran might consider a union of the two countries that would re-constitute the old Persian empire that fell when Sa'd ibn abi Waqqas conquered Ctesiphon in 637 AD [Baghdad was built nearby from its ruins]. This would mightily upset the balance of power in the region, and give George Bush more sleepless nights than his problems with Saddam Hussein.

6. If, as is alleged, the US has been putting pressure on King Abdullah of Jordan to permit them to use Jordan as a base for

military action against Iraq,¹⁰ this risks toppling the Hashemite throne and inviting the Alawites of Syria to take the spoils. Syria has long regarded Jordan as part of its natural territory, and after its relatively unopposed annexation of Lebanon, may well be looking for fresh fields to conquer. What this development will do to the vexed question of Israel and the Palestinians can only be imagined.



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— Editor. *Annals Australasia*.

1. See www.kurdmedia.com
2. 'Tales of the Tyrant,' by Mark Bowden. *The Atlantic Monthly*, May 2002.
3. See Report of Max van der Stoep. Special Reporter to the UN Commission on Human Rights to the 54th Session of the UN Commission in Geneva, April 14, 1998.
4. See, e.g. Pietro della Valle, *The Travels of ...* London, [1664, 1665] p.260 quoted C.P. Grant, *The Syrian Desert*, London 1937, p.206.
5. Christian M. Weber, *DefenseWatch Magazine*, October 2002.
6. Scott Gibbon, *The Conspirators*, London, 1967, p.154.
7. February 22, 2003.
8. *The Weekend Australian*, Saturday February 22:
9. Andrew and Patrick Cockburn, *Out of the Ashes*, 1999.
10. See, e.g. *The Observer*, July 7, 2002.

THOUGHT FROM THE LITURGY OF THE DAY



MARCH

1 Sat Week 7 Lent Ps 103:13
Our Father knows of what we are made; he remembers that we are dust.

2 Sunday Week 8 Hos 2:19
I betroth you to myself with integrity and justice, with tenderness and love.

3 Mon Week 8 Sirach 17:29
How great is the mercy of the Lord. He pardons all who turn to him.

4 Tues Week 8 Mat 11:25
You have revealed to little ones the mysteries of the kingdom.

5 Ash Wednesday Joel 2:12
Come back to me with all your heart.

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

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

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

9 Sunday Lent Week 1 Ps 25:9
The Lord guides the humble in the right path; he teaches his way to the poor.

10 Mon Lent Week 1 Ps 19:8
The precepts of the Lord gladden the heart.

11 Tues Lent Week 1 Ps 34:5
Look to the Lord and be radiant.

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

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

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

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

16 Sun Lent Week 2 Ps 116:15
Precious in the eyes of the Lord is the death of his faithful.

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

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

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

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

22 Sat Lent Week 2 Luke 15:8
I will rise and go to my Father

23 Sun Lent Week 3 John 3:16
God loved the world so much that he gave us his only Son.

24 Mon Lent Week 3 Ps 95:8
If today you hear God's voice, do not harden your heart.

25 Tues Annunciation Jn 1:14 1
The Word was made flesh and pitched his tent among us.

26 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.

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

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

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

30 Sun Lent Week 4 Eph 2:4
God loved us with so much love that he was generous with his mercy.

31 Mon Lent Week 4 Ps 30:10
You listened and had pity. You came to my help. I will thank you forever

Thoughts compiled by Father Michael Fallon, MSC.



Be ready for the unexpected

THERE was a story in Jerusalem so true or so well told that I can see the actors in it like figures in coloured costumes on a lighted stage. It occurred during the last days of Turkish occupation, while the English advance was still halted before Gaza, and heroically enduring the slow death of desert warfare. There were German and Austrian elements present in the garrison with the Turks, though the three allies seem to have held strangely aloof from each other. In the Austrian group there was an Austrian lady, 'who had some dignity or other,' like Lord Lundy's grandmother. She was very beautiful, very fashionable, somewhat frivolous, but with fits of Catholic devotion. She had some very valuable Christian virtues, such as indiscriminate charity for the poor and indiscriminate loathing for the Prussians. She was a nurse; she was also a nuisance. One day she was driving just outside the Jaffa Gate, when she saw one of those figures which make the Holy City seem like the eternal crisis of an epic. Such a man will enter the gate in the most ghastly rags as if he were going to be crowned king in the city; with his head lifted as if he saw apocalyptic stars in heaven, and a gesture at which the towers might fall. This man was ragged beyond all that moving rag-heap; he was as gaunt as a gallows tree, and the thing he was uttering with arms held up to heaven was evidently a curse. The lady sent an inquiry by her German servant, whom also I can see in a vision, with his face of wood and his air of still trailing all the heraldic trappings of the Holy Roman Empire. This ambassador soon returned in state and said, 'Your Serene High Sublimity (or whatever it is), he says he is cursing the English.' Her pity and patriotism were alike moved; and she again sent the plenipotentiary to discover why he cursed the English, or what tale of wrong or ruin at English hands lay behind the large gestures of his despair. A second time the wooden intermediary returned and said, 'Your Ecstatic Excellency (or whatever be the correct form), he says he is cursing the English because they don't come.'

— G.K. Chesterton, *The New Jerusalem*.

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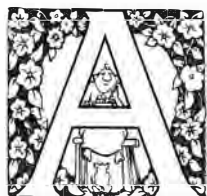
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Annals reviews the latest assault on the Rock of Peter

CROSS – VERY CROSS – WRITERS IN ECCLESIAL HOT PURSUIT

By IAN MACDONALD



AMBIGUOUS main title. Does it mean Australia is still a long way from Rome? Surely not with jet travel, global systems for mobile and the Internet? Or does it mean that Australians are psychologically, culturally and/or theologically a long way from Rome? And is this the reason why the Australian Catholic Church is in crisis?

Puzzlement is compounded in reading the book's various pieces. There is much modish cant pro multiculturalism and con the Church's male hierarchy. Yet the book's contributors are drawn from a narrow cultural base. A writer of Italian culture, say, might have done something to offset the subtext that the foreignness of the Vatican is incompatible with fair, dinkum, egalitarian Australia. Or a Chinese-Australian might have suggested that adherence to Rome's doctrinal authority can be maintained despite dungeons, if not fire and sword, even in a country with an ancient, pre-Roman culture.

The editor Chris McGillion, in a fine display of male hierarchy, gets star billing above the title. His superior in media status, the lustrous Geraldine Doogue, only gets second billing below the title as writer of the foreword in which she finds solace in veteran hack Donald Horne and Mr Focus Group himself, Hugh Makay.

And of the magnificent seven main contributors only two are women. Where are the other Catholic women writers to join Morag Fraser and Juliette Hughes, the dynamic duo from *Eureka Street*? Where is Ita Buttrose? Where is Jane Fraser? And where, oh, where, is Germaine Greer?

All in all, however, this is a rich

A Long Way From Rome: Why the Australian Catholic Church is in Crisis
 Edited by Chris McGillion
 Allen & Unwin \$29.95

piece: clerical sexual abuse of children.

diff of a book, deeply serious yet inadvertently funny; so a tasting of each piece is in order.

As editor McGillion not only writes the introduction but provides the opening, keynote piece: *Visions, Revisions and Scandal: A Church in Crisis* and a possibly otiose though zealous *Afterword*. His comments on the Statement of Conclusions in which the Vatican dared to criticise aspects of local Catholicism, including negative aspects of egalitarianism, telegraph his biases with not one but two references to the Vatican's 'alleged crisis'.

Got it. In a book about crisis, the Vatican's is merely alleged where McGillion's is the deadset reality. Talking of which, McGillion makes much of the scandal aspect of his

piece: clerical sexual abuse of children.

But he provides little context: no mention of the reality that child sexual abuse has a long history as its Greek name paedophilia indicates, none that most sexual abuse takes place within the family, none of the seismic shift in morality during the Sixties whose romanticised rebels, the Paris students of '68, had child sex on their program as a means of attacking bourgeois morality, none of the worldwide pornography industry with its child abuse product, the watching of which is deemed by some as intrinsic to civil liberties.

Here it must be emphasised that to provide context does not mitigate the grievousness of child abuse, nor of the special breach of trust when the abuse involves a cleric, nor of the trans-generational harm the offences can cause to families and the Church. Context, however, does mark the difference between deadline-headline journalism and judicious history.

Damian Grace, associate professor in the school of social work, University of New South Wales, writes on *Why People Don't Listen to the Pope*. He provides an early sample of his distinctive style by referring to the 'Church's 2000-year-old tradition that is said to extend back to the Apostles'.

Either it does or it doesn't. If Grace has proof to the contrary let him cite it, not haver. But this may be asking too much of a writer who takes a firm grip of a metaphor about the Church being a club, and proceeds to use it as if it were the jawbone of an ass and he were Samson smiting the Philistines.

Grace, you see, objects to the Church/club's rules and regulations, seemingly unaware that local culture is sustained by clubs: bowling, cricket, football (all codes), ex-service,

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with socially beneficial codes of conduct. But to the self-evident value of club structure, Grace prefers his notion of an 'invisible Church'. He does not, however, specify how such a Church's members would retain their cohesion and confess Christ before men. Would his 'invisible church' be essentially an anarchic one? Or would it simply be the inspiration for another handwinger: *Unseen from Rome: Why the Australian Catholic Church is in Chaos*.

Grace does make a reference to cover-ups in business. He fails, however, to follow through on the obvious point that cover-up is the reflex of all organisations in trouble. Even newspapers have been known to use the mantra 'commercial in confidence'. And confidentiality clauses are standard to out of court settlements of media libel actions.

Morag Fraser also criticises what she sees as the anti-egalitarianism of the Statement of Conclusions. But in her description of a priest's actions in repeatedly rescuing a down-and-out, she appears to confuse egalitarianism with heroic virtue. And she is certainly not one of *The Silenced Majority* she writes about.

Perhaps she should have a word with fellow contributor, scientist John Carmody, (*The Lost Art of Catholic Ritual*). He writes: 'European Australia is the most anti-intellectual and hence unspiritual culture in the Western world. We are an utterly, perhaps irredeemably, secular society.'

If the Vatican Statement of Conclusions had said that, it would have been on for young and old. It may be that objections were not to the document's content but to its non-local source. Australians take criticism from insiders more easily (or less reluctantly) than from outsiders. Indeed, the document may indicate knowledge of this by using egalitarian in its locally accepted sense. But how true is this to reality? Egalitarian is no more than a shibboleth in a polity where the gap between rich and poor is wider still and wider.

The Juliette Hughes piece *Popular Culture's New High Priests* opens with a nostalgic passage in which she refers to 'lacy cassocks'. Surplices, yes, albs, yes. But cassocks? She is positive about aspects of pop and rock culture.



Entertainment Inc.

THE fixation on self first became obvious with rock 'n' roll, which evolved into 'hard' rock. 'The extrovert, the hedonist, the madman, the criminal, the suicide, or the exhibitionist can rise to heroic stature in rock for the same reasons that Byron or Raskolnikov became Romantic heroes – profligacy and murder are expressions of an emotional intensity that defies the limits imposed by nature and society.' Now we have moved on to rap, which is even less constrained. Its performers don't just sing about criminals, some of them are criminals. Which does not seem to diminish their popularity.

What we hear in rap is paralleled elsewhere in popular culture in varying degrees. That the movies feature sex, violence, and vile language is not news. Car chases ending in flaming crashes, the machine-gunning of masses of people, explosions of helicopters, the liberal production of corpses, language previously not heard even in semipolite society, these are now standard fare. It is no doubt true that Hollywood is appealing to profitable adolescent audiences, which appear to think that dismemberments and obscenities are an excellent evening's entertainment. But there is probably more to these developments than that. Many in Hollywood insist upon a liberal lacing of foul language in their films because they regard brutality and obscenity as signs of 'authenticity'.

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

No mention of the manifest corruption of the industry from which rock and pop flow. And in praising the Olympic Games, she neglects to mention the welter of bribery and skulduggery from which, ironically, the multi-billion Sydney 2000 Olympics rescued it (temporarily?) while local hospitals, schools and public housing needed funds.

Michael Mullins (*Has the Church a Future? The Generational Divide*) is also terminologically vague in a reference to Pope John Paul II's condemning celebrities 'for wearing crucifixes as fashion accessories'. Was it crucifixes or crosses? In any case, Mullins appears to take exception to the appropriateness of the strictures. This at a time when intellectual property lawyers feast on the result of trademark and logo defence cases, including defence of the International Red Cross and Crescent symbols.

Mullins is not alone among the essayists in taking exception to the exercise of papal authority. Here that marvellous, old notion about the larikin independence of Aussies may be in play. Or is it that for the most over-governed and bureaucratised nation (per capita) on the planet, the Vatican is one bureaucracy too many? When Mullins discusses the generational divide, he does so in terms of Generations X and Y and other marketing jargon.

No mention of the Antioch movement which has brought together so many young Catholics, nor of the St Vincent de Paul Society, nor of Opus Dei nor that greater powerhouse, the Catholic Women's League.

Paul Collins (*Imagination Abandoned*) cites Pope John Paul II's 'important homily' during the Mother Mary McKillop beatification ceremony in Sydney in 1995 supporting the spiritual value of lonely places, a citation that is a welcome change from the Collins attitude in *Papal Power*.

He goes on to write that this theme has 'essentially been ignored ever since, except by priests and religious brothers and sisters working in Aboriginal ministry ... As such it is a theological imagination available to all Australians but one that remains marginalised from the mainstream Church.'

Again marketing jargon fudges the issue. Had Collins seen the matter in terms of the Church being the mystical body of Christ, he would have surely realised that all Catholics share in the lonely place spirituality of priests, religious brothers and nuns as they share in the monastic and conventual spirituality of the Church's enclosed orders.

Subsequently, he goes into invective

tive spasm about contemporary Catholicism being 'filled with the superficially attractive messages of exotic religions or New Age fantasies'. He lays no specific blame, not even on the Vatican. Wonders will never cease.

This is journalism in paperback. Your reviewer had trouble defining its overall tone. Then he realised what it echoed: John O'Brien's immortal and doomy line from his poem *Said Hanrahan*: 'We'll all be rooned.'

So the book should be ignored? By no means. Its intentions are good and do not pave the way to hell. Its writers deserve sympathy, for like this reviewer, they suffer from chronic *cacoenthes scribendi* - the itch to write. Moreover as every hack knows even a once over lightly cuttings job can be the beginnings of a more considered wisdom.

To buy or not to buy? Well, the work is thought-provoking. And the thought it provokes is that the Catholic Church, in Australia and elsewhere, has been in crisis since its inception. It can be seen as a divinely instituted organisation to free human generations from the chain reaction of crises which they must endure until the end of time, remembering that the heroic saviour who founded the Church said: 'Behold I am with you all days even to the consummation of the world.'

Note: A comparison between Church and State attitudes to child sexual abuse can perhaps be made following a High Court judgment on such cases brought before the court by State education authorities. These involved children and their teachers in New South Wales and Queensland schools during the 1960s and 1970s (Cynthia Banham, *The SMH*, February 7).

By a six-to-one majority, the High Court decided that State education authorities were not legally liable for teacher-pupil sex abuse. There you have it: the States did not accept legal responsibility; the Church and its orders accepted moral responsibility for such abuse by teachers and clerics, and paid appropriate compensation while instituting due reform.



IAN MACDONALD is the pen-name of a prominent Sydney journalist and author.

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— Editor, *Annals*

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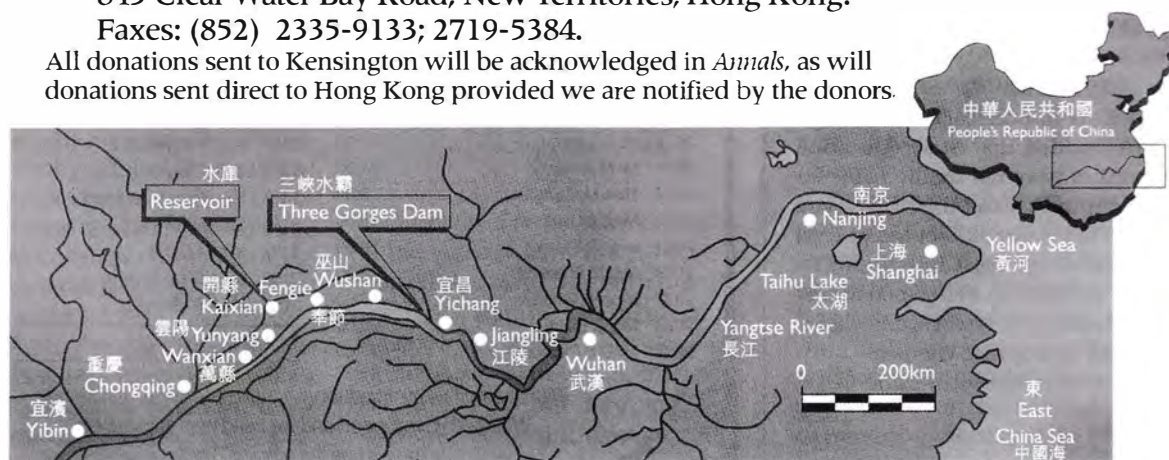
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In praise of convent education

DE *Institutione Feminae Christianae* by Juan Luis Vives, tutor to Princess (later Queen) Mary, had a greater success abroad than it enjoyed in England: for the Reformation cut England off from the Catholic culture of the continent. Vives, as a Spaniard and as a Catholic, became suspect. His works were banned here, as was Sir Thomas More's *Utopia* which also went abroad for its popularity. On the continent there were many editions of Vives translated into French. One of these editions of *De Institutione*, translated by Antoine Tiron, was published, in 1579, by the famous press of Christopher Plantin, printer to the King of Spain, and includes a letter from that publisher addressed to two men, Sebastian Cuypres and Pierre Heins. They were schoolmasters who kept a school for girls in Antwerp.

In England the Reformation was disastrous to the education for women, for the convent schools were destroyed.



Thomas Becon, writing his *Catechism* in the reign of Edward VI, after the dissolution of the monasteries, laments the disappearance of the convent schools, and his testimony is that of a contemporary. Miss Dorothy Gardiner, whose book on the subject of girls' education is most valuable, writes:

'It is remarkable that from his pen there should proceed the highest commendation of nunnery schools and the most genuine, reasoned expression of regret at their removal.

'Writing of the education of girls, he says:

'To this end, without doubt in the beginning were the monasteries of solitary women – called nuns, built and set up and endowed with possessions of our godly ancestors ... The young maids were not enforced to wear this or that apparel; to abstain from this or that kind of meats, to sing this or that service; to say so many prayers, to shave their heads, to vow chastity, and for ever to abide in the cloister ... For all that they were commanded to do of their schoolmistresses and governesses was nothing else than the doctrine of the Gospel, and matters appertaining unto honest and civil manners, whom they most willingly obeyed ... and would God there were some consideration of this matter had among the rulers of the Christian commonwealth, that the young maids might be godly brought up.'

He goes on to plead:

'If it be thought convenient ... that schools should be erected ... for the right education and bringing up of the youth of the male kind, why should it not also be thought convenient that schools be built for the youth of the female kind? Is not the woman the creature of God as well as the man? And as dear unto God as the man? Is not the woman a necessary member of the commonwealth? ... they do no less deserve well of the Christian commonwealth that found and establish schools with honest

stipends for the education of boys.'

'His ideas appear to have awakened very little, if any, immediate response.'

The convents were destroyed and their schools were not replaced; and with the monastic institutions were destroyed the hospitals and the Guilds. The poor, the sick, the old and the young, all the most helpless and suffering members of the community, lost all the succour and compassion that this world held for them.

– Olga Hartley, *Women and the Catholic Church*, 1935.

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GRAFFITI

Every day more than 1 million passengers travel in 1458 carriages over the 2,060 kms of railway tracks around New South Wales. This is the fourth in our series of articles by FATHER MAX BARRETT CSSR on commuter extraordinaire Joseph Meagher.



IT WAS one of those rare mornings when (a) the 8.05 departed on time and (b) the devotees of Compartment No. 1 were not waiting for Joe Meagher to put the ball into the scrum. There was among them a general murmur, a pained protest of "Oh, no!" The entire carriage was littered with graffiti: graffiti on graffiti. There must have been a 'tag', a group, at work and each member had contributed of his energetic worst.

Joe looked as dismayed as any other passenger. But he was the first to recover and he sang, softly at first before ending on a robust crescendo:

*The idiot who, in railway carriages,
Scribbles on window panes;
We only suffer to ride on the buffer
In Parliamentary Trains.
My object all sublime –*

The vocalist made an inclusive gesture towards his neighbour and explained, as it were, apologetically: "I used to do a bit of amateur *Gilbert and Sullivan*." After a short walk down memory lane he added: "They said I would have been good if only I had a voice and a bit of acting ability and had been less bumble-footed in the choreography ..."

"Graffiti. Do you recall the story

about the gent who saw written up on a wall, 'I hate graffiti.' The gent took out his piece of chalk and wrote, 'I hate *all* Italian cooking.'

Apparently a few in the carriage had not heard, because there was a light burst of laughter. Joe, oblivious as ever of the carrying power of his voice, looked around and wondered what he had missed, then returned to the seemingly limitless world of his own thoughts.

"Did you know," again, his left flanker was the recipient of a confidence, "did you know that graffiti means 'scratchings'? That interests me. You may recall at school how the teacher would sometimes run her nails down the blackboard, and the scratching sound made your blood run cold. I think that some of the graffiti merchants do much the same thing – deliberately. They feel the Establishment has let them down, and they're angry, so they scratch to let us know that all is not well in the state of Denmark."

To Joe's delight, discussion took on something in the nature of an open forum. A man in uniform remarked ominously that graffiti styles are identifiable; that the police were able to trace scratchings to individual sources.

Among the passengers this day was a middle-aged lady, refinement personified, who gave the impression of one on the way to have her hair set before meeting her sister at City Tatts for lunch. She wore the most serious expression as she spoke her query with delightful, impeccable diction: "I have sometimes wondered: could there be some genetic link between these graffiti people; something akin to a weak bladder in canines; some need to splatter, splatter, splatter all over the place? Do you know what I mean?" That broke up the discussion for quite a few moments.

Yet another lady volunteered an opinion: "At least, today's graffiti is not coarse; not indecent. It seems to me the poor kids want to be noticed – like the people who dye their hair a deep scarlet or an electric blue."

"Trouble is," (this contribution proceeded from a standee) "the kids today have too much."

Joe's response was deferential. "Could be. But it could also stem from the fact that they have too little."

Regular passengers on the 8.05 knew well enough not to buy in to one of the Meagher paradoxes, so they waited for him to elaborate. It was not an interminable wait.



"They may have too little supervision. They may have too little by way of *limitation* placed on them.

"Permissiveness is part of our changed culture. But that is not always in the best interests of our young folk. Young people need reasonable and clearly-defined boundaries. Without clear borders, juveniles are insecure. And sometimes they strike out, angrily, because they are insecure.

"One of my grandsons clued me in on something he had found on the Internet. In South Australia, I think it was, a number of graffiti freaks had been identified by reason of hidden surveillance cameras on railway stations. Together with parents and police officers, they viewed the video footage. The parents were surprised; they had no idea their son (or daughter) was at large at that time of night. That's my point about *too little*. Too little structure about appropriate social freedoms for a young teenager.

"Do you recall the smart saying of some years back that 'There are no delinquent children - only delinquent parents'? I have always found that aphorism phoney and unfair. However, parents can be remiss in not insisting; while you are our responsibility, our loving responsibility: *thus far, no further*."

"Establish reasonable limits, and trust. When young people know they are valued and trusted, they don't resort to ugly acts.

Joe mused a while. He signalled his return to circulation by song, humming a bar of *I still call Australia home*. Then:

"I love this country. I am always proud to call Australia *home*. But we are not handling our heritage with due ... reverence. We've imported ugliness in the form of violence and greed. What the kids do with their spray paint is just the reflection of our own loss of direction."

Joe rested his head back and directed a broad smile at the ceiling. "I remember the Sesquicentenary celebrations in Sydney. I recall where we stood in Oxford Street, my Dad and

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brother and I. When all the floats had rolled by, we made our way to the Quay ... across to Manly ... We walked along the boulevard at South Steyne, under those magnificent Norfolk Pine. Dad had had a few sherbets by this time. He was mellow, and patriotic. 'We have brought these trees to this point. It's up to you to safeguard them into the future.' I remember being dismayed! I was all for what Dad had said. But, as

a 10-year-old, I didn't feel adequate for the nurturing of these giants.

"Now I understand. This lovely country is *ours*; it is a trans-generationally *ours*. If I disfigure it, I am harming myself. At every stage of life, I have the honour of running for Australia. If I drop the baton, I let down both country and self."



[TO BE CONTINUED]



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Latin is being taught in fewer and fewer of our schools, and [at least in Anglo-Saxon countries] Mass in Latin has been largely replaced by Mass in the vernacular.

PAUL STENHOUSE *maintains that the stately language of the Romans still exerts an influence that would surprise Julius Caesar and his legionaries.*



NE evening in late November last year, as I was driving home, I tuned into an FM station to hear someone describing the next musical treat. It was to be mediaeval motets, but their Latin titles were mangled beyond recognition by the hapless DJ whose education, seemingly, hadn't included Latin. For Latin, like riding a horse or push-bike, is something one hardly ever entirely forgets. Despite the lamentable pronunciation, the beauty of the music and the Latin phrasing hit the spot.

Latin for all our current neglect of its teaching in our schools, pervades our lives and language. The cultural and linguistic outreach of imperial Rome, directly or through its colonies, extended further than that of few empires before or since.

Australians complaining of the influence of American English on our language, or American ideas on our culture, would have found counterparts in Iceland, Egypt, Parthia and Armenia lamenting the assaults of Caesar's language on their linguistic fortresses.

The ghosts of Rome's legions walk our streets, write for our newspapers and appear daily on TV. Their voices are heard in outer space.

From childhood I was suspicious of the Puritan poet Milton. My mother who loved Anglo-Saxon explained that he exerted a powerful influence on changes that have occurred in our English language.

If it were possible to use a Latin word rather than an English or Saxon one, he would do so.

But then, as I discovered, he had

problems: had he written 'freedom' instead of 'liberty' would the sense of this verse [whose words of Latin origin are italicised] have rung so clear:

'But what more apt, in nations grown corrupt,

And by their vices brought to servitude,

Than to love bondage more than liberty,

Bondage with ease than strenuous liberty?'

Politicians are always 'addressing' problems, while most of us are content with 'solving' them. Either way we are drawing on Latin roots for words to express ideas for which perfectly good ones exist in English.

I wonder what would have happened to us had we not let ready-made Latin and Norman-French words push out our home-grown English words like *own* [as in 'own-up,'admit], *wend* [change, turn], *ware* [a collection - as in *waters-ware*, a 'dam,' or *windes-ware*, a wind storm], and compounds like *bread-wright* [baker] *want-wit*, *nit-wit* [ignoramus], *find-fault* [back-biter], *mumble-news* [tale-bearer] and *lily-livered pinch-penny* [cowardly miser] who is probably also a *slug-a-bed* [lazy].

Imagine advertisements for a *bidding-sale*, instead of an 'auction'; or university courses in *earth-tilth* instead of 'agriculture'; or appeals for support for your local *book-hoard* instead of your local 'library'; or newspaper headlines about *wanhope* at people's *wantrust*, instead of 'despair' at people's 'suspicion'; or someone's asking the waiter to *skink* [pour] the wine.

Would children take to their books more readily if we were to call 'arithmetic' *rime-craft* as did our ances-

tors? Would respect for teachers increase if 'disciples' and 'students' were called *learning-knights*? Would an appeal to our *in-wit* move us more than appeals to our 'conscience;' or a call for *fore-wit* rather than 'prudence'? No school should be without its *hoar-board* [white-board].

Sadly our *fore-bears* or *fore-elders* have been displaced by the fairly bland 'ancestors,' and it seems that little can be done now to stem the outgoing tide of English, whether Early, Middle or Late.

But Latin continues to ride the waves of change with style and confident ease. To return to our politicians 'addressing' their problems. Address comes from the Latin *directus* which is the participle of *dirigere* which means to put right, or straight, and then to regulate and adjust, to prepare and put in whatever shape is desired. Thus we 'dress' meat, we 'dress' ourselves in the morning, we 'dress-up' for special occasions, and 'address' letters [send them to the correct person or place]. We may 'address' problems [put them right]. We can even 'redress' matters [put them right again].

Having grown older, I have learned to appreciate the tough honesty of Latin, resembling the beauty and strength and sense of purpose of our unique Australian Eucalypts and their stolid yet soft Paper Bark cousins.

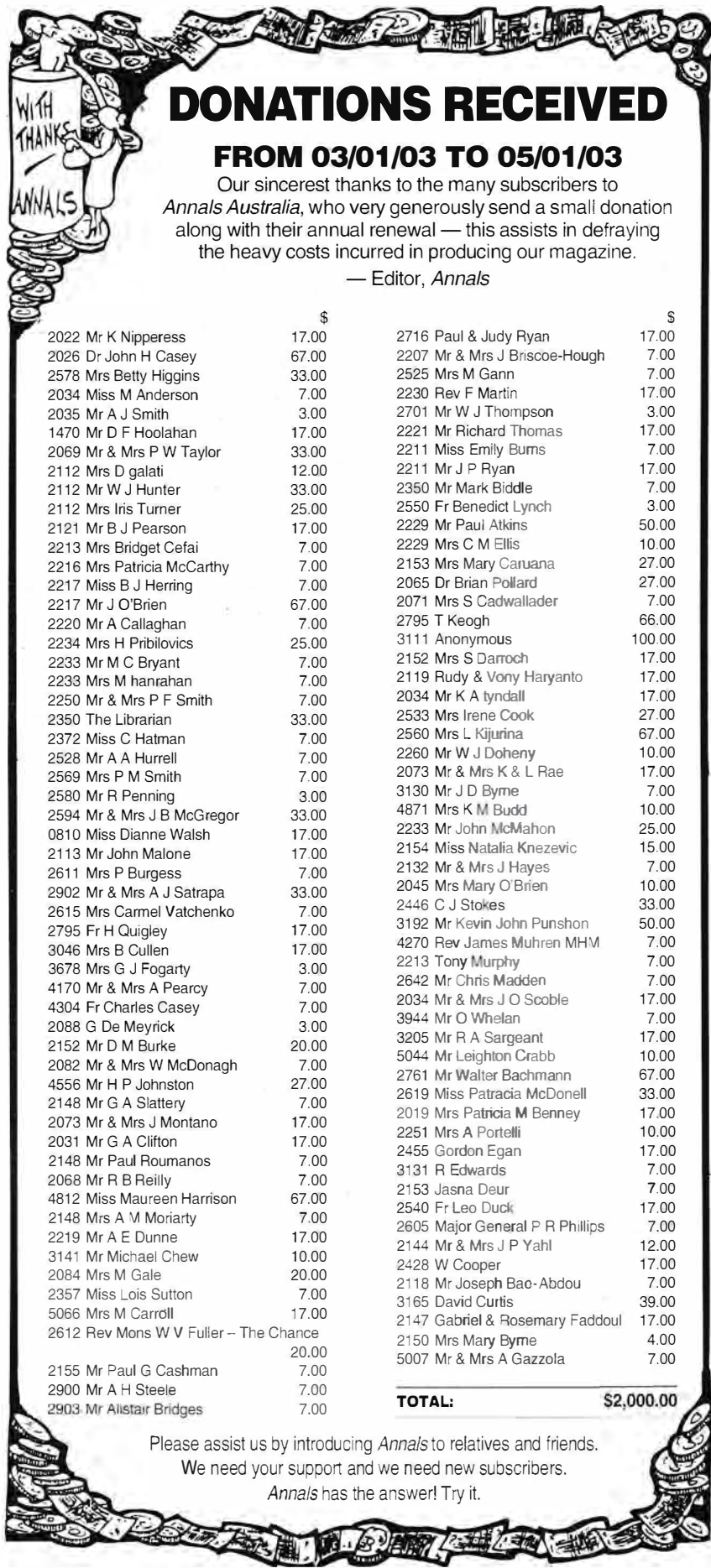
We should take to heart as addressed to ourselves the straightforward advice Cato gave to his son as he started out in life:

Rem tene, verbasequentur.

'Cling to what is real; words will come later'.



This article, written for *The Mature Australian*, first appeared in the November/December issue, 2002.



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— Editor, *Annals*

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Oldest Old Lady?

MUCH attention has been given in the media lately to the French lady who reached her 120th birthday. It is claimed that this is the longest recorded life and, as such, has found its way into the *Guinness Book of Records*. The following may provide a challenge to the claim:

The community of Cistercian nuns at the monastery of *São Pedro de Arouca* in the north of Portugal fell victim to the aftermath of the French Revolution and Napoleonic Wars. The abbey had been one of the most important of the country. Its landholdings were a legacy from *Rainha Santa Mafalda*, d. 1256, daughter of Portuguese ruler Sancho I. As a teenage 'widow' (her marriage to the child D. Henrique I of Castile was later annulled) Mafalda retired to live there in monastic seclusion. The abbey, like its Spanish counterpart Las Huelgas, became a retreat of several other royal personages.

There are two different versions to the challenge mentioned above. A. S. Leal (1873) claims that D. Toda Maria Coutinho, daughter of D. Gastão Coutinho and D. Philip de Sousa, who was born in 1497, lived at Arouca until her death in 1620, aged 123 years years. Leal provides the names of the sovereigns with whom she was contemporary viz. the three Philips as well as D. João IV, D. Alfonso VI, D. Pedro II and D. João. V. A. Baudrillart (1930) reports the longlived lady as D. Felipa de Souza (1397-1520). However, M. Cocheril (1978), the much respected scholar of Portuguese monasticism, stands by the information of Leal.

While there must be an error regarding the century in one or other of the sources (the name inconsistency could be reconciled via family), it seems fairly clear that the age of 123 years was reached by one of the nuns of Arouca.

— Contributed by Sister Marie Levey, RSJ.

A media proprietor defends tabloids and the profit motive

WELL, HE WOULD SAY THAT, WOULDN'T HE?

Last year the *Andrew Olle Memorial Lecture* was delivered by Lachlan Murdoch, son of Rupert and deputy Chairman of News Ltd. KEVIN HILFERTY reflects for *Annals* readers on some of the issues raised in the lecture, and wonders what Lachlan will say ten years on.



HERE was a time when Australia's media proprietors were the true faceless men in our national power structure. They granted Prime Ministers and party officials private audiences in their panelled board-rooms. Their deeply conservative opinions were echoed in their papers' thundering editorials. When they did appear in public places, usually race-tracks, cameras never flashed at them.

Even most of their staff did not know them. I once spent three years as a reporter for a lively Sydney afternoon tabloid, the *Daily Mirror*, owned by the legendary Ezra Norton. A few days after I left his employ, I was in

the Martin Place bar of the Hotel Australia and I asked about a disagreeable man in a nearby group. 'That's your old boss, Ezra,' the barmaid remarked. So it was – a noisy, unpleasant drunk.

A few years later I was in a pub off Fleet Street, London, and a colleague pointed out a big aggressive man with an eyepatch and identified him as Sir Frank Packer, who laid the foundations of the present Packer fortune from the *Daily Telegraph*, *Australian Women's Weekly* and the *Nine Network*.

They got away with it then. They would not do so today. The new generation of media chiefs are public identities. TV programs are made about them. Their weddings are

public spectacles. They are articulate and, fittingly, media-wise. They control multi-media empires that are licensed to use the airwaves, so they are accountable to the public and their shareholders.

The Andrew Olle Memorial Lecture, an annual event bringing media people together, is a useful forum for significant figures in the industry. So it proved again in October of last year when the speaker was Lachlan Murdoch, son of Rupert, deputy chairman of News Limited and publisher of that company's *New York Post*.

Lachlan Murdoch's education and training have made him very well informed about the media. His career path (and that of James Packer) appears to be unaffected by the loss of hundreds of millions of dollars of company funds in the One.Tel disaster. He is going to be a key player in the Australian media scene for years to come. It is encouraging to see him stand up in public and express strong opinions in his clipped US East Coast accent to a knowledgeable audience who would mostly disagree with him.

The core of his message was his criticism of what he described as 'self-styled purists who believe that the business of media – the requirement to make a profit – somehow corrupts the craft.'

Zeroing in, he went on to say: 'The self-anointed media elite among us believe, somewhat self-servingly, that not only the act or process of making a profit is positively sinister, but also that the very desire to do so is.'

He chose not to name these critics but it was obvious that he meant certain commentators in the Fairfax newspapers (*Sydney Morning Herald*, *The Age*, *Australian Financial Review*)



'Prestige' is 'pretty' illusory

THIS word that today appears in the media linked to people or things (cars, books, items of every sort), means literally 'illusion, deception, imposture'. It comes from the Latin 'praestigium', jugglers tricks, sleight of hand, because they dazzle the eye by their rapidity and cunning.

'Pretty' in the sense of 'almost' or 'nearly' seems to come from the French 'pres de' – nearly.

and the ABC – in particular David Marr's *Media Watch*.

'The Australian media elite define their club through standards designed only to exclude. Entry requires that you either rely on taxpayers' money to draw your pay cheque or that your newspaper folds twice over and, God forbid, don't even think about a profit.'

These are strong words so we can assume that the barbs of the media elite have at times injured the Murdoch interests or causes they are supporting. Hence Mr Murdoch's targeting of David Marr for his criticism of the Farmhand Foundation appeal for drought victims which *Media Watch* linked with the wish of certain media interests and the Federal Government to proceed with a full sale of Telstra.

Mr Murdoch had some quite sensible things to say about media diversity, drawing attention to the wide range of books and papers his company publishes from the popular tabloids to the more serious broadsheets (*The Australian* and *The Times of London*). He stressed the importance of profits, noting that over the years these had paid for the technology that has provided better printing and extensive use of colour as well as the human resources needed to cover major news stories.

Without profits, media choices would be limited. The media elite, he felt, did not recognise this. But why not? Apart from the ABC, the media organisations he criticised are every bit as dependent on profits as News Limited and their journalists know this.

They also know that while the big organisations can put together costly teams of reporters and equipment at considerable cost to report on disasters such as the Bali bombing, their resources for covering day to day events are limited. This is a bottom line decision: the drive to cut costs is relentless.

The News Limited tabloids in Australia are good papers and reflect the communities they seek to serve. People respond and buy them in vast numbers. I read them regularly but I prefer the broadsheets (including *The Australian*) for their wider coverage. The Bali coverage is



Much ado about nothing

BIG developments are hourly expected in the Central London Murder. The police are watching a man in a house in a street near the scene of the crime. They require one more clue to justify an arrest and the signs are that it will soon be forthcoming.'

– *He Laughed in Fleet Street*, by Bernard Falk, London 1933 – A news item based on guesswork, when a reporter was unable to interview police.

a good example of this. The tabloids offered good solid reporting with a heavy content of human interest; *The Australian* and the Fairfax broadsheets were able to add an extra dimension from their correspondents permanently based in Indonesia (at very high cost).

Similarly with TV coverage all stations did a sound job but again the expertise of the ABC's correspondents with their knowledge of Bahasa Indonesian and the devious workings of Indonesian politics put the national broadcaster streets ahead of the commercials in the depth of coverage.

It is all to do with that diversity which Mr Murdoch praised. Long may it remain with us.

It was intriguing to note that Mr Murdoch castigated his critics by calling them the elites. There was a time when to be regarded as one of an elite – the very best – was a badge of honour. In the mid-1990s it became a pejorative term, being used initially to describe an inner group of cultural bureaucrats and academics. Then it was widened to describe people who opposed Pauline Hanson, advocated political correctness and adopted (to use another cliché) a black-armband view of Australian history. Times change and it is rarely used now.

Among media people Mr Murdoch's speech did not go down very well. But it was commendable for him to stand up and express his views so eloquently. This is a time when the media in all its forms, its successes and its failures, are under public scrutiny as never before. I wonder what he will have to say when he is invited back ten years from now.



KEVIN HILFERTY is a semi-retired Australian journalist who has worked around the world from Australia to London and New York.

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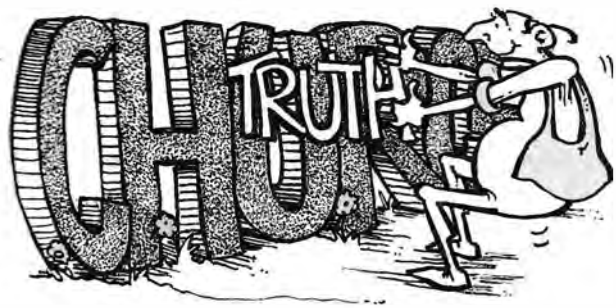
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– John Ruskin, *The Crown of Wild Olive*, 1866-1869, II. 66-73.



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James McAuley's Sequence for a Mass for Our Lady

SING A NEW SONG

SISTER M. PETER DAMIAN MCKINLAY SGS describes a little-known poem by Australia's uncrowned Poet Laureate James McAuley, which deserves a place among the sacred hymns of the Australian Catholic Church. She puts 'Sequence' in context for *Annals* readers and lays bare the faith and filial love that permeates it.



THE holy year of Jubilee 2000 was celebrated with various expressions of religious reverence and activities. These acknowledged of God's relationship with Men through the Incarnation of the Second Person of Trinity, Christ the Redeemer.

Alleluias rang out; spires were erected on St. Mary's Cathedral, Sydney; pilgrims made their way by means of modern pilgrimage transport to the Holy Places of Christendom; the Youth of the World rallied in answer to Pope John Paul II's call, and there were demonstrations of faith over the whole world. But in the Year of the Lord's favour in Australia, no poet rose to sing the Ode to Christ of the Millennium and enshrine the Great Jubilee in immortal verse.

One poet who might have assumed the task, James McAuley, reached his 'end of voyaging' nearly thirty years before the millennium. In his *Last Vision*, McAuley's Quiros in prophecy blessed the awakening of our poetic voice:

Terra Australis, heartland of
the South,
In the Great Lauds your
Myriad creatures raise
May there be never wanting
the singer's mouth
To give words to that
canticle of praise
Which from all beings pours
forth to the Spirit
And from our broken toll
may you inherit
A vision to transform your
later days.

It is McAuley himself who
endowed his work with the wealth

of thought, the stylish rhythm and the elegant beauty of lyrics that would grace the 'singer's mouth'.

A brief biographical note² reveals little of the true McAuley; his contribution to the liturgical endeavours of the Australian Church in the aftermath of Vatican II receives no specific attention. The *Ern Malley* hoax is enshrined in remembrance whereas the Songs

for the Year of Grace and the Cosmic Hymn of Praise are not mentioned. Perhaps the contribution of hymns is to be classified under poems 'increasingly personal'!

These poems were to be set to music by Richard Connolly and were a welcome addition to the parish hymnals in the first flush of liturgical reform after Vatican II. Many of them have that haunting appeal which uplifts the spirit in a mood of prayer-of joy or sorrow; of desire or fulfilment. Take for example the antiphon for Passiontide-

O Jesus crucified,
For us you suffered,
for us you died,
On the Cross.

To mark the first visit to Australian shores of a Sovereign Pontiff, the visit of Pope Paul VI in the year of the bi-centenary of Captain Cook's discovery of the Eastern Coast, the processional hymn for the Mass at Randwick racecourse was McAuley's *Song of Cosmic Praise*. This is the best-known of his religious poems and is the most majestic and profound in theme and content.

In liturgical ritual the song proper to the Mass is called a Sequence or Prose whereas the Hymn is the song of the Breviary. In the liturgical reform, there remain in the Lectionary approved by the Australian bishops in 1980 only two Sequences-*Victimae Paschali* for Easter Sunday and *Veni Sancte Spiritus* for Pentecost. If McAuley wrote Sequence as intended for a Marian Mass, it no longer had a place. It has remained unpublished, but it is a beautiful



Cromwell's Curse

BY an uncompleted process of terror, by an iniquitous land settlement, by the virtual proscription of the Catholic religion, by the bloody deeds already described, he cut new gulfs between the nations and the creeds. 'Hell or Connaught' were the terms he thrust upon the native inhabitants, and they for their part, across three hundred years, have used as their keenest expression of hatred The curse of Cromwell'.

- Winston Churchill, *A History of the English Speaking People II*, 1956, p. 232.

address to Mary, the Mother of the Redeemer; a fitting prayer of devotion, an earnest of the final grace we crave.

SEQUENCE

Lady, whose grace it was to do
Common things divinely-
Whose hidden life is threaded thro'
Luke's woven cloth so finely
That the eye must pick the weave
To catch its gold meander:
Star of Eden, second Eve,
Sweet single rose of candour,
Silence, that many secrets heard
And kept them for its own;
Ark of rescue, which could contain
The human race in one,
To which across the deluged plain
The secret Dove has flown:
Burning Bush, still unconsumed
Ablaze on holy ground:
Bride with weakness clothed,
perfumed
With bliss, with glory crowned;
Dawn-wading ibis; desert palm;
Gold monstrance of our altars;
Star of evening, shining calm
On dark, uneasy waters;
Queen of Heaven, as we revere
The Word that formed your story,
From our long distractions here,
Receive us into glory.

The address, 'Lady' is courtly and reverent. She is presented first as she emerges from the pages of Luke's Gospel and the poem moves delicately through the figures applied to Mary and the titles given to her in the Church. This Woman who does 'common things divinely' is portrayed in a kaleidoscopic tapestry in 'Luke's woven cloth so finely.'

Her rising is the rising of the Star in Eden, the second Eve, the Mystical Rose in the fullness of 'candour'. Her role in the redemption of the human race began in 'Silence', so dramatically was her vocation predicated that the poet personifies her as the very Silence that she kept while pondering transcendent mysteries in her heart.

In the Litanies, she is hailed as the Ark of the Covenant, always remembered by the rainbow. He presents an image familiar to us to the 'deluged plain', and with the artistry of verbal economy, he joins



Sifting the Facts

WHAT is new in Gibbon is evidently the *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. Gibbon's leading political, moral and religious ideals are those of Voltaire. But he was aware that facts are needed in history. Here the facts are collected, sifted, made to live again by a man who had no doubt about what to love and hate, but knew also how to describe, to measure effects, to draw a line between good and bad evidence.

- Arnaldo Momigliano, *Studies in Historiography*, Harper Torchbooks, 1966.

the Dove of Peace to the Dove-form of the Holy Spirit who overshadowed Mary at the Incarnation-a secret Dove', power of the Most High.

It was at the Burning Bush that Moses received the mission to lead the Israelite People out of slavery in Egypt. Mary is the Burning Bush from whom will issue the Saviour of the whole human race, leading them to an everlasting Promised Land.

These are the metaphors which vividly but succinctly portray the

place of Mary in the devotion of the Church invested by McAuley with a pulsating urgency. He then surprises with a freedom of metaphor as the psalmist does so often. Mary is saluted in the unfamiliar metaphor of a bird seen often in Australian paddocks-'Dawn-wading ibis' a picturesque ground-dwelling bird apparently always busy with its solitary foraging. And Mary we know to be our kind and loving helper in our time of need.

Finally, after the well-loved image of Mary, the Star over the rough, wild sea, in reverence to the Word, the quintessential Mystery of Mary's 'story', the poet entreats the Queen of Heaven to fulfil her maternal role of intercessor for us and to pray for us all when the long distractions here' vanish with time and nothing assuages but the hope of glory. This final strophe is typical of the Sequence, the pathos of the ultimate human hope, and leads to the proclamation of the Gospel the summit of the Liturgy of the Word.

Thus James McAuley sings a new song, a tribute to the Blessed Virgin whom 'the Church appropriately honours with special reverence'³ It is clear from his measured cadence, his mixture of masculine and feminine rhyme, his equipoise of allegorical figure and the fact of Mary's humanity that he sees 'the offices and privileges of the Blessed Virgin always related to Christ, the Source of all truth, sanctity and piety.'⁴ He sings a new song on very old traditional emblems, and all indeed with filial love.



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1. Captain Quiros, p.178 James McAuley, *Collected Poems 1936-1970* With permission of Curtis Brown 2001.
2. *The Oxford Companion to Australian History*, Melbourne Oxford University Press. McAuley James Phillip (1917-1976), poet, was a young serviceman in Sydney when he helped create as a hoax a pastiche of modernist verse under the name of Ern Malley which was published in *Angry Penguins*.....His earlier works drew heavily on classical themes; his later poems became increasingly personal.
3. Vatican II, *Lumen Gentium*, 66
4. *Ibid.*67

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SR M. PETER DAMIAN MCKINLAY is a Sister of the Good Samaritan Order, from Glebe NSW. She spent the greater part of her religious life teaching in schools and colleges in NSW, Queensland, Victoria and Western Australia.

THOUGHT FROM THE LITURGY OF THE DAY



APRIL

- 1** Tue Lent Week 4 Psalm 46:1
God is a refuge for us, a helper close at hand in time of distress.
- 2** Wed Lent Wk 4 Isaiah 49:15
Even if a mother were to forget the child at her breast, I will not forget you.
- 3** Thur Lent Week 4 Ps 106:21
They forgot the God who was their Saviour.
- 4** Fri Lent Week 4 Psalm 34:18
The Lord is close to the broken hearted, to those whose spirit is crushed.
- 5** Sat Lent Week 4 Psalm 7:9
Make the just stand firm, you who test mind and heart, O just God.
- 6** Sun Lent Week 5 Jer 31:33
Deep within you I will plant my law, writing it on your heart.
- 7** Mon Lent Week 5 John 8:12
I am the light of the world. If you follow me you will not walk in darkness.
- 8** Tues Lent Week 5 Psalm 102:2
Turn your ear towards me, O Lord, and answer me quickly when I call.
- 9** Wed Lent Week 5 John 8:31
Make my word your home and you will be truly my disciples. You will learn the truth and the truth will set you free.
- 10** Thur Lent Week 5 Ps 105:8
The Lord remembers his covenant for ever, his promises for a thousand generations.
- 11** Friday Lent Week 5 Ps 18:7
In my anguish I called to the Lord and he heard my voice.
- 12** Sat Lent Week 5 Jer 31:10
The Lord will stand guard over us as a shepherd guards his flock.
- 13** Palm Sunday Phil 2:7
Being as we all are, he accepted death – even death on a cross.
- 14** Mon Holy Week Isaiah 42:7
You are to open the eyes of the blind and to free those who are in prison.
- 15** Tues Holy Week Isaiah 49:3
I was thinking: 'I have exhausted myself for nothing'. But all the while my cause was with the Lord.
- 16** Wed Holy Week Isaiah 50:5
Each morning the Lord wakes me to listen like a disciple.
- 17** Holy Thursday 1Cor 11:26
Each time you eat this bread and drink this cup, you are proclaiming his death.
- 18** Good Friday Psalm 31:12
I am like someone who is dead and forgotten in people's hearts, like a thing thrown away.
- 19** Holy Saturday Psalm 104:30
Send forth your Spirit, O Lord, and renew the face of the earth.
- 20** Easter Sunday Psalm 118:16
The Lord's right hand raised me up. I shall live and recount his deeds.
- 21** Easter Monday Psalm 16:11
You show me the path of life, the fullness of joy in your presence.
- 22** Easter Tuesday Psalm 33:5
The Lord loves justice and right, and fills the earth with his love.
- 23** Easter Wednesday Ps 105:4
Think of the Lord and his strength; continually seek his face.
- 24** Easter Thursday Psalm 8:2
What is a human being that you should keep us in mind? Why am I that you should remember me?
- 25** Easter Friday Psalm 118:1
Give thanks to the Lord for he is good. His love has no end.
- 26** Easter Saturday Acts 4:20
We cannot stop proclaiming what we have seen and heard.
- 27** Sunday Easter 2 John 20:23
Receive the Holy Spirit. Those whose sins you forgive are forgiven.
- 28** Monday Easter 2 Acts 4:31
As they prayed they were all filled with the Holy Spirit.
- 29** Tuesday Easter 2 Apoc 1:5
You have loved us and washed away our sins with your blood.
- 30** Wed St. Mark 1John 1:1
We declare to you what we have looked at and touched with our hands – the word of life.

Thoughts compiled by Father Michael Fallon, MSC.



MEDIA MATTERS

By James Murray

Impious Legend

The decision to open further the Vatican archives on Pope Pius XII has caused commentators to reach for their cuttings in aid of another look at the subject. Common to them all is that a watershed occurred with the production in 1963 of Rolf Hochhuth's play *The Representative*. Before the production, Pius XII had been acclaimed by Jewish leaders for his work in saving their co-religionists from the Holocaust. After the production, the line changed.

Not enough emphasis has been given, however, to Hochhuth's being of the first generation to come of age post-World War II. As such, he had to confront the fact of Nazi Germany's mind-numbing culture of death, particularly in relation to the Jews (though millions of others, starting with the mentally retarded and disabled, were exterminated in the Third Reich).

Rather than examining the true genesis of this extermination in the vile Nazi mix of Enlightenment eugenics and Aryan race supremacy, Hochhuth created his legend of Pius XII as the single human being who could have halted the slaughter. In other words, he made Pius XII a classic scapegoat for the sins of Hochhuth's compatriots or in psychological parlance caused a transference of guilt from them to Pius XII.

Hochhuth did not confine this kind of guilt transference to Pope Pius XII. His second play *Soldiers* focused not on the war morality of the Nazis but on that of the Allies who defeated them. His Pius XII legend was taken up and continues to have journalistic currency on the basis defined by John Ford in *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance*: when it's a choice between truth and legend, print the legend.

In the case of Pius XII, printing the legend has had the added advantage of exculpating all those leaders, including Jewish leaders, who thought they could treat with Hitler as well as those British and American leaders, who subsequently learned of the death camps and did nothing to interrupt their grisly trade, not even to bomb their access railways.

Foxtel All

Editor at large Max Walsh scored a coup with his Rupert Murdoch interview in *The Bulletin*

(February 18). The interview was long. But possibly because of publishing lead times it made no mention of a dark lining in the \$725 million silver cloud of News Corporation results: a \$US30 million out of court settlement of a \$US 6 billion action brought in the United States by investors in the pioneer (now defunct) Australis/Galaxy pay-TV venture.

Nor was the matter referred to in News coverage of the results. The story was broken by Ben Hills, peerless investigative reporter (*The SMH*, Feb 1 and 5). It highlighted the conspiratorial details of how the Australis/Galaxy venture was displaced by its major rival Foxtel, a News/Telstra joint project (which Kerry Packer joined later).

This one may not fade away. Local institutional and individual investors sustained huge losses in the \$1 billion Australis/Galaxy collapse of 1998. If the matter comes to court here, there may be more specific details on the collapse, including perhaps the extent to which a proprietor rather than his journalists (*pace* David Flint) controls content and/or spin. In addition, Telstra was then (and still is) 51 per cent Government owned, so taxpayers may be partly liable for any damages. But what's new about that in the wonderful world of free-market deals?

Nine Mutiny

The changing of the guard at Packerham Palace, otherwise known as the Nine Network, under panjandrum John Alexander is not proceeding with Buckingham Palace precision. The move by Nine's news and current affairs chief Peter Meakin to Seven was headlined as the latest in a line of shock-horror defections. No mention, however, of the historic, Nine-to-Seven defection of television genius, the late Bruce Gyngell.

Gyngell did give Seven an edge over Nine. But he returned to Nine and also rendered invaluable service to Packer at TV AM, London. His son David Gyngell is officially deputy to Alexander at Nine. Unofficially, he is heir apparent James Packer's watchman while the latter checks out Scientology, and hopefully returns with the kind of exclusive Packer print and television relishes.

The Packers run a feudal-family enterprise. Alexander walks a narrow path. Even if he succeeds in increasing Nine's fortunes, he is still



a hired hand as a predecessor Trevor Kennedy learned when he bravely differed from Kerry Packer.

It may also be worth remarking that Alexander's former colleagues at the John Fairfax Group in Melbourne and Sydney are discreet in accounts of him. Not surely because of fear that media regulation changes may allow Kerry Packer to make his long foretold bid for Fairfax, thus enabling Alexander to return there? If he survives, that is, his penchant for high-risk living...

Popcorn Bust

The Australian and New Zealand film industries create less profit than prestige. It may console their workers to know that *The Economist* (Jan 18-24) had a cover story on Hollywood, headlined: 'Lights! Camera! No Profits!'

Iraq Irrational

The imminent (or current) war against Iraq can be criticised as wrong from a perspective other than the just war. The war is wrong because it cannot achieve its ultimate objective. This is neither the taking of Baghdad nor the ousting of Saddam Hussein; it is the elimination of the threat of random, worldwide terrorism by Islamic fundamentalists intent on a global caliphate, that is, a polity without the kind of separation of secular and religious powers inherent in Jesus Christ's dictum: 'Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's.'

Desert Storm II has an extraordinary, un-American, dynastic element: a presidential son's sequel to his presidential father's unfinished war; it could succeed short term as massive, deadly force applied on a narrow front but not long term, though its booty will include oil. Indeed the fact of this kind of war may please the damned, elusive Osama bin Laden wherever he is: his enemy has fallen into his trap.

To succeed long term what is needed is a combined civil police and military campaign. Above all it must be a campaign of internationally co-ordinated intelligence and counter-intelligence, of containment and specific urban and rural targets rather than carpet bombing, artillery barrages and all-out attack where the means are not proportionate to the local end.

Here the United Nations Security Council should throw off its hesitancy and nominate a supremo to co-ordinate the campaign, preferably someone with senior legal as well as police and/or military experience, a multi-linguist whose languages include Arabic.

An American? Someone from France might be preferable. Or from Britain. An Australian? Or a Turk of the calibre of Mustapha Kemal alias Ataturk, victor of Gallipoli, who magnanimously

commemorated the invaders of his nation and went on to modernise it so that subsequently it fought alongside its former invaders in the UN's first police action in Korea.

Weak Link

USA Today front paged a report (Jan 23) that private security guards were 'Homeland defense's weak link'. It pointed out: 'They are the first line of defense against terrorists. But more often than not private security guards who protect millions of lives and billions of dollars in real estate offer a false sense of security.'

It added that most of them were 'unlicensed, untrained and not subject to background checks'. Presumably things are different here.

Summers Squall

Impossible not to refer to Anne Summers who began the New Year by distinguishing herself in her SMH column by praising the academic success of Chinese students. Who would condemn that? According to Summers those of Irish descent. 'Many of Irish descent,' she wrote, 'feel that their social hegemony is being undermined by people willing to work harder'.

Well, all hacks have moments of daftness when confronted with a blank screen and a deadline, not to mention an empty head. But former Adelaide convent schoolie Summers went on to write: 'So what if the Chinese students mostly do medicine and science? Irish Catholics once went mostly into the public service, into customs and taxation and immigration (where their bigotry continues to have impact on policy) and later in large numbers into law.'

This pishogruery lies beyond momentary daftness in caves, like those of Xanadu, measureless to man, if only because one of Summers's former bosses Paul Keating is Irish Catholic, though he, like others, might prefer from a fellow citizen the non-bigot addition, Australian.

More praiseworthy than her prose was the reaction of her subjects: a few letters to the editor. Having made their way without anti-discrimination quangos, they, like others of the Irish diaspora, and indeed like their Chinese co-religionists, can take care of themselves.

Incidentally, distinguished contributors to newspapers generally have details of their status footnoted. For example, Gerard Henderson is always footnoted in *The SMH* as the executive director of the Sydney Institute. Isn't Anne Summers executive director of Greenpeace Australia? Shouldn't she be so footnoted?

Golden Cuffe

Revelations that Chris Cuffe, the Harry Potter of money magic, conjured a package of about \$33 million from the Commonwealth Bank epito-





misadventure is such sweet sorrow; they also reignited the question of executive emoluments. Not that Cuffe was an executive whose package rewarded failure. On the contrary, he was so successful, he was invited to join that Professor Dumbledore of money magic, Kerry Packer.

But such packages scarcely accord with the nation's much vaunted egalitarianism and fair suck of the savoloy for battlers. Success is rarely a one-man or one-woman event. Your correspondent has long thought the fairest system is the fishing industry's with proportionate shares in the market value of catches for all crew members from skipper to deckhands.

The Royal Navy prizemoney system is another example. Even more appropriate, however, might be the system of the privateers who shared their loot among all involved, including those who invested in their ship, its armaments and its provisioning.

So what about making D-FAT (Department of Defence Foreign Affairs and Trade) into D-FLAT (Department of Defence, Foreign Affairs, Loot and Trade) with instructions to divvy up in fair-dinkum fashion market-success profits?

Kiwis Fly Higher

Reports that New Zealand is to set up its own war memorial at London's Hyde Park Gate near the already announced Australian memorial inspire the question: why did the nations whose soldiers immortalised the acronym ANZAC not erect a joint memorial?

The Australian memorial design reportedly includes the names of the places from which Australian Imperial Force volunteers came, Australian places, that is. But what about the birthplaces of the 30-40 per cent of the First AIF who were British-born. How much more poetic (and historically precise) would be a memorial juxtaposing Brewarrina with Auchtermuchtie, Windorah with Walton-on-Thames or Woolloomooloo with Llanfairfechan.

The Australian memorial is scheduled for unveiling on November 11. Obviously, the memorial to the New Zealanders is scheduled for a later unveiling. But they will have the high side of the site, apt, some may think; it was New Zealanders (with Gurkhas and South Wales Borderers) who carried the heights that commanded the Dardanelles only to be blown off by gunfire; some say from the Royal Navy, others say from the Turks.

Both Australia and New Zealand would earn kudos for magnanimity were they to have pipers playing the march of the Gordon Highlanders, home regiment of the Gallipoli commander Ian Hamilton, whose order 'Dig, dig, dig' began the

Anzac legend and who lived and died not far from Hyde Park Gate.

Pru's Prune

Federal Government uber femocrat Pru Goward did not beat about the cliches in her contribution to this year's Australia Day. She coined the word 'secularity'. And opined among other things that a religious ethos was incompatible with economic success.

So what about the Republic of Venice, La Serenissima, whose rule of ocean waves and trade pre-dated Britannia's. What of the Calvinists of Geneva? Or, to keep the question ecumenical, what of the Saudi Arabians, guardians of the holy city of Mecca?

Waiting for Sam

Coverage of the row over unauthorised additions to Samuel Beckett's play, *Waiting for Godot*, tended to see director Neil Armfield as having done the playwright a service by adding Latin words and new music to the proceedings (or non-proceedings).

In defending his late uncle's literary heritage, Edward Beckett was criticised as too strict. Yet playwright David Williamson, local equivalent of Lope de Vega, Spain's most prolific playwright, has defended the integrity of his texts against directorial whim. George Bernard Shaw was so careful about his texts that he directed his own plays.

And Oscar Wilde, like Beckett an old boy of Enniskillen's Portora Royal School, must at least twitch in his grave at re-workings to make a modern director's reputation.

Disclosure. Your correspondent favours Beckett neat; in the Sixties he appeared in a Beckett play, no less memorable for being abrupt. Your correspondent then worked for Granada television. He got a tip-off that Beckett was rehearsing a play upstairs in a Soho pub not far from Granada's London office in Golden Square.

He hot-footed it to the pub. At the upstairs entrance your correspondent (YC) saw a lean shank of a fellow with a face on him like a parsnip (LSFFP). Dialogue ensued:

YC: I'm looking for Sam Beckett.

LSFFP (with a backward jerk of his head): He was upstairs.

Upstairs went YC. The room was empty. Only as he made his way downstairs did he realise the LSFFP was Sam Beckett, gone but not forgotten (RIP).

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— Editor, *Annals*

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Nationalism & Genocide

MOST of the people, most of the time, are relatively little affected by the inner logic of the dominant nationalist model of their own countries. Hundreds of thousands of German Jews remained until the 1930s able to be loyal Germans, confidently at home in Berlin or Munich.

It is extremely important to remind those who want to tie the Holocaust too narrowly to any intrinsic quality of German nationalism, that even under the pressures of the First World War the German consensus in favour of internal common sense and tolerance did not break down.

No people turns naturally to the perpetration of genocide. Genocide is a decision of politicians, whether in fifteenth-century Spain or twentieth-century Germany, Bosnia or Rwanda. Yet effective ethnic cleansing requires validation from religion, mythology or ideology if it is to mobilise a great many people willing to participate in all the horrors of mass murder with a moderately good conscience.

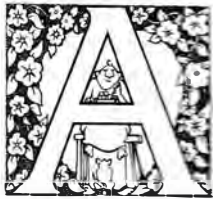
An ethnically edged nationalism can best do the job of providing such moral cover. It may seem strange that a movement of the collective European mind which derived its origins from such things as a vernacular Bible, the jury system and parliamentary government, could be so transformed as to produce genocide, but an adequate theory and history of nationhood needs to be able to hold together within a single matrix of intelligibility such disparate realities.

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

Lost heir to an ancient Catholic Family, or an Australian imposter?

ALMANACH DE WAGGA:
TICHBORNE REVISITED

Reviewed By R. J. STOVE



ALMOST every conceivable development – or rather, in most cases, regression – of modern histori-

ography should by rights have sent the Tichborne Affair down the collective memory-hole. The recollection of it nevertheless widely lingers, like the tune of *Champagne Charlie* or some other Victorian hit that never quite leaves the public consciousness. Why it thus lingers remains uncertain. It represents in concentrated form that most terrifying nightmare of what passes for the progressive mind: “kings-and-battles history”, with a hideous absence of economic determinism, slaves, noble savages, or even Oppressed Women (its cast’s female lead was about as “oppressed” as Bertie Wooster’s Aunt Agatha). What conceivable scenario could more totally disgust Henry Reynolds, Raphael Samuel, Eric Hobsbawm, David Cannadine et al than the notion of an individual seeking toff status? Even so, the resultant litigation continues, albeit discreetly and sporadically, to haunt authors. Two Maughams. Somerset’s brother Lord Maugham and nephew Robin, each published a volume on the matter. The novel *Brat Farrar* (1949) by Elizabeth Mackintosh – who wrote her plays under the pseudonym “Gordon Daviot” and most of her fiction as “Josephine Tey” – clad the tale in mid-twentieth-century dress (employing three different names might well give you a head start in the Tichborne study stakes). In 1976 Tichborniana inspired a kind of book-length pun, complete with self-consciously evocative title: *The Twyborn Affair*, easily the worst effusion in Patrick White’s output. Two

The Man Who Lost Himself: The Unbelievable Story of the Tichborne Claimant, by Robyn Annear; Text Publishing, 430 pp, \$32.

years afterwards, playwright James Workman produced for ABC Television a dramatisation of the whole story: one long overdue for a fresh screening, if the relevant videotape still exists in ABC archives. And now we have Robyn Annear’s *The Man Who Lost Himself*.

The case, for anyone still unfamiliar with it, can be soon recapped. Tall, thin, asthmatic Roger Charles Tichborne of Tichborne Park, Hampshire, was never definitely seen alive after the ship *Bella* sank not far from the Brazilian coast in 1854. Twelve years later a resident of New

South Wales – fat, uncouth, afflicted with St Vitus’ Dance and a tapeworm – presented himself in London. There he inspired Roger’s French-born mother Henriette Félicité Seymour Tichborne (who had advertised in Australian newspapers for tidings of Roger’s whereabouts) with the passionate belief that her vanished son and the recently arrived behemoth were, all appearances notwithstanding, the same person. All the other Tichbornes regarded the newcomer as no more than a vulgar fortune-hunting fraud. Whereupon the claimant took against the Tichborne trustees an ejectment action, which the Court of Common Pleas heard. (Henriette’s husband Sir James Tichborne had died in 1862, Roger’s brother Alfred in 1866; Henriette herself followed them to the grave in 1868.) The two resultant trials – constituting, until the 1994-96 “McLibel” case, the longest courtroom hearings in English legal history on English soil – found the claimant to be one Arthur Orton, alias Tom Castro, erstwhile butcher from Wagga Wagga, with not a particle of right to the Tichborne estates or title. Evidence against him proved powerful, and by no means only for physiological reasons. The undoubted Roger spoke excellent French (thanks to his mother’s nurture); the purported Roger had no French at all, uttering such howlers as “Feliceet” for “Félicité”. While the undoubted Roger could read music and play chess, the purported Roger could do neither. Having lost in Common Pleas (1872), the claimant fared even worse at the Old Bailey (1873), where – after enduring 35,000 questions under cross-examination – he was convicted of perjury and sentenced to fourteen years’ hard labour. Freed early, in 1884, he

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published (then retracted) a confession of his misdeeds; set himself up, with no great financial success, as a music-hall act; and died in 1898. His coffin bore a plaque with Roger Tichborne's name.

Such is the tale's barest outline. Its subtext (which warrants spelling out, if only because Miss Annear so slights it) is one of a social niche within a social niche. For the Tichbornes were not just English gentry – with all the knack of inspiring outsiders' bafflement which this rank implies – but English *Catholic* gentry, as the Orton trials' followers could never be permitted to forget. In theory this nuance should by the 1870s have meant little or nothing. After all, Catholic Emancipation had become law more than four decades previously; in 1850 England's Catholics had had their episcopate reinstated; prohibition on their studying at Oxford or Cambridge now tended to come from their own clergy instead of from the Anglican establishment. In practice the nuance meant everything. Such dynasties as the Tichbornes resembled moles which have emerged from underground to find the atmosphere unexpectedly breathable. However welcome the new breathability, communal remembrance of Sir Francis Walsingham, Cecil *père et fils*, "Architophel" Shaftesbury, and Titus Oates could not be gainsaid: especially by the Tichbornes themselves, since Walsingham's body-count had included an ancestor, the poet Chidioc Tichborne. To this remembrance these clans responded by keeping quiet. (Too quiet, for some. Cardinal Manning likened them to "the Seven Sleepers". Belloc despaired of inculcating into their descendants the right, or Right, Maurrasian stuff.) Not for them any Vendée-type defiance, any dreams of theocracies on Mexican or Ecuadorian lines. They wanted nothing so much as to be left alone. Mostly they were. They hunted and shot and fished as enthusiastically as any Whig descendants of Henry VIII's tame parvenus; they would have gravely disappointed Evelyn Waugh. At least one Catholic peer so blended into the landscape as to join the local Loyal Orangemen. Another

eschewed his Masonic membership only in his forties (having hitherto been unaware that in 1738 his church ruled such membership to be a mortal sin). But rather than marry local Protestants, England's Catholic upper classes often wed co-religionists from the Continent, which is how the Tichbornes managed to lumber themselves with Henriette in the first place.

Henriette's behaviour forms the most perplexing element in the business. Cordially disliked, save by the local vagabonds on whom she specialised in bestowing reckless charity, she probably had not much intelligence. Her in-laws irked her, and she tried to queen it over them, with results resembling the outcome likely to obtain if Isabella of Castile had issued edicts in a church hall on bingo night. Still, she deserves some compassion. The particular torment of a mother whose child goes missing is one that no man – although every woman – can presume to comprehend. Moreover, Henriette combined illegitimate birth with a temperament too headstrong and *Latin* to allow the eccentricity act that would have endeared her to her husband's home-

land. What more natural for such an unreflective, embittered creature than to convince herself that anyone whom her in-laws comprehensively distrusted *must* be the Prodigal Son?

Except for various dignified female witnesses, no-one emerged from the courtroom dramas with much credit. Arthur Orton turned out to have a blackmailing brother, Charles, who entertained visions of unlimited Tichborne cash flowing in his direction if Arthur was vindicated. At the Old Bailey Arthur's defence counsel, Edward Kenealy QC MP, emerged as a prize example of that most dangerous barrister: the one who vehemently believes in his client's innocence. (This particular barrister's dangers extended well beyond the forensic. In 1850 he beat his six-year-old bastard son so ferociously as to incur a month's imprisonment; the culprit's difficulties in paying court costs ensured that he actually stayed inside for eleven weeks. One grisly epigrammatist conceived an imaginary poem: "Lines on a Boy's Back, By Dr Kenealy." Clearly various categories of maltreating children, and natural children at that, transcended even 1850 custom's bounds.)

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The devil's wiles

NO longer able to ridicule Christianity in men's eyes the devil now tries to deceive them by *praising* Christ. What was his language before? Whom do you worship? A dead Jew, a crucified, a man of no standing, who could not keep off death from himself. But now that he sees mankind running in Christ's name, temples overthrown, idols broken, sacrificial fires extinct in the name of the Crucified, he clothes himself in the praises of Christ and starts another method of deterring from the faith. 'A grand law is the Christian law, a mighty law, diving and ineffable, but who fulfils it?' In the name of our Saviour, trample on the lion and the dragon (Ps. xc). the lion roared by open fault-finding, the dragon lies in wait with crafty praise. Let not men say, 'Who fulfils this law?' If they presume on their own strength, they will not fulfil it. All the faithful live in the name of Christ, each according to his station fulfilling the precepts of Christ, married and unmarried living as God grants them to live, but not presuming on their own strength. Ask me not, 'Who fulfils it?' He fulfils it in me, who has come rich to the poor, full to the empty.

— St. Augustine, 345-430, *In Ps. xi. 4. 8*
(Preached at Carthage between 411-413.)

the claimant suffered: a misfortune that his contemporaries discussed with a frankness that will astonish any remaining believers in Lytton Strachey's caricatures of "Victorianism". Kenealy, for all his vindictive nonsense, *did* offer the jury an intriguing suggestion: that a swindler would have done his homework much more studiously, been much less incautious, than had the claimant.

Bernard Shaw's sneer at those who

Kenealy propounded his own interpretation of Orton's downfall, blaming it wholly on a Popish Plot. Apparently the world's Jesuits had left off burying nuns' babies under convent floors, raping penitents in the confessional, concealing stenios in crucifixes, etc., etc., etc. for long enough to organise an entire global conspiracy with the exclusive aim of placing Orton behind bars. The undoubted Roger had grown addicted – as nobody denies – to pornographic reading; ergo, all "papists" must be awash in filth. Other and happier periods would have put Kenealy's anti-Catholic ravings to more personally profitable use. In the eighteenth century he could have led the Gordon Riots' exterminationist yahoos. In the twenty-first century his species finds its life's work kicking Pius XII's corpse and charging every single priest with sexual perversion, abetted in such gallant crusades by Rupert Murdoch's proverbially philanthropic mass media. Nineteenth-century England offered fewer opportunities for the Rome-hating fantasist, though Kenealy exploited each opening then vacant. The scurrilous periodical he founded to publicise his allegations sold sensationally well at first, exhibiting as it did a sovereign scorn for libel statutes. (Printed billingsgate was at this time acquiring a whole new English audience. In 1870 Gladstone had ratified the Education Act, sharing his age's delusion – which admittedly took milder forms in England than in America – that when you have turned illiterates into semi-literates, you have somehow solved a problem.) Yet rhetoric which aroused temporary cheering from the mob met a frostier reception in Parliament; Kenealy's move to establish a Royal Commission into the Old Bailey trial suffered defeat by 433 House of Commons votes to one.

Like all long-running cases of confused identity, and *pace* Richard Aldington's curt dismissal of the claimant's campaign – "so fantastic and absurd that the marvel is that anyone believed in him" – the Tichborne Affair can still make the flesh crawl. Especially concerning the rare penile malformation from which

upheld Orton's claim because the latter's opponents sought "to do a labourer out of his rights" was a cheap debating point instead of an informed judgement. As Shaw must have realised, over and over again impersonations have contained a class-war factor: most notably the tenacious, messianic Portuguese belief in an immortal monarch Sebastian (once and future king *plus* imminent liberator of Portugal's commonalty from Spanish control); and, above all, Emilian Pugachev's 1773-74 rebellion against Catherine the Great (Pugachev proclaiming himself Catherine's resurrected husband *plus* the serfs' emancipator). Tichborniana, then, had the potential to be a lethally intoxicating brew. Elsewhere the lethal intoxication would have been not just potential but actual. It needs little effort to perceive an Orton's dangers for Franz Josef's empire, say, or for Third Republic France. The claimant's failure to leave a lasting impression on Her Majesty's Government – whereas across the Channel its outcome could only have been a Mayerling- or Dreyfus-style agony over decades – constitutes a somewhat odd tribute to English exceptionalism.

Miss Annear's narrative, lively and colourful, flows right along. Its author abounds in witticisms, is stronger on the Australian background (above all, on the possible Tichbornian relevance of William Cresswell, an inmate at two Sydney madhouses) than many a precursor has been, and avoids the "Post-Colonial Studies" brigade's anachronistic self-aggrandising chatter. Once you start reading her lucid presentation, you do not readily cease. *But . . .* her tone painfully clashes with her theme. This is the material of high tragedy, material that Miss Annear too often describes as if furnishing pabulum for the Sunday tabloids' social reportage. An Elgar slow movement recomposed by Milhaud, or *Bleak House* rewritten by Nora Ephron, could not disconcert more than this chronicle in Miss Annear's overly flippant prose. The wife of solicitor William Gibbes is said to have "felt a *ping* of recognition." Orton's champions are not deceived;

they have, rather, "bought it." Characters do not desire tea; they are, instead, "ravening for a cuppa." They do not rage; they "bl[o]w up." Orators are not improvising without adequate preparation; they are "winging it" (this American vulgarity surely never arose till the 1990s?). Faces twitch "like a telegraph" or "like a flapping blind." There occurs the weird superlative adjective "most kamikaze". The very name Wagga Wagga is credited with – you had better believe it – "steam-piston euphony". (How much steam-piston euphony survived the voyage from Australia is vague, since Englishmen regularly mispronounced the town to rhyme with "stagger".)

Worse still is the excessive mind-reading. "James Tichborne looked at his son and wondered how on earth to prepare this foppish, mummied Parisian boy for his future role." (Yes, and presumably Miss Annear stood right there in the room monitoring James' wonderment levels.) "Well, thought Gibbes, not a bad morning's work." (So he specifically informed Miss Annear of his thought 140 years later . . .) Employed with extreme restraint as a deliberate dramatic technique, such psychologising can convey useful points incommunicable otherwise. But if you *persistently* blur the distinction between fact and guesswork, you are merely barking your way to the same padded cell where Rebecca West ensconced herself. Besides, Text could at least have given us some endnotes to supply sources for quotations, however irksome the idea of doing readers this basic courtesy now seems to vogueish book publishers (who have – as some wit remarked about one Thatcher-Major-era apparatchik steeped in uncommon squalor – "all the characteristics of populism except popularity"). Had either Patrick Morgan or Paul de Serville – both men extremely learned in the Tichborne field as in other areas of the Australo-British relationship – written this tome, they would undoubtedly have insisted on such a procedure before typing a single line.

For those who have read nothing of the case and want merely a vivid account of it, *The Man Who Lost*

Original Frauds

IN 1948, a German art restorer named Kietrich Fey, engaged in reconstruction work on Lübeck's ancient St Marien Church, stated that his workmen had discovered traces of Gothic wall-paintings dating back to the thirteenth century under a coating of chalk on the church walls.

The restoration of the paintings was entrusted to Fey's assistant, Lothar Malskat, who finished the job two years later. In 1950 Chancellor Adenauer presided over the ceremonies marking the completion of the restoration work, in the presence of art experts from all parts of Europe. Their unanimous opinion, voiced by Chancellor Adenauer, was that the twenty-one thirteenth-century Gothic saints on the church walls were 'a valuable treasure and a fabulous discovery of lost master-pieces'.

None of the experts on that or any later occasion expressed doubt as to the authenticity of the frescoes. It was Herr Malskat himself who, two years later, disclosed the

fraud. He presented himself on his own initiative at Lübeck police headquarters, where he stated that the frescoes were entirely his own work undertaken by order of his boss, Herr Fey; and he asked to be tried for forgery. The leading German art experts, however, stuck to their opinion; the fres-

coes, they said, were without doubt genuine, and Herr Malskat was merely seeking cheap publicity. An official Board of Investigation was appointed and came to the conclusion that the restoration of the wall-paintings was a hoax – but only after Herr Malskat had confessed that he had also

manufactured hundreds of Rembrandts, Watteaus, Toulouse-Lautrecs, Picassos, Henri Rousseau, Corots, Chagalls, Vlamincks, and other masters, and sold them as originals – some of which were actually found by the police in Herr Fey's house. Without this *corpus delicti*, it is doubtful whether the German experts would ever have admitted having been fooled.



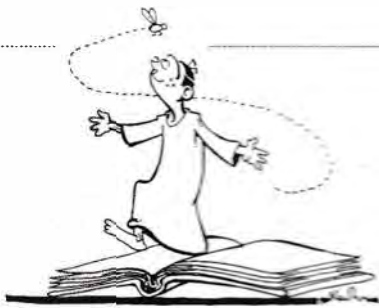
– Arthur Koestler, *The Act of Creation*, London, Pan Books, 1964.

Himself will serve. For those less easily satisfied, earlier books reward sustained attention much better. Michael Gilbert's *The Claimant* (1957) is brisk, bluff and imbued with prosecutorial relish, its author exhibiting approximately equal contempt towards Orton and towards sentences that have subordinate clauses. Douglas Woodruff's *The Tichborne Case: A Victorian Mystery* (also 1957) is as its subtitle implies: altogether subtler than Gilbert, less ebullient, far more detailed. Among

more recent analyses Michael Roe's *Kenealy and the Tichborne Cause: A Study in Mid-Victorian Populism* (1974) has great and permanent value. To read Miss Annear after having absorbed all these is to get the sense of dining on a lavishly garnished *entrée* in default of a full meal.



R. J. STOVE is the author of *The Unsleeping Eye: A Brief History of Secret Police and Their Victims* (Duffy & Snellgrove, 2002). Amid his other activities he is currently researching a book on the history of royal impersonators. A slightly different version of this review appeared in *Quadrant*, October 2002.



Of beauty and love

CHILDREN should laugh, but not cmoek; and when they laugh, it should not be at the weakness and the faults of others. They should be taught, as far as they are permitted to concern themselves with the characters of those around them, to seek faithfully for good, not to lie in wait maliciously to make themselves merry with evil; they should be too painfully sensitive to wrong to smile at it; and too modest to constitute themselves its judges.

With these minor errors a far graver one is involved. As the simplicity of the sense of beauty has been lost in recent tales for children, so also the simplicity of their conception of love. That word which, in the heart of a child, should represent the most constant and vital part of its being; which ought to be the sign of the most solemn thoughts that inform its awakening soul and, in one wide mystery of pure sunrise, should flood the zenith of its heaven, and gleam on the dew at its feet; this word, which should be consecrated on its lips, together with the Name which it may not take in vain, and whose meaning should soften and animate every emotion through which the inferior things and the feeble creatures, set beneath it in its narrow world, are revealed to its curiosity or companionship; this word, in modern child-story, is too often restrained and darkened into the hieroglyph of an evil mystery, troubling the sweet peace of youth with premature gleams of uncomprehended passion, and flitting shadows of unrecognised sin.

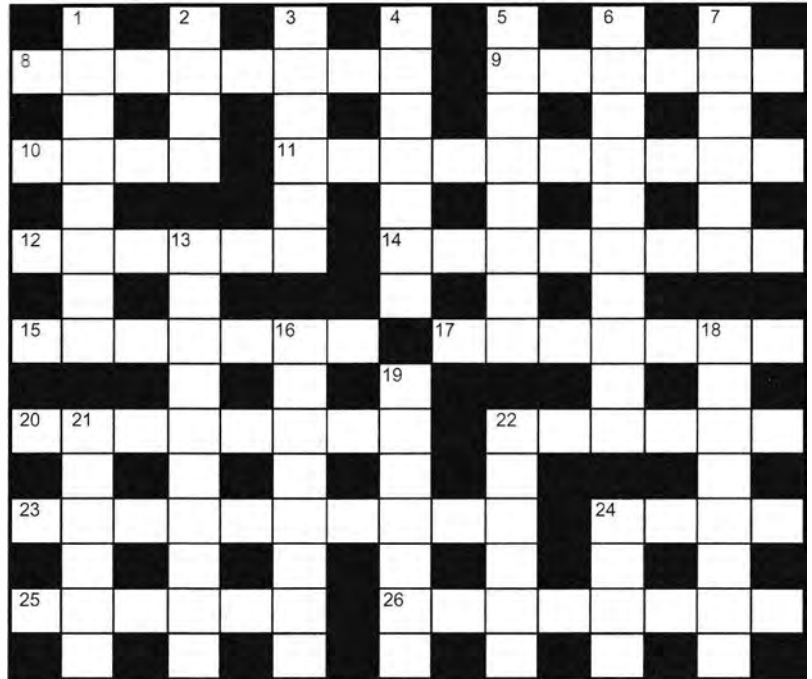
— John Ruskin, *On the Old Road*, II, 125-127.

Reassuring?

ABOUT one billion people worldwide now use cellphones, and the number is growing rapidly, leading some scientists to call the use of cellphones the biggest biological experiment in history, Says Louis Slesin, editor of *Microwave News*, the most comprehensive source of information on electromagnetic fields and health: 'Anybody who tells you that cellphones are either safe or unsafe doesn't know what they're talking about. It remains an open question.' Slesin urges much more aggressive research. In the meantime, those little headsets are inconvenient but reassuring.

— *Fortune Magazine*, Sept 30, 2002.

ANNALS CROSSWORD No. 11



ACROSS CLUES

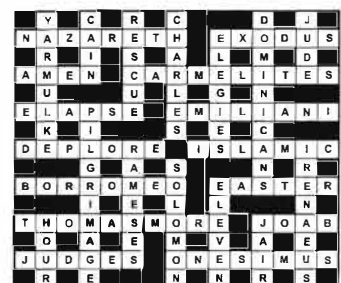
- English born Saint known as "The Apostle to Germany" (Feast Day 5 June) (8)
- Ancient capital of Egypt (Ezek 30:14) (6)
- Transgressions of God's will (4)
- People who act immorally or illegally (10)
- A member of the highest order of angels (6)
- Home town of Abiathar the Priest (1 Kings 2:26) (8)
- A military expedition to reclaim the Holy Land in the 11th, 12th or 13th century (7)
- Part of donkey Samson used to slay a thousand men (Judges 15:15) (7)
- A congregation (in formal church usage) (8)
- Country of which St Denis is a Patron Saint (6)
- Greek version of the Old Testament translated by 72 scholars (10)
- Made by God on the 4th day to rule over the night (4)
- Personal integrity; fame or glory (6)
- Having perpetual life (8)

DOWN CLUES

- Lord (it) over; act imperiously (8)
- Trivial lies (4)
- Hebrew name for God (6)
- Nurse of Jacob's mother Rebecca (Genesis 35:8) (7)
- Marks resembling the wounds of the crucified Christ (8)
- Fear of strangers (10)

- The prayer said by the celebrant between the Offertory and the Preface (Latin Mass) (6)
- Remission of sin (10)
- Gives us hope (8)
- Patron Saint of Russia and children (Feast Day 6 December) (8)
- Patron Saint of Lithuania known as "Brother and Defender of the Poor" (Feast Day 4 March) (7)
- Statements of belief (6)
- Place of pilgrimage in Portugal with shrine to Our Lady; daughter of Mohammed (6)
- One of the Gospellers (4)

SOLUTION TO NO. 10



© Brian O'Neill 2002

The Life of David Gale

Gale (Kevin Spacey) is a paragon: Rhodes Scholar, Harvard graduate, Texas university lecturer and deadly serious campaigner against capital punishment. Spacey brings his minimalist but potent technique to the part. Laura Linney is his associate, prepared to share his commitment. Kate Winslet is the reporter whose interviews with Gale link plot flashbacks.

Powerful drama but at its core is an unasked question: can a good objective be achieved by bad means? The good objective is the ending of capital punishment; the bad means is a suicide, displayed in such a blatant style you wonder whether director Alan Parker realises that people mimic suicide methods.

MA 15+ NFFV ★★★

The Recruit

Colin Farrell is the recruit. Al Pacino is his mentor at the Central Intelligence Agency famously described by its one-time boss James Jesus Angleton as a 'wilderness of mirrors' - a wilderness in which a traitor could hide.

Indeed the identity of a traitor drives the plot through spiralling convolutions. The film makers were given extraordinary access by the CIA. Shrewd move. Having recently missed on the al Qaeda network, the agency is in need of image enhancement. What has worked for the US Marine Corps since John Wayne's *Sands of Iwo Jima* will doubtless work for the CIA and all who spy in her.

M 15+ NFFV ★★★

City of God

Director Fernando Meirelles uses the title of St Augustine of Hippo's great work ironically in this savage, quasi-documentary on the child and teenage street gangs of Rio de Janeiro's new housing project and its old slums where the prevailing ethos is a doomed cycle of killing to

By James Murray

control drug commerce as a cure for poverty.

The movie looks as spontaneous as life. But Meirelles put slum children through an intense course of training and rehearsal to find the hundred he needed to achieve maximum impact for his intertwined stories, taken from Paolo Lin's novel *Cidade de Deus*.

His narrator Rocket (Alexandre Rodrigues) is a poor black too scared for outlawry, too ambitious to remain in the slums. He who finds his escape as a photographer to his gangster contemporaries who tote guns rather than skateboards and kill without pity.

R 18+ NFFV ★★★

Talk to Her

Benigno (Javier Camara) is what used to be called a simpleton. Yet he has passed the examinations to become a nurse. Marco (Dario Grandimetti) is a writer yet he never seems to put pen to paper or finger to word-processor. These are only two of the improbabilities in director Pedro Almodovar's tragi-comedy. But such is the persuasiveness of his film making that they are ignored as Benigno teaches Marco of the need to talk to his friend Lydia, (Rosario Flores), comatose as the result of a bullfighting accident. He does this by allowing Marco to listen while he talks to another unconscious patient, the beautiful dancer Alicia (Leonor Watling).

Almodovar is sly in his shifting of the pattern of these coincident relationships and startling in his manipulation of their final outcome.

MA 15+ NFFV ★★

Tuck Forever

Disney production which has nothing to do with food or Friar Tuck and everything to do with immortality (an obsession of Disney founder Walt whose remains lie in a Californian

cryonics centre awaiting scientific rather than religious resurrection).

William Hurt and Sissy Spacek are pa and ma Tuck living like prototypical hippies in a deep wood with their sons (Jonathan Jackson and Scott Bairstow) and a secret.

Into their lives come the runaway Winnie Foster (Alexis Bledel) and a Man in a Yellow Suit (Ben Kingsley), the latter intent on profiting from the secret. Director Jay Russell maintains pace, credibility and the period detail. Hurt, using a Scots accent, and Kingsley, enunciating furiously, look as if they wish they were elsewhere. But as John Wayne almost said: 'A man's got to do what a man's got to do to pay the mortgage.'

PG SFFV ★★★

Simone

Cinema is illusion. But what happens when another layer of illusion is added, a layer of which the audience is not aware? Writer/producer/director Andrew Niccol sets out the answer satirically in the character of Hollywood director Victor Taransky (Al Pacino).

Generously Niccol writes into his script a reference to its inspiration: the Greek myth of Pygmalion who fell in love with the ivory image he had sculpted. The Taransky image Simone (short for Simulation One) is computer sculpted to physical perfection.

Pacino is as hyperactive as a flea in search of a dog. And funny with it. Catherine Keener turns in a cut-throat razor characterisation as his studio boss wife. Niccol opts for a happy ending. He might have done better to go for the ending intrinsic to his script: those who live by illusion perish by illusion.

PG SFFV ★★★

About Schmidt

Tic by tic, grimace by grimace Jack Nicholson creates the char-

acter of Warren Schmidt, insurance actuary, retiring at 65 facing the prospect of becoming a Winnebago gypsy with his wife Helen (June Squibb) of many years and strict rules.

Helen, however, dies with her vacuum cleaner on. He then tries to save his daughter Jeannie (Hope Davis) from marriage to a waterbed salesman Randall Hertzell (Dermot Mulroney) only to find himself ambushed in a hot tub by Randall's doting Mom (Kathy Bates).

The milieu is middle west and middle class. Mulroney's turn as a repellent dope with charisma delusions meshes wonderfully with Nicholson's hapless shrewdie. Director/co-writer Alexander Payne's humour is atrabilious. Alone Schmidt must face thoughts of a life without meaning - and death. He is saved not by insurance but by acts of charity to an African orphan Ndugu.

At one point, Schmidt touches his forehead as for the sign of the cross but conceals the rest of the sign beneath the quilt he has around his shoulders - a gesture surely symbolic of the present uncertainties of many believers.

M 15+ NFFV ★★★★★

The Hours

It worked for Laurence Olivier. But who would have foreseen it working for Nicole Kidman: a false nose as a prop to fine acting? Okay, the Kidman nose doesn't have the dimensions described by Vivien Leigh in her quip: 'First you hear Larry, then you see Larry's make-up, then you see Larry.' Nonetheless, the nose is formidable and transforms Kidman from covergirl beauty to that plain Jane of English literature (and suicide) Virginia Woolf.

Scriptwriter David Hare, following Michael Cunningham's novel, intertwines Woolf's story with that of a latterday reader Laura Brown (Julianne Moore) who finds in Woolf's novel, *Mrs Dalloway*, an option more appealing than the American suburban dream. This has dire

Official Classifications key

G: for general exhibition; PG: parental guidance recommended for persons under 15 years; M 15+: recommended for mature audiences 15 years and over; MA 15+: restrictions apply to persons under the age of 15; R 18+: Restricted to adults, 18 years and over.

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SFFV: Suitable For Family Viewing; NFFV: Not Suitable For Family Viewing.

results. Not for her, however, but for her grown-up, writer son, played by Ed Harris, still seemingly in his grizzled Jackson Pollock make-up.

It sounds a bit parasitically Eng Lit not to say twee, but director Stephen Daldry ratchets up the tension by deft intercutting. Moore is in artful form. So, too, is Meryl Streep as the kind of literary editor most writers would prefer to the Nobel Prize. Kidman, however, like Phar Lap, wins by a nose.

MA 15+ NFFV ★★★★★

City by the Sea

Director Michael Caton-Jones has done it: restored Robert De Niro's adrenaline flow in his role of Vince, a hard-nut detective, returning to his old stamping

ground Long Beach, once glamorous, now derelict and dangerous, not least for Joey (James Franco) the son he abandoned to drug addiction, fatherhood and suspicion of murder.

Admirable though the revived De Niro is, he does not match Franco who combines toughness with desperation, hopelessness with reluctant love for his father.

Can Vince save his son and grandson? The answer lies in the fact that even broken families can have more positive energy than benevolent institutions.

M 15+ NFFV ★★★★★

Narc

The story centres on the activities of two narcotics squad cops Nick Tellis (Jason Patric) and Henry Oak (Ray Liotta) who begin by pursuing drug dealers to solve the death of colleague killed in the line of duty, and end by pursuing each other.

MA 15+ NFFV ★★★

Two Weeks Notice

In Mr Twitchy, Hugh Grant, Sandra Bullock may have found her co-star, the one she needs to spark-up her comedies as Katharine Hepburn, Myrna Loy and Lucille Ball needed Spencer Tracey, William Powell and Dezi Amez to create theirs.

PG SFFV ★★★

Gangs of New York

Director Martin Scorsese has wanted to make this movie for more than 20 years. Perhaps he had to wait too long, and then was given too much: a budget of \$97 million and all the resources of Rome's Cinecittà. His take on the rival New York gangs of nativist Americans and Famine Irish immigrants curdles into flamboyant melodrama.

Yet the scale of the movie, set during the American Civil War, is undeniable. Principal writer Jay Cocks imaginatively transmutes journalist Herbert Ashbury's factual book. And Scorsese gives it the fevered power of a sickly



child's fantasies of religion, violence and love.

Daniel Day Lewis, Anglo-Irish by birth, dominates as Bill the Butcher, swaggering, knife-wielding nativist leader (while occasionally giving the impression that he is sending up the movie's extravagances). As Amsterdam Vallon, Leonardo DiCaprio huffs and puffs but doesn't really look as if he could even blow Bill's hat off, let alone match him in single combat to avenge his father Priest Vallon (Liam Neeson). Cameron Diaz is the multi-talented street crim, Jenny, desired by both Bill and Amsterdam.

Scorsese's climactic scene, in which the Butcher's and Vallon's gang war is interrupted by government forces putting down anti-conscription rioters, is shell-shocking; it inspires a wayward thought: Andrew Lloyd Webber could make a musical of this.

MA 15+ NFFV ★★★

Star Trek Nemesis

Hokum. But hokum of the finest vintage made to the highest standards of Gene Roddenberry who ratings years ago created the Starship Enterprise and all who voyage in her.

Once more Patrick Stewart lends his classical training to the role of Jean-Luc Piccard, speaking the lines as if they were Shakespeare's own.

They may well be Brent Spiner's. He, as well as playing the cyborg Data, gets a co-writing credit with John Logan. It involves a cloning experiment in which Piccard finds himself matched against a new (and villainous) edition of himself: Shinzon (Tom Hardy) with the future of the galaxy at stake.

MA 15+ SFFV ★★★

Chicago

Jagged as lightning, black as Guinness and with the sound volume of a Rolls-Royce jet engine revving for take-off, this musical tells the story of two entertainers Velma Kelly



Theological Clap-trap

WE are to believe that, if 'most theologians' hold a position on a certain issue, the position must be true. That's flabby thinking. Recall the movie *Twelve Angry Men*. It was about how one juror held out for acquittal, turned out to be right, and eventually convinced the other eleven. No one watching that movie would have thought it good if the lone juror had decided to go along with the others merely because 'most jurors' initially believed in the defendant's guilt. Keep in mind that theologians do not enjoy the charism of infallibility. At times 'most theologians' simply are wrong about a particular point. We need to examine the point itself, not take a hand count.

- Karl Keating, *Nothing But the Truth*, El Cajon Calif. 1999.

(Catherine Zeta Jones) and Roxie Hart (Renee Zellweger), murderers both, vying for the attention of sharp lawyer Billy Flynn (Richard Gere).

Jones almost rips the screen asunder with her opening song and dance number. Zellweger has a quieter start but keeps up with the Jones if not with the Zeta. Sometimes she flags and to express emotion simply lets her face crumple like a Mini-Minor hit by a Mack truck. Gere? He's no Gene Kelly but deft editing gets him through his big tap number.

Because of its structure and editing the movie lacks narrative clarity, but it compensates with razzle-dazzle dynamism. There are references to convents and rosaries, for the characters are pre-Vatican II showbiz Catholics. The musical is also a brilliant satire on the adversarial legal system that the United States inherited from England.

M 15+ NFFV ★★★

The Kid Stays in the Picture

The charm of actor turned producer Robert Evans was always dangerous, not least to himself. He has survived it to dominate this exercise in showbiz hagiography, produced by the hagiographer to the stars, *Vanity Fair* editor Graydon Carter. It takes us through the rise and fall of Evans.

He may not quite have risen again to the heights of *Love Story*, *The Godfather*, *The Odd Couple* and *Chinatown* nor gone again to the risky depths of *Cotton Club*. But he does provide the compelling voice-over and star-pals such as Jack Nicholson and Dustin Hoffman come to the party, the latter providing a brilliant satire of the Evans speech patterns over the end credits.

MA 15+ SFFV ★★★

Secretary

Director Steven Shainberg creates arresting images (that is, images that would have got him arrested years ago) in the person of Maggie Gyllenhall. She plays Lee Holloway, secretary in the law office of E. Edward Grey (James Spader) who dictates sadism to which she responds as if it were a love letter.

The movie is based on a short story by Mary Gaitskill, and everyone tries for profound significance. Gyllenhall has buckets of charm and beguilement. But this cannot prevent the movie from being queasily redolent of the problem pages of *Cosmo* magazine seen in a dentist's waiting room.

R 18+ NFFV ★

Adaptation

As the twin brothers Charlie and Donald Kaufman, one awkward the other smooth, Nicholas Cage provides a *tour de force* (or perhaps *deux tours*). To complicate matters the Kaufman characters are scriptwriters just like Charlie Kaufman who wrote the screenplay (and secured a credit for the fictional Donald).



Stocking up for the long voyage

WHILE a convict vessel lay at anchor, about to sail, a boat from shore reached the ship, and from it stepped a clerk from the Bank of England. The convicts felicitated themselves upon the acquisition of so gentlemanlike a companion; but it soon turned out that the visitant had no intention of making so long a voyage. Finding that they were not to have the pleasure of his company, the convicts very naturally thought of picking his pockets, the necessity of which professional measure was prevented by a speedy distribution of their contents. Forth from his bill-case this votary of Plutus drew his nitid Newlands; all the forgers and utterers were mustered on deck, and to each of them was well and truly paid into his hand a five pound note: less acceptable, perhaps, than if privately removed from the person, but still joyfully received. This was well intended on the part of the directors, but the consequences it is scarcely necessary to enumerate; a large stock of rum was immediately laid in from the circumambient slop boats, and the materials of constant intoxication secured for the rest of the voyage to Botany Bay.

— Rev. Sydney Smith, Anglican clergyman and one of the founders of the *Edinburgh Review*, 1823.

As directed by Spike Jonze, the comedy is a high octane cocktail. It could not be more intoxicatingly funny if written from the bottom of a jug of moonshine and includes a send-up of a seminar by the real Robert McKee (Brian Cox) world-touring guru to would-be Kaufmans.

Meryl Streep looks slightly bewildered as Susan Orleans, author of works about orchid theft in the Florida swamplands, which drive the screenplay. Chris Cooper, as orchid thief John LaRoche, aptly enough steals the picture.

MA 15+ NFFV ★★★

Human Nature

Another and earlier movie scripted by Charlie Kaufman. It inspires the suspicion that Charlie Kaufman like his brother Donald may be a fiction, a mask for a factory of writers.

That suspicion aside, the satire concerns Lila (Patricia Arquette) who has a hairy pelt rather than a smooth skin, fitting her for a life in the wild and for bestsellerdom

as the author of nature books. Through these she links with Nathan (Tim Robbins) a scientist who is as repressed as she is now discreetly hairy.

Into their partnership comes a feral human Puff (Rhys Ifans) whom they proceed to civilize. Research assistant Gabrielle (Miranda Otto) further complicates matters to a degree so comically bawdy that it can only be summed up in a single adjective: Kaufmanic.

MA 15+ NFFV ★★★

Confessions of a Dangerous Mind

George Clooney's debut as a director is no run-of-the-mill formula movie. How could it be? It is based on the life (or legend) of Chuck Barris whose dayshift was television producer and nightshift CIA assassin.

Sam Rockwell plays Barris as to the double life born, not an easy task given Clooney's busy-busy, murky direction and the script by quirkmeister Charlie Kaufman. Drew Barrymore and Julia Roberts play the femmes fatales.

Clooney himself puts in a longer than Hitchcockian signature appearance. Not bad, in fact pretty good, for a beginner who could have rested on his looks if not his laurels.

MA 15+ NFFV ★★★

One Hour Photo

Robin Williams freezes his comedic talent to play mall photo-booth technician Sy Parrish. He is about as jolly as a mortuary in his obsession with the Yorkin family, Nina, Will and Jakob (Connie Nielsen, Michael Vartan and Dylan Smith) and outraged when he discovers in developing family snaps that Will is betraying Nina.

But writer/director Mark Romanek does not sufficiently clarify the roots of Parrish's outrage: the sexual abuse he endured as a child.

M 15+ NFFV ★★★

Satin Rouge

Belly dancing is not the first activity that comes to mind as essential to women's liberation. But Tunisian writer/director Raja Amari seeks to make it so with considerable help from his captivating star Hiam Abbass who plays Lilia, a widow and seamstress who finds she has a talent for gyration as well as sewing.

M 15+ NFFV ★★

Like Mike

For non-basketball fans, the Mike of the title is basketballer Michael Jordan. Calvin Cambridge (Lil Bow Wow, repeat Lil Bow Wow) is an orphan who finds a pair of Jordan's old sneakers, later magically souped up by a lightning strike. These enable him to play with the very big boys of pro basketball, help his fellow orphans and defeat the villain. The storyline betrays similarities to an earlier British movie about magical football boots. But how many children can spell plagiarism?

G SFFV ★★★

Frailty

Actor Bill Paxton makes his directorial debut with a blood-boltered thriller (scripted by Bret Hanley) about a widower (Paxton) with two sons who has delusions of being called to visit divine vengeance on demon sinners under the alias God's Hand.

Wesley Doyle (Powers Booth) is the FBI Agent baffled by the seemingly random God's Hand serial killings. He is given the key by Fenton Meiks (Matthew McConaughey) the son of the killer who refused to join him.

Paxton keeps the violence out of frame, thus heightening the horror. And his final twist raises the disquieting question of just how delusional the killer was.

MA 15+ NFFV ★★

The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers

Director Peter Jackson is two thirds of the way towards a cinema masterpiece, the scope of which surpasses any Cecil B DeMille epic and even the DW Griffiths classic *Birth of a Nation*. When he presents the final film of his trilogy, he may as well weep like Alexander the Great who, having conquered the known world, could not think what to do for an encore.

The key to Jackson's success? His use of the majestic New Zealand landscape keeps his mighty special effects in scale. Jackson, of course, had a masterpiece to start with: JR Tolkien's work. But more literary masterpieces have been botched than bettered. Indeed some Tolkien purists stubbornly insist that Jackson's work does not do full justice to the original. Others prefer the BBC radio version.

M 15+ SFFV ★★★

Catch Me If You Can

Is a tortoise and fox hunt, involving Frank Abagnale (Leonardo DiCaprio), a precocious conman-cheque artist and FBI agent Karl Handratty (Tom Hanks). DiCaprio gives Abagnale

a quicksilver insouciance. Hanks creates a lonesome Plodd who comes to respect Abagnale, a respect returned.

The movie ends with a twist which would be incredible were it not said to be fact based. Director Steven Spielberg's stated ambition has been to make wide-appeal movies like those from the Golden Age of Bill Collins (sorry, Hollywood). This is another, and unmissable.

M15+ SFFV ★★★

Standing in the Shadow of Motown

Belated but welcome tribute to the musicians who in the 1960s provided the backing for the multiple chart-toppers of Detroit's hit assembly line, Motown. They called themselves the Funk Brothers and come together again to discuss genially their talented anonymity while headliners such as The Temptations, The Supremes, Smokey Robison and Martha Reeves took the spotlights



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and the bows.

Like *The Buena Vista Social Club*, the tribute's climax is a full-on concert in which the Funk Brothers finally get their share of spotlights and bows.

G SFFV ★★★

Tape

Amy (Uma Thurman) is a small-town attorney. Vince (Ethan Hawk) is a former high school friend now a drug dealer. They are re-united through a meeting with another school friend, Jon, now a film-maker (Robert Sean Leonard). As they explore their past, Vince initially dominates Jon. No prizes for guessing who eventually dominates both. Small, tight, raw, gripping. The budget is B-grade but the playing is A-grade as is Richard Linklater's direction.

MA 15+ NFFV ★★★

Far From Heaven

Reworking of Douglas Sirk's 1955 drama *All that Heaven Allows* (starring Jane Wyman and Rock Hudson) which in turn was inspired by DH Lawrence's *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. Here Kathleen Whitaker (Julianne Moore), her husband Frank (Dennis Quaid) and their gardener (Dennis Haysbert) interact to the revelation that Frank is a homosexual.

Writer/director Todd Haynes maintains the mock antique Fifties setting, and with his three stars the movie's precarious balance between vintage weepie and soap opera.

M 15+ NFFV ★★★

Just Married

Boy meets girl is, like aspirin, a tried and tested formula. This what might be called the reverse-Cinderella variation: poor boy Tom (Ashton Kutcher) meets rich girl.

It's popcorny but Kutcher has a gift for goofy comedy and Murphy subdues her wild chick persona to convince as a culture vulture when they visit Venice on their hilariously ill-fated honeymoon.

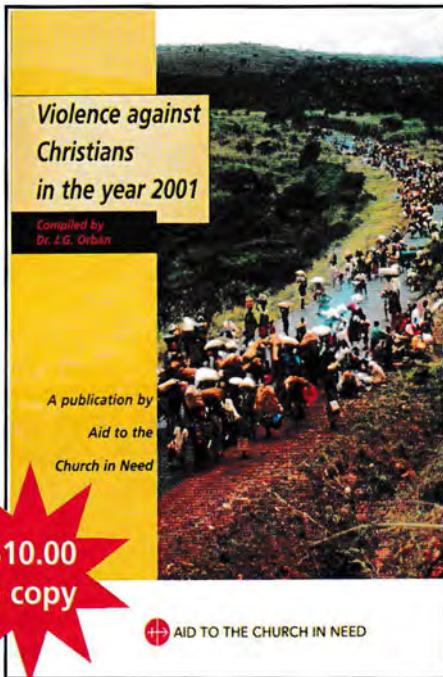
PG SFFV ★★★

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