

# *Transcendental Sermons and Enlightenment*

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For ANZAPA issue No. 228

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## Grey Pages – ANZAPA

### Editorial

### Technological Advancements?

### Garry Talks about Tech and his Writing?

This issue is coming to you via the 256MB Data Stick I received at the beginning of this year. I'm still unable to use it at home on the desk top, but I am able to use it to store and carry work home and then use a laptop at home which takes both discs and the Data Stick. It's not as comfortable to use as a desk top, so I may end up using it mostly to swish stuff typed at home off discs and onto the Data Stick. This Laptop incidentally runs VERY hot, far to hot to make it's use as a 'lap top', impossible, so I fear to just leave it on all weekend as summer approaches.

What this combination is allowing me to do is to carry to and from work an increasing volume of text, and more importantly, to make better use my time allowing me to knit spare moments at work and at home into effectively hour long chunks of 'writer time' pre and post commute.

The consequences of this are becoming alarming. You may recall that early this year I tried for nine and ended up with seven 500-ish word SF&F stories for the Magic Casements Flash Fiction competition. The last of which appears as the Original Fiction of this issue. I now have close to fifty SF&F stories that I feel are mostly complete. With the use of the Data Stick I have made two 'anthology' files for the 2005 MC3 stories and the six (to date) 2006 MC4 stories.

A task for the end of year slowdown at work / holiday period is for me to assemble, index and organise (by length and story theme or characteristics) an anthology file containing most of my (40 ish?) completed stories.

I intend to send off a printed version of this Anthology file as an audition piece to most of Australia's small press publishers in the hope that a systematically organized anthology will be more attractive to them than my mailing off 40 individual undocumented stories to gradually add their slush pile. I.e. I would prefer a single initiative, something that gives them the option of picking and choosing by theme or length a story to meet their needs by running a finger down an index, rather than having to read through heaps of stories that just do not fit their publication's needs.

As a secondary objective I hope to impress potential editors that as I can write about lots of things, and hopefully this might lead to being invited to try to write something on 'X' from scratch.

I see this course of action as being better than the largely futile effort of mailing our stories to a dozen or so small press publishers and hoping to 'luck on' while playing the game of trying to guess which issue of which publication is looking for a Vampire / Mormon / Lift / Beach / Space Migration story at any given time. I.e. for example the ASIM collective will have Six Editorial teams in any given year, so there will be at least Six different sets of views as to which topic/story would 'suit' one issue. Even if I can write the 'Right' story, it could arrive five issues too early or it may arrive a week after the deadline for the one issue that it would fit into.

Another technical advancement is that I am now weighing the rain, relying on a digital readout electronic scale with single gram (ml) sensitivity rather than volumetric estimates. It cost all of \$30 at Aldi's.

And so it goes.

Garry P Dalrymple - November 30, 2005

Mailing comments on ANZAPA issue # 227 for the December 2005 ANZAPA issue # 228

1 -- OBO 227 – Bruce Gillespie –  
No Comment at this time.

2 – Anzapapoll 2005 – Sally Yeoland –  
Congratulations Bill Wright. The top 10 results broadly coincide with what my vote would have been, couldn't quite get the hang of the voting system though.

3 - \*BRG\*44 – Bruce Gillespie

Ah! Such fond warm memories of London during the Blitz your cover photo brings back! From my impregnable fortress of superiority (being a Basenji owner) I can agree with you on the stupidity of other people's barking dogs. Your listing of Classical Music enjoyed makes me consider making listening to each of Mrs McCartie's records a new year's resolution, technology permitting! My reading these days doesn't intersect much with yours. I still have hundreds of unread second hand SF and a dozen of more unread Aust 'Speculative Fiction' titles to hand, in my bedroom and other stashes about the garage and shed.

I can't say that I have a lot of time for Mark Latham or any of the Lib Lab crew. The criticisms he makes as a Labor party insider have long been apparent to those outside the party. He does I suppose bring a degree of personally experienced detail. A marginal involvement in Politics such as I have tends to attune you to the personal faults and failings of the shining lights of the major parties.

I feel that having experienced what I have, I could never 'turn' and join the Lib/Labs or even the Greens. Irrespective of the past I remain committed to a 'Third Force' Party as being the essential way of introducing what are initially minority concerns into political life. The personality cult of the 'Bob Brown Party' and the 'Go the Greens' mentality is just another form of the 'Fuhrer Prinzipal' of relying on blind trust in 'The Leader' instead of the gritty and sweaty business of getting personally involved in understanding policy determination. People are still joining the Democrats to take part in policy determination. People join the Greens because they agree with what they think the Greens are on about there is a difference and it does matter. If

there was a 'Liberal' party there would have been no need for the Democrats / Greens / Family First / Christian Democrats Etal. An Australian Parliament of four stable Parties, the Conservatives, Liberals, Labor and Country Party could/should have been a stable outcome of the 1960s and the 1970s. Read the rest of your contribution with interest.

#### **4 - GNU Vol. 1 No. 4 – Derrick Ashby**

I feel I must comment on a point of dissonance, for me a 'Cavie' will always be a Guinea Pig, so on the first quick read through I was a bit concerned at the weight and cat interactivity of your new 'cavie'. The Burns poems were a real pain to get through the spell checker, Scots English not being valid usage to my home or work PCs.

#### **5 - Interstellar Ramjet Scoop – Bill Wright**

Ah, Colour, Erosion effects, Fractals and landscapes undimmed by atmospheric haze. It must be the Interstellar Ramjet Scoop again! Appreciated the quite detailed coverage of the Voyager writers at Continuum, may mine it later for leads to Sydney Freecon guests.

Cytopia sounds an interesting company, perhaps if I invested now the all up cost of attending a US Worldcon, in time the investment could grow to be enough to fund a future Sydney Worldcon?

The 2005 Futurian Monolith sits gathering kudos on a bookshelf next to the squeeze generator torch. A family trophy cabinet was considered but indefinitely deferred, it would have sat with my only other trophy, an aluminium medal for debating prowess (or at least participation!)

Annoyance at the transportability of tradition in Sydney Football codes touches even I. Each day my train to and from work passes the Canterbury football field/Stadium. It functions now as a sometimes practice field for the lower grade teams. Large sums of public money were invested and the team now 'home grounds' and plays elsewhere. Sod all public money for all for any sense of gender equity in public sport facility funding, Football fields for the Boys and not much of anything for the girls. An additional major irritant to me as a sky watcher is the light pollution issue, squillions of kilowatts blasted into the sky from 6 pm to 12 pm to facilitate a 40 or so

minute training session for a squad of twenty blokes. But then again, the Canterbury team has been the NSW Premiers several years running for the local Sex Offenders Cup (the only football competition where 'own goals' count double).

Re Your Comments to Cath Ortlieb – On Golf links, perhaps the criticism is a little unjust. I hold no brief for Golf, but where I live there are several golf links nearby. They are usually urban in-fill, i.e. they built them on the creek side land that was too narrow or flood prone to build more housing on. I believe that most re-use run off or ground water, i.e. water that is not safe to drink. Things may be different elsewhere though. Read parts of the rest of your contribution with interest.

#### **6 - Kingdom of the Bland – Eric Lindsay,**

No additional comments at this time, read your contribution with interest. Read your other comments with interest.

#### **7 – Land of 10,000 Loons – Jeanne Mealy**

Dear Jeanne, All the fun of the fair! I suspect that attending a county fair such as you describe would be a better and more representative 'American Experience' than attending say the Creationist Grand Canyon theme park. Living as I do by public transport and 'shanks pony' has allowed me to see other Australia's that are not apparent from a car. 'Wainscotting Fiction' is a term used to describe fictional events that are concurrent with our own mundane reality. Real life is like this, I was stopped in my tracks when I learned that Kevin Dillon had lived for 7 or so years as a homeless person. In addition to the Saturday Market, I used to do monthly (daytime) University market days. This often meant riding the first bus of the morning to be there in time to be set up well ahead of the arrival of University staff or Students. It is a very different Australia that goes to work at 5 am. I did not send the letter as the moment had by then passed. I had planned all manner of things, clearance sales and to go out with a statement, but a week after the last market it all seemed too self indulgent and melodramatic. St. George Girls is most definitely not a Private (or Religious) School. It is an academically selective Public School of

what was once the St. George administrative region. Girls of all social, religious, cultural or racial background are entitled to apply to attend, provided their Academic Ability / Performance exceeds that of those who fail to get an offer. If you like it is a public school with a 100% scholarship level enrolment. These girls are drawn from a pool of close to 2,000 applicants, from families that care enough to apply for a school that admits only on academic merit. Janene's score in the test / assessment process places her in about the top third of these girls. My greatest relief is that Janene will be at a school where her level of Academic Ability / Performance will be considered 'normal' rather than 'strange', and secondarily that she will be free of the poisonous 'Devil's playground' like atmosphere that often meets the Scholarship girls at most 'elite' Private Schools. The Basenji Uncle stratagem has failed to proceed, but mum and I are considering making it known that we would like a companion / replacement for Mystique sometime soon.

As for the Telekinetic Levitating wheely bins, all will be revealed in the Christmas Dr. Who special – perhaps. On Bjo Trimble, she once threatened with international legal action. Met her. All explained and all made better.

### **8 – Les Chattes Parties 79 – Sally Yeoland**

The calculation of a 'good day' at the market is an exceedingly complex bit of calculus. Starting Thursday you want the weather forecast for the weekend to hint at bad weather, this is to prevent people making plans to go out to the beach or a picnic etc. or otherwise avoiding their sacred responsibilities in a Consumerist Society. It may not rain on Friday, we don't want potential customers planning to sleep in, overcast is best, we want them up and early so they have time to arrive, stroll, and linger until lunchtime. On Saturday, if the ground is wet, forget it, by the time afternoon blue skies emerge it is too late until next week. Too fine a day or too hot a day and you will be left alone with your stock and a migraine. For a good day at the market Buskers, Mimes and other 'Street Theatre types' are to be shot on sight! They turn up after breakfasting at 11 am (stall holders having been at work since 7 am), with

no stock to buy, carry or set up, no stall fees to pay. They arrive in time to 'play' to the lunch time crowd, your peak sales period, and reap immediate un-receipted cash before leaving at 12.30. Whether melodious or not, the crowds they cause block the narrow between stalls passage ways and customer traffic flow. Your customers seeing the blockage caused by the Buskers crowd turn and walk off in search of another coffee. Others stand as a wall of backs to your display, blocking the view of anyone coming the other way. On cat Equivalent ages I am curious if there should be adjustments for size. With dogs, a 7 dog years to one human year ratio is said to be valid, but I suspect that this is less valid for both larger and smaller than average dogs. Fifteen is a good age for a basenji, Mystique's predecessor made it to 17 or 18 (120 to 130 'years'?) before blindness and dementia became evident. Mystique is in her fourteenth year and I hope to have her company for three or five years yet. Read the rests of your contribution with interest but no further comments at this time.

### **9 – Megatheriums for Breakfast #45 – David R Grigg**

No additional comments at this time, read your contribution with interest. .

### **10 – Necessity 66: We are the Champions** **Jack R. Herman**

No additional comments at this time, read your contribution with interest.

### **11 – Notes from a New Life No 3 / Random Musings - Karen Gorey**

Yes thank you, I am enjoying my weekends, activities expand readily to fill the newly available time and I have had hardly a moment of separation anxiety. For years and years I would have 'late for High School / Uni Classes / Exams nightmares, but few such since getting out of marketing. Having had some recent blackout experience I have some sympathy with your Hurricane experiences. Read the rest of your contribution with interest but no further comments at this time.

### **12 – Odd News and Nonsense – Roger Sims**

What we experience we know for life, what we read soon passes from the memory of the

current generation. The hurt is healed by time, but seldom are the lessons truly learned, lingering usually only as a footnote in the service of some other yet to be imagined thesis. No further comments at this time.

### **13 – Panopticon 32 – Dan McCarthy**

With my SF&F writing, which I believe I have come to via note taking, I find short story writing to be fairly easy, I start with an image or idea, add notes of what I feel should also be there and then start writing the necessary stuff that you need to convey the reader to and from the central scene or idea. Writing novels would of course require more planning and plotting. No additional comments at this time, read your contribution with interest.

### **14 – Ping! – John Newman**

I share your thoughts on the house where nobody lives. In my case it is the Garages. In the weeks after my father's death I had plans to 'sort it out' and install a sort of a 'Slan Shack' by concentrating all of my fannish archives in one spot (and SF&F books to the shed). I have made several re-organizational efforts and each time they come to a halt for the reasons you describe. It will be a long time, if ever, before they become 'Uncle Garry's Garage' rather than 'Dad's'.

As men do, turning to Talk of Lawns – Among the more useful things my father left me is an early generation electric lawn mower. It is powered by a long power cord plugged into an ordinary household socket. Even with juggling a twelve-metre cord over the shoulder, Toga fashion, I find it a lot lighter, quieter and easier and less messy to use than the petrol versions with their oil, petrol, sparkplugs and throttle to manage.

### **15 - QUOZ No 2 – Claire Brialey & Mark Plummer**

Dear Mark, please be entirely at ease over your inability to recall details of our meeting at Melbourne in 2002. The event would have been dangerously close in Space and time to the Iconic 'Three eyed Frog' incident that has permanently scarred the psyche of Melbourne con organizing fans. The corollary of your intense outback sky experience is something that Amateur Astronomers frequently battle. Lots of people believe that it is only in the

'outback' that can you see anything in the sky worth looking for, when Eclipses and many other periodic events are still worth an evening out even in light polluted Sydney. Hope you still find my contribution of interest, more rainfall next issue, perhaps.

Dear Claire, The Irish cons I know of, James Bacon I might investigate mailing a slab of my stories. The 'Quality' of writers reported to be attending the Irish SF cons seems intimidating high, but with a smaller fandom I guess you can get away with such a degree of writer/fan familiarity. I will consider you book suggestions for my niece in the New Year. Read the rest of your contribution with interest.

### **16 – Random musings – Karen Gory**

No comments at this time, read your contribution with interest.

### **17 – Rhubarb, The Cocky – John & Diane Fox**

No comments at this time, read your contribution with interest.

### **17 – Siyayilanda No. 9 – Nick Shears**

As most of your issue concerned Music of a form that I have little familiarity I refrain from comment. Excessive devotion to Jazz and 'Sport' are both mysteries to me, possibly due to toxic exposure at some point, but we must all be outsiders to some aspects of popular culture, lest our society be entirely without Objective opinions? No additional comments at this time.

### **18 - You Really Know You're Home When You Find a Wombat in Your Bed #101 – Cath Ortlieb**

No additional comments at this time, read your contribution with interest.

## **Quark Strangeness and Charm in Sydney - The quaint joys of Reading and showering by Candle light**

On Sunday night (November 20, 2005) mum and I were watching the 7.00 news on TV. Snap Crackle and pop! Lights and TV flash on and off. Investigation reveals that a 4WD has flattened an 85 mm steel bus stop post and gone on to sever at ground level a timber electricity / streetlight pole. Some houses in Eulabah Avenue and nearby streets are

blacked out immediately. The Driver of the 4WD claims to have been forced off the road by a vanished 'white car'. The remains of the pole is hanging suspended by its various wires, busy Bexley road is soon blocked off by police. Blacked out and so denied indoor self entertainment, many people (and their dogs) are out on the street TALKING to each other and viewing the scene. After ascertaining the above we return home.

Next door John (I'm an Electrician) claims he's OK, as his house has three phase electricity. He has lost one phase, but lights were still working. He says that our place has only single phase. Well Oopty doo! I think I might go one better and turn photo-voltaic!

At 9.00 pm the lights go out again, a work crew is fixing the pole etc. The area Blacked out is surprisingly large. I curse the full cloud cover, as sky observing during a local blackout is a rare treat. Mum and I shower by candle light or listen to battery powered radio. I try to read by the light of two candles (and suffer eye tiredness for it in the morning) but give it up as not being a very satisfactory way of reading.

At 11.45 I hear young Arthur next door. Will child noises will now be added to add to the evening shouting overheard most nights, they say the first twenty years are the worst? The lack of communication from next door and the fumigation of the house this week had left mother and I uncertain if the people next door had had a baby or had a tragedy, and naturally we were reluctant to mention the matter on the occasion of rare daylight sightings of John.

At 12.43 lights, TV, VCRs and refrigerators come back on and we return to the 21st. century. After all this, there might be a \$97 12v / 240v petrol or diesel powered camping generator under the Christmas tree this year!

Young Arthur is John's first child, brought home from hospital that afternoon. Moral to the story, even if your dad is an Electrician it doesn't stop your first day home being in darkness when accidents happen!

While going to the Don Chip Foundation talk I noticed on a UTS noticeboard with a sheet with tear off contact details. It was for 'Eckankar', possibly the original Science Fictional, 'Ancient Alien wisdom' Religion, a survivor from the 1950s, from well before Scientology and Raelianism?

## Blue Pages Science & Astronomy

### Intelligent Design & Creationism Rant

(Possibly Quark, Strangeness and Charm as well!)

The following is something I posted to ABC SCIENCE MATTERS as part of a discussion about the issues raised by small evangelical literalist Christian group to have the 'Intelligent Designer' Creationist point of view presented in schools as an alternative to Evolution by Natural selection.

I am responding to postings suggesting better ways to argue against ID proponents.

*.....All of the previously discussed is true to an extent.*

*Prior to this email I proposed a format of meeting, but I did not fully explain my full reasons for that format or occasion.*

*Some years ago I attended the infamous Creationist meeting at the Sydney Wesley Centre, the one where Dr. Ritchie got up to ask a question and 'all Hell' broke loose.*

*I had attended expecting to see 'paradigms collide' and ended up sitting among some people that I vaguely recognised from previous Australian Museum Society meetings.*

*Consequently I was one of the people who had to lock knees against the row of chairs in front to prevent Security guards and the organizers physically extracting Dr. Ritchie from his seat and ejecting him from the meeting.*

*Until you are present at such a meeting, hearing the abuse and catcalls of the 'Righteous' you are missing the point about ID / Creationism. Until you experience the emotion charge all the debate about Evolution Vs ID is just a polite common room conversation.*

*Rationalism in any form is a threat to these guys. They have a self constructed worldview that 'they are going to heaven' and all the 'unrighteous scum' are going to a well deserved and punishing Hell'. There ain't no God of Love and Acceptance in their sub-theology, 'Burn the Nigger' and 'Kill the Jew' are the sniggering Angels of their better nature whispering at their shoulder as the preacher preaches for ID to be received with 'reasonableness' and for an 'even handed' reception for their 'Science'.*

*As these people do not believe in the New Testament's loving and accepting God, there is only the bitter old man of the Old Testament, the Smiter and trier of Job. Any attempt at putting rationalism between their beliefs and reality consigns them personally to the Hell that they have so self-hatingly constructed for unbelievers, as their belief system gives them no other alternative post judgement day destination.*

*Losing points at a 'public debate' or giving undue prominence to their fallacious arguments is a price that you have to pay to see the mask slip, and unless you see the twisted face under the mask, how can you expect to understand why they lie on behalf of their God, lie to their own children and want their lies to be told to your children.*

GPD

## The Proposed Meeting Format

Dear all

Much has been said of the ethics of having to support the ID cause by ponying up the cash to buy the DVD in order to be able to express an informed opinion about the contents of the DVD.

An 'Id'eal would be to get a group like the NSW Science Teacher's Association (or similar) to set up a meeting at a public venue to show the DVD in all it's glory and then have three Scientists for, and three against, to discuss ID and what is shown in the DVD.

To be completely fair and even handed (or one hand tied behind in the case of the non ID-ers?), the chair being could read out the list of the three ID speakers and then read out a list of the Scientists of equal or greater Academic standing who oppose ID but who were excluded from talking the podium against ID on this occasion, so that the ID volk only have to go up against anti-ID folk of an equal Academic standing (i.e. a primary school teacher Vs their primary school teacher, a geographer Vs their geographer and a history teacher Vs their history teacher, an ID beardy weirdy Vs a Skeptical beardy weirdy etc.).

All attending could be polled on their views on ID, Creationism, Young Earth, Biblical Literalism ..... before and after the talk with a \$? Cash Prize going to the side that shifts the numbers their way on the night.

You could also have the Creationists, the Skeptics, the Rationalists the Scientologists (and the Invisible Spaghetti Monster Ghod people?) selling their stuff in the foyer.

I'd pay my \$10 to attend, just to watch the fun in the foyer as paradigms collide!

However you would be Very unlikely to get the Intelligent Designers to agree to show up and to take part in this or anything like a real

open debate; and where would they get three real ID scientists from?

GPD

# Green Pages

Part 1 of 2.

Notes from the November 22, 2005

A Don Chipp Foundation talk at the UTS: Politics, Religion and other Impolite Topics, What Role should Religion play in Australian politics?

## General Comments

The talk started with an audience of 45 which grew to about 50 before the evening's conclusion. To get into the talk you had to walk past a table laden with tired Trotskyite tracts. Some boutique brand of post-1990 Socialist Revolutionary group were holding a meeting as well (Buy your copy of 'The Socialist Work Shy' newspaper, the Left Green alternative ....). So in effect the Australian Democrats inspired meeting was 'to the left' of the Trots!

## Senator Lyn Allison

(Opening remarks)

**Australian Democrat Leader**

**The Don Chipp foundation** is a largely government funded think tank associated with the Australian Democrats. Its task is political education and research. Each major Federally represented political party has one, the spare change thrown to the Australian Democrats one 'balances' the far greater amount thrown at the Lib/Lab equivalents.

In current political life religiosity is more visible than in the past, Government welfare services are being contracted out to arms of church organizations. The 'Fairness' arbiter of the new Industrial Relations system gets his guidance from God rather than common law. The Education Minister is 'open' to teaching Creationism in Schools, The Health Minister interprets health Science and women's welfare through a Catholic prism. At the most recent election numerous Coalition and Labour candidates 'affirmed' religious conviction and

Family First, a Pentecostal party contested the election, winning a senate spot. There is also a climate where Terrorism is seen as being primarily religion justified. Few voices are raised as to the desirability of mixing minority religion with Law and Politics, or whether it is wise for government to advantage Faith based endeavours through direct/indirect funding and tax concessions, given the lack of accountability or transparency of 'private' religious establishments.

## Dr. Richard Ely

**Historian and Author of 'Unto God and Caesar'**

Asks that before considering 'What role should Religion play in Australian public life' we should examine the facts on what role it has already played. Maddox argues that Religion and Conservative Politics have advanced hand in hand, but it is more complex than this, a more consistent observation is that John Howard is presiding over a Corporatist Makeover of Australian Society and that some Religions and institutions such as the Pentacostalists (Hillsong / City Church) and Salvation Army etc. are along for the ride. There has been no legal impediment to 'Establishment' since the 1996 State aid to Private schools High Court decision. Government has been keen to 'privatise' and some religions have been pleased to step in and receive government funding for their welfare activities. Corporatization proceeds, but paradoxically as institutional presence in 'services' increases, for most denominations there continues to be a decline in church attendance. Dr Ely to a degree shares Maddox's fears for egalitarianism and other Public spirited values under the religious right, 'Public' should mean to advance egalitarian values rather than just lowest cost tenderer.

## The Reverend Eleni Poulos

**Director of Uniting Justice Australia**

Started her speech by acknowledging the Eora people as prior owners of the land on which this meeting is conducted and their continuing traditional ownership / custody of



the land. Opinions on role of Religion differ between denominations. The Politics of Religion is not a one size fits all. She is not concerned that some religious take part in political life, has always been so, but the rise of the Neo Conservatives, in service to the Free Market, rather than towards individuality is. There is an honourable Christian Tradition of standing up for the Poor, the disadvantaged and for Social Justice. 'Traditional Christianity', is political and should be Radical rather than regressive or for the Status Quo, God's will is for Peace and Social Justice. She believes that there should not be an 'Established' or official State religion, as any move toward the centre of worldly power corrupts. Involvement is OK, but the religious calling should stimulate and force social analysis rather than conformity to government objectives. John Howard and Alexander Downer conceive of the 'Judeo-Christian' outlook as being a one way street, i.e. Downer told the churches to 'get out of politics' when they united to oppose the War in Iraq and criticise the current IR proposal. People of faith are well entitled to claim that the message of the 'Good News' is antithetical to Rampant Materialism, Xenophobia and Lack of Compassion. We are called to Love God and our fellow man across the barriers that divide us and there are a whole lot of 'Bads' that Jesus calls us to struggle against.

Part two will include talks by the final three speakers;

### **Dr. Max Wallace**

Who teaches Sociology and Politics in Canberra and is the Author of 'The Purple Economy: Secular Essays on Material and Ideational Culture'.

### **Jamilla Hussain**

Who is currently a law lecturer at the UTS, interested in the relationship between Australian and Islamic Law and is the author of 'Islam its Law and Society'

### **David Marr**

Who is a Fairfax Journalist, Author of Patrick White's biography and a past presenter of ABC TV's Media Watch investigative journalism program.

# Yellow Pages Science Fiction

Notes from the October 21, 2005  
Sydney Futurian @ UTS meeting

**Topic: SF stories set in Human Only Universes**

### **Present were**

Garry Dalrymple, Diane Fox, John Fox  
Anthony Peacey and Anne Rankins.  
With apologies & contributions from  
Brian Walls.

### **News - October 21, 2005**

GD - Kevin Dillon's Memorial Service was earlier today, I failed to attend due to ill health.

GD - Serenity the Firefly movie is still airing, post the school holidays dumbing down of movie fare.

GD - Next Saturday, instead of the Freecon /Unicon we will have a '**Sydney Futurians on Saturday**' where six previously covered topics will be revisited. 9.30 am to 5.00 pm.

Topics already on the list include

'Books they should make into movies'

'Android, Robot and Virtual Sex'

'Problems with Galactic Civilisations'

Room for more! Will advise the full list before Friday 28 Oct

GD - Anime Blizzard of late! During the last two weekends there were: an **Anime Film Festival** at the circular Quay Dendy, '**Animania**' at the Town Hall, **Supanova** at Darling Harbour (not a single book writer but Conflux and ASIM had a stand apparently) and **the 2005 Whovention** at North Sydney

GD - I attended the first **Sydney SF fans in the pub** gathering at the Civic hotel with **Ted Scribner** and 'Past-urian' **Mark Philips**, an almost perfect score for attending Sydney SF meetings for the first half of October

GD - I have been very unwell this week.

JF – Now is the time to start thinking about your entries for the 2006 Magic casements Flash Fiction short story writing competition.

JF – John listed the booking details for next Saturday's 'Sydney Futurians on a Saturday' at the UTS.

DF – described a meeting at Lawson that she attended, Talk of plants and the relavatory experience of just getting out there and doing some field work

AP – Anthony explained his history with Perth SF fandom. The First Swancon was held at his house, but he stepped out of con running shortly afterwards. Has attended recent Swancons and found them to be events where lots of people take part with the intention of assuring that everyone has a good time.

BW – October 29 is also the last day of 'Women in the Window' a play about living in Stalinist USSR and 25 century Australia.

BW – Told me of his brushes with fame, also related to me

## The Topic for October 21, 2005

**SF stories set in Human Only Universes**  
(A Serenity Special?) **About the Topic**

**Garry's List of Presumptions in discussing this topic**

- A. We are talking about 'Intelligent Life' i.e. alien bugs, slugs and scenery permitted.
- B. We will allow Stories where there are Human constructed animals or artificial Intelligences playing character roles.
- C. The Universe has been widely explored and there just aren't any ET s to be found.
- D. Stories here we have just started to explore our own solar system, so ET issues do not occur.
- E. Stories are frequently 'Space Opera', often 'Military SF' where the story is concerned with Men (and Women) and Machines at War. Having to discuss or explain Alien mindsets would just get in the way of the action. These stories allow for a replay of historical dramas.
- F. Stories where the focus is exclusively Terrestrial i.e. Alternative History Stories – Naturally there are no ET s about!
- G. There is a time frame for the writing of Human only Universe stories. The

Second generation of SF, Verne, Wells and Conan Doyle et al did not have available 'The Alien' as a well established plot device, beyond that of Jonathan Swift (except for The War of the Worlds?). A third generation was enamoured by the Pulp opportunities of the 'BEM' but this soon passed.

- H. Wholly human Dramas, Humans have filled the galaxy to the extent that any ET s encountered were just irrelevant – i.e. the Dune Series, there might.
- I. Humans arrive into space to discover the ruins left by departed alien species.

The UFO TV series by **Anderson**. The ETs are visiting Earth and body snatching humans for spare parts!

**Joss Wheddon's** Firefly TV series.

The Dune series by **Frank Herbert**

The Foundation and Robots series of stories by **Isaac Asimov**

Most **Robert Heinlien** books

Norstrilla by **Cordwainer Smith**

## 2005 / 2006 Sydney Futurian Discussion topics: See Page 21

As part of October's meeting we went through a very much longer list of topics to select the following as discussion topics for 2006.

**Notes from the Tuesday November 01, 2005, Sydney Fans at the pub meeting, Civic Hotel, Corner Pitt and Goulburn Sts. Sydney CBD**  
**No Topic, just SF&F and related Fandom chat**

### Present were

John August, Chris Barnes,  
Zara Baxter, Garry Dalrymple,  
Paolo Rech, Ted Scribner  
And Alinda Thornton

### Comments overheard – Nov., 2005

This was a very good turnout, given that it was the sobering up afternoon after the annual excesses of Melbourne Cup Day. Double

Digit growth in attendance that will see Worldcon sized crowds in ..... years!

Zara (who has no books!) brought along some of her Aurealis Award reading load, two 'Second book of the series' titles of standard Fantasy length. Zara had also persuaded to attend Alinda Thornton, her fellow Clarion South Survivor. Among these books we found a slender Hardcover Quest novel with Maps and everything. The writer had even 'discovered' new names for North, South, East and West on the fly-leaf maps. Names of Continents, Mountains and towns seem to be adjustments of recognize-able English names rather than from an invented language.

The divine works of the Noodly appendages of the Great Invisible Spaghetti Monster were invoked for some reason or other. Following an explanation of the Uterine atmosphere of the Civic Hotel's Saloon (Ladies) back Bar there followed a discussion of Placenta eating, as understood by both New Age childbearing couples and pet breeders. This conversation had some A red wine is suggested (P foods go with Red Wine Polenta, Pasta and Placenta?). Worldviews were exchanged, support being found for Cartesian Copernican, Kantian, Platonic and Ptolomaic Cosmologies. The events of Saturday at the UTS were discussed, with four of the seven present having attended the Saturday Futurians event. John August attempted to explain to Alinda his two major interests in life, Shoe distribution software and Rocketry of the big noisy kind. Truly John lives on the 'Shoe event Horizon'. Alinda was very knowledgeable about various types of shoes. Mentioning the recent Sydney Futurians discussion topic 'Headgear in SF' I was unable to get her to agree to take part in a future 'Foot-wear in SF' discussion. Zara had to hand several UK SF&F magazines and demonstrated many connections with people in UK SF fandom. My Anzapa newsletter was discussed and Issues of TBS&E dealing with Kevin Dillon will be forwarded to Dave Langford.

Zara also expressed an intention to 'get into' more Larry Niven and was pressing Ted Scribner for suggestions. John was interested in recruiting those present for a Whisky tasting session, some interest was expressed.

SECOND PAGE OF NOTES MISSING?

The gathering broke up and left the Civic at about 8.30pm. Using the previously mentioned shopping list that so fascinated Paolo, I crossed Pitt Street and bought \$50.06 load of groceries (including power efficient light bulbs and six packets of dried Peaches) before just managing to catch a 9.00 pm 412 home. Hope this is of interest Paolo!

## **Notes from the Thursday November 03, 2005 Meeting at the Infinitas / Blokey stuff shop Parramatta**

### **Topic: Japanese (influenced) Science Fiction**

#### **Present were**

Darryl Addams, Leonard Chapple  
Henry Chatroop, Garry Dalrymple,  
Kurt Frank, Brian Walls and Mick

A very unusual Infinitas meeting, in that the topic was not only remembered by those present, but was actually discussed to exhaustion!

#### **SF&F News – of November 2005**

I arrived at 7.10 pm and News had been in progress for some time.

BW – Mostly passed around October's newspaper cuttings from the SMH covering SF books, Movies and other Sci-Fi news.

– Attended a 'Ghost Hunter' talk put on by the Sydney Humanists, managing to trap the speaker with a loaded Bastille question. Surprisingly many of the Humanists could recount 'ghostly' or 'unworldly' experiences.

- A live on stage 'The War of The Worlds' Musical is due out, no news if it is to feature a chorus line of buxom three legged Martian showgirls (The chances of anything coming from Mars are a Million to one ... yet still they come ....).

- Attended 'Woman in the Window' on it's packed last night. Story was about living under Stalin and living in Australia Circa 2300. Conclusion - Not much SF-nal content.

DA – Recommended Sattler and Waldorf dot com for its satirical take-offs of many movies.

S and W being the theatre box seated critics from Sesame Street.

Mick – Mentioned the recent ABC TV Foreign Correspondent program. It had featured coverage of Tokyo Tribes, AKA members of the various 'OTAKU' groups. Much was made of the 'Lol-Lols' the schoolgirl dress-up 'Lolitas', cos they were easy on the eye.

Mick also bought a book, from France, encountering a special appeasement monkey/arrogance tax levied only on those who in times of world crisis stand by our US ally. He declined to say whether this book contained any 'French Letters'.

HC – Beyond Tomorrow (an alleged Science Show on channel 7 that is big on cars and new high tech toys) featured the US Military sponsored Autonomous Land Vehicle challenge, robot controlled vehicles making their own way across Death Valley.

### **Topic: Japanese (influenced)**

**Science Fiction** The most common form of Japanese SF encountered by those present were the 'Export' forms of Japanese SF, Anime, Manga, Crap TV & Movies, so mostly what was discussed was Japanese themed or Japanese charactered mainstream SF.

### **Time and Fashion**

Growing up in Australia in the 1960s, under the spell of TV, you could not avoid Japanese SF influences, of the Astroboy, Gigantor, Marine Boy, Phantom Agents and Movies like Gojira and the Mushroom people. Anime as 'something better' than comic books was only really being appreciated by the artistic and the avant garde until the late 1980s?

The 1980s and Japan's massive dollar surpluses (due to decades of artificially depressed Yen-US Dollar ratios) lead to talk of a 'Japanese Future' and a popularity of SF stories where some aspects of Japanese culture were included in visions of the future.

**William Gibson's** books (of this era) Johnny Mnemonic, Idoru, Pattern Recognition, Overdrive and Neuromancer etc. all feature characters and some aspects of Japanese culture. Black Mist, an Anthology of five stories, edited by **Jack Dann** and **Janeen Webb**, is about Japanese futures. This

book is also incidentally Australian influenced, with Editors and the writers of two stories being Australian!

In a similar vein, books representing Japanese-ness in the future include; **Kim Stanley Robinson's** Red, Green, Blue Mars Trilogy. Similarly, in **Patrick Tilley's** The Amtrak Wars series of six books, Japanese culture at a medieval level of technology, is one of the cultures competing for dominance of a post apocalypse USA.

On a much darker note, **Michael Chrichton's** Rising Sun represents a xenophobic view of Japanese influence. **Phillip K Dick's** stories stand apart from the 'in fashion' season with an early depiction of Japanese-ness. The Man in a High Castle features Japanese-ness as a consequence of an Alt-history America where the allies lost World War two, (possibly a delayed reaction to MCarthyism when it seemed easy to believe that the allies had been defeated and a local police state had triumphed?). In this book, on the West Coast of America things Japanese are imitated by young and ambitious Americans while the moneyed young Japanese visit to sample the exotic 'Western' culture of blue jeans and cowboys.

You might care to balance this incidental view of Japanese-ness with the approaches of two more recent writers, **John Birmingham's** Weapons of Choice and **Harry Turtledove's** World War series. Both are Alternate History SF, involving WW2 and necessarily dealing with Japan. Dick's story Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep (banned in NZ for explicit content) was re-interpreted for the times as the movie Blade Runner, having vastly more Japanese-ness than in the original story.

Other SF Books and writers exhibiting Japanese-ness include Australia's **Maxine McArthur** and her book Less than Human featuring Japanese settings and main character. **C. H. Cherryh's** Foreigner series also features Japanese-ness. A post 1990s 'normalization' of Japanese-ness in Sci-Fi, things Japanese are no longer seen as necessarily dominant or threatening to the

future, hence Stargate's eventual inclusion of some Japanese mythology / god figures in their pantheon of lesser Go'uld system lords, much less frequently than say Chinese or minor European mythology / god figures.

The missing aspect to this discussion is of course the home grown Japanese language tradition of literary SF. There are Japanese SF Writers of note, National awards etc. and more will probably be heard of them in the lead-up to the 2007 World Science Fiction Convention, with more Japanese to English translations of significant works reported to be in the pipeline.

Discussions concluded at around 8.15 pm.

The topic chosen for next month (the Third of December, 2005) is '**Dr. Who**', and is partly based on the assumption that the ABC will screen the Dr. Who Christmas special (I know, but weird things have been happening since the Dalek's got religion!) some time in December.

As the first Thursday of January 2006 is too close to the New Year break, there will be no January meeting.

## **Notes from the Friday November 04, 2005, Sydney Dr Who Tavern meeting at the Lansdowne Hotel Broadway / Glebe**

**No Topic, just post Whovention chat**

### **Present were**

Sam Andrews, Todd Bielby  
Nathan Bottomly  
Karen (**Ace**) Carpenter  
Garry Dalrymple, Brendan Jones  
Michael Kilpatrick  
Paolo Rech (NB this was his third SF event in six days. Well done Paolo!)  
And James / John who arrived at close to 9 pm

## **Impressions and Comments overheard**

Michael was the first to arrive, at about 6.30 pm when tables were spare and the noise level tolerable. I had a brief look in before going across the street to survey the SF&F diversity at Dymocks (was the Leigh Blackmore influenced run Collins Super Store on Broadway). I was asked to leave a few minutes before 7 pm, the shop's closing time.

There ain't much point in going there again, the SF&F section has been 'De-Diversified' into a state that is worse than that found in most suburban shopping mall chain bookshops. I looked in at their ABC shopette, same story, four recent Dr Who DVD releases and about the same number of other BBC SF / Comedy titles. Far better to go to the ABC shop at Burwood Westfields!

I find it increasingly difficult to enjoy going to these meetings, for an affordable meal and a chat. The \$5 steaks are still \$5, not \$5 small print .95 as advertised closer to the CBD. The noise from 'other people' is just too loud that most of this report comes from Lip reading or 'what did he say?' requests. I hope this changes sooner rather than later. Post Whovention, the Committee is open to suggestions about re-visiting a University Campus presence.

## **Notes from the November 18, 2005 Sydney Futurian @ UTS meeting**

Topic: Towards an A to Z of good SF writers  
Or How Not to hold a SF discussion meeting

### **Present were**

Just Me!  
Apologies from Diane and John Fox

## **News – November 18, 2005**

### **How Not to hold a SF discussion meeting**

1. **Unclear Signals**- in the announcements put out we offered an undefined choice between a Dinner meeting and a discussion topic. Net result, the people

who would have turned up for a dinner gave it a miss thinking it would probably be a discussion and the people who would have fronted for a discussion thought it might be a Dinner and so didn't show up either.

2. **Exams** – I arrived a bit after 7.05 pm and found that our usual meeting room was set up for an exam, and an exam was taking place in the big room next door. I.e. anyone arriving for our meeting was probably persuaded by the evidence of their own eyes that the November meeting was 'not on'.
3. **No signage** – There was no visible signage advertising the meeting or directing interested parties to our default venue, room 1615.

So much for our mistakes. Let us see if we can learn from them and get it right for the 2006 meetings?

## **Notes from the Saturday November 19, 2005 Sydney Mechanics School of Arts Institute Science Fiction and Fantasy book group meeting 11.30am - 1.00 pm**

**Topic:** No single topic, more of a general discussion SF&F in general and which books those present have read and enjoyed recently

### **Present were**

Winsome Allen – SMSAI organizer?  
 David Bofinger  
 Belinda Coombes – SMSAI organizer?  
 Garry P Dalrymple  
 Ann Pritchard  
 And Paolo Rech (the universal Sydney fan?)

### **Back Ground**

A rare find, a Sydney book SF&F discussion group that I had not previously encountered! I think this is a relatively new group, possibly only active since June or July this year.

Recently there was a call for a meeting of the 1,000 or so financial members of the Sydney Mechanics School of Arts Institute (SMSAI). About 80 people showed up and among other

things, it was suggested that they run several Book interest discussion groups. Meetings were proposed for readers of Detective/Mystery, Romance, and Science Fiction/Fantasy books. In spite of the popularity of these types of book, documented by the SMSAI's own lending library records, there was some polarizing 'Genre-Shock-and-loathing' among the SMSAI members present at the prospect of opening the doors to and letting in the barbarians, i.e. the Romance and SF&F genre book lovers. If only they knew, what would they think of the readers of **Lois McMaster Bujold's** recent books or even the Slash Fan Fiction set?

### **To and from the Meeting**

The 10.20 423 bus which would have got me in town by ~11 am, failed to arrive (alien abduction Again!) the next one, at 10.45 had to take up the slack of the missing bus, slowing it down considerably as more people had to get on an off. On the way in, I gave a copy of my 2005 'Where's the SF in Sydney' flyer to a bloke on the bus. He had been using a piece of toilet paper as a bookmark in an **Ian M. Banks** book! I was at Railway Square at about 11.30 am, arriving at 280 Pitt Street a few minutes later. Initially I went up to the Library, **meeting Paolo Rech** who was on his way to the meeting as well, just delayed over an overdue book. On going down to level 1, the MSIAS meeting rooms floor I encountered a fannish face, **Ann Deverell**, who was chairing the Romance book discussion group that ran simultaneously to the SF&F group next door.

### **The Meeting**

The Meeting started in what I believe to be their characteristic manner, with a round of 'I'm... and I've recently read...' This blurred a bit into general discussion of points raised by each participant's introduction and explanations. Of the six people present, it seems as though four were pre-existing SMSAI members, with David and myself as 'blow-ins'.

Belinda explained that the purpose of the meeting was to allow readers of the SF books to meet and talk, rather than just passing each

other silently as they checked out the SF&F book shelves, a fan worth sentiment. She had brought a stack of books from the library with her, mostly on Quilting (doesn't she understand how dangerous that is, I mean, sometimes Quilters share needles!). Belinda disclosed that she was a refugee from the intensity of life among Melbourne SF fandom and that she had been a Star Trek fan (currently in remission).

Paolo also brought along three recent **CSFG** publications, including 'Gastronomicon'.

Belinda questioned Paolo on Whovention. A book that she had recently enjoyed reading was 'Trip to the Stars', **Nicholas Christopher's** fourth book. A non-SF book but well and poetically written with some SF worthy images. Seeing that DB had a copy of The Last Albatross, she revealed a fondness for books by **Ian M. Banks** and **Ian Irvine**.

This led to a brief discussion of the current Scottish domination of SF, apparently the position of 'Third best Scottish SF writer' currently negotiable, although DB suggested that **Charlie Stross** may already be short listed for this position. BC's other remarks included that **Terry Pratchett's** 'Thud' was now available upstairs, that she had tried, but just couldn't quite get into **John (Leviathan) Birmingham's** Weapons of Choice books and that she still harboured a deep and abiding interest in the Star Trek characters called Saavik. Apparently, at the back of all SMSAI library books there is a sheet that can be initialed, hence it is possible to follow the reading career of library users with similar tastes —, as Mr. Spock would say... Fascinating!

Also fascinating was news that Abbey's Bookshop lists 26 sub-genres of Crime / Mystery, including as separate ones Dog And Cat detective books. Clearly the market for Basenji detective fiction has not yet been tested! At some point the '**Sydney Passengers**' (fans of Conan Doyle) should link up with the Crime / Mystery book meeting that took place ahead of the SF&F meeting.

David Bofinger had to leave near noon, as he was attending the Infinitas Writers group meeting at Parramatta, so his comments were mostly responses to what others had said. In my turn, I distributed copies of my 2005 edition 'Where's the SF in Sydney' flyer and raised the matter of the consequences of this meeting's every third week rotation and how this inevitably and inconsistently leads to clashes with Sydney's other usually Monthly SF&F meetings.

Ann Pritchard discussed her interest in the horror end of the SF&F genre, the movies 'Saw' and 'Saw II', 'The Running Man' and 'The Cube'. The last is a movie about being trapped in a moving lift like room with six possibly booby-trapped exits. Ann also discussed trips to Peru, pre and post **Van Danikan** tourism; to see the Nazca figures, which as of four weeks ago are patrolled and access controlled by, armed guards! There was discussion of how **Stephen King** must live in fear of encountering the 'affection' of his fan base.

A fairly lengthy discussion erupted at one point over SF books where gender is routinely changeable (for real or virtual encounters?) and of stories involving a baby drought or in some cases a baby boy drought. This followed from an off genre discussion of China and the male child preference tradition producing a 40,000,000 bride deficit in the current generation. Winsome and Belinda each disclosed their family histories of 'multiple Daughter Syndrome', where mothers with in a 'boy child valuing' culture are obligated to keep producing daughter after daughter in hope of an eventual family name perpetuating son. Partly in jest I suggested they investigate the Mormon option as a solution to these gender imbalances. My other speculation was that the male child preference tradition might be about to dissipate China's future wealth. In the future I can see educated and more cosmopolitan Chinese men of potential and ability, the new rising post communist class (as opposed to the 'old money' men, the less talented sons of politically connected families) will increasingly choose to marry out and seek brides from more female emancipated societies. Their

Sons and Daughters may not choose to keep the family's wealth or talent in Patriarchal China? I draw your attention to the Irish-Chinese Australian Phenomena, where illiterate immigrant Irish Catholic women found themselves to be unmarriageable. Wealthy Ex-gold miners preferred literate brides. Finding a wealthy 'Chinese Gentleman' was their ticket an otherwise impossible comfortable lifestyle. This wealth stayed in Australia, endowing several rural dynasties, rather than returning to China. And what of AIDS, the disease that best targets those in a community that can't say 'No' to sex. China and India are set to explode with it, the economic and social consequences for the world if these societies ever hit South Africa like (20-30% Adult incidence) levels of AIDS infection do not bear thinking about.

In conclusion I would say that the meeting was a reminder that there are SF fans out there, unacquainted with SF fandom or following the mundane line that an interest in SF&F is something to keep quiet about. In effect the SMSAI SF&F meeting is intended as a meeting for the subset of SMSAI library users that read SF&F. This is in turn a subset of the 1,000 or so financial members of the SMSAI. In there somewhere would be applications of the 40% rule of reduced participation at each step of increased commitment. Financial membership, library use, ability to attend Saturday morning meetings etc. are each increased commitment steps. This sequence of nested subsets within a group with broadly common interests tempts me to draw comparisons with the FSF Book interest discussion group.

This is a meeting that just begs for more people to attend, well placed for transport, a library upstairs Tea Coffee and biscuits laid on and some VERY nice people.

## Books Read, Sept. to Dec, 2005

04 to 10 Sept. 2005, **1788**, By **Watkins Tench**, Edited by **Dr. Tim Flannery** 280 pages (C) 1996

11 to 14 September 2005, **Hard to be a God**, by **Boris and Arkadi Strugatski**, Trans. by **Wendayne Ackerman** 205 pages, © 1973

16 to 21 September 2005, **The Alley God**, by **Philip Jose Farmer** 176 pages © 1970, which consists of three stories, each claimed to be a 'short novel'. They are; **The Alley God**, 47 pages © 1959; **The Captains Daughter** 58 pages, © 1953; and **The God Business** 64 pages, © 1954)

21 to 23 September, **Splashdance Silver**, by **T.R. Roberts**, 386 Pages © 1998, (Australian) 23 Sept. to 13 October, **Barnacle Bill the Spaceman and other stories**, by **Lucius Shepard**, 300 Pages © 2005,

26 and 27 September, **Fortean Times 202 – October 2005**, by **Various**, 80 Pages © 2005, 28 to 30 September, **The Australian Skeptic**, Ed. by **Barry Williams**, 90 Pages © 2005,

24 and 25 October, **Fortean Times 203 – November 2005**, 80 Pages © 2005,

25 October to 10 November, **Chapter House**, by **Frank Herbert**, 376 Pages © 1985,

10 to 17 November, **Machinations**, Edited by **Chris Andrews**, a **CSFG Anthology**, 217 Pages © 2002, (Australian)

19 to 28 November, **So Little Done**, by **Dr. Theodore Dalrymple**, 144 Pages © 1995,

24 and 25 November, **The Fortean Times No. 204 – December 2005**, 80 Pages © 2005,

25 and 26 November, **Voyage to the Red Planet**, by **Terry Bisson**, 236 Pages © 1990,

27 November, **Asterix and Cleopatra**, by **Gosciny and Uderzo**, 48 Pages © 1974? (copyright date not stated!)

28 November, **Asterix and Caesar's Gift**, by **Gosciny and Uderzo**, 48 Pages © 1974? (copyright date not stated!)

## CURRENT BOOK

Started 29 November, **Year's Best Australian Science Fiction and Fantasy (Volume 1)**, Edited by **Bill Congreve** and **Michelle Marquardt**, 254 Pages © 2005,

## Short Book Reviews

On Monday September 26 I received my copy of the **Fortean Times No. 202 – October 2005**. It was a pleasant vacation for the mind and a welcome distraction from the realities of the day, Kevin Dillon's funeral. This issue's main stories feature the strangeness entangled with the life and works of the German / English painter Hans Holbein,



the Fortean phenomena referred to in a work by William Hogarth and the strange influences of the 'Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood' of British Artists. That is to say an excursion into the weirdness of British Art figures of the 16<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. In other departments, there was a story on the newly discovered species of Australian Dolphin. Stories like the Dolphin one are not unusual, in that the Fortean Times frequently gives earlier and better coverage of local science interest stories than local news sources. It is good to be able to read this magazine as a backstop to the deficiencies of the 'popular press'!

### **Fortean Times No. 203 – November 2005.**

The main feature of this issue was 'Life After Death', mostly about attempts to make contact with the 'other side'. Not a very memorable issue in spite of the subject matter.

### **Tried and Died**

i.e. stopped reading part way through

I picked up **Splashdance Silver**, by **T.R. Roberts**, to read because it was an Australian Authored book and a Turner Prize winner. I think I now have all four of them. I had such hopes for this book, but it turned out to be a tedious sub-Pratchett fantasy pirate 'romp'. The best that I can say for it is, 'I guess I'm just not into that sort of thing', but how by ghod's noodly appendages did it get to be a Turner Prize winner?

Similar story with **The Day of the Klesh**. The book starts adequately enough with four companions from an out of the way planet setting out on a big adventure. Tedious progress, some credibly alien Aliens, but after crash landing on their destination, a sort of a human biodiversity theme park I lost interest. They encounter a 'friendly' castle dwelling culture and there it descends into gibberish instead of credibly different sorts of cultures. The Cover image had an image very reminiscent of 'Puppetry of the Penis' only fully clothed with an anomalous small furry biped sitting in the Main character's lap?

**Rather Better**

**Hard to be a God**, by **Arkady and Boris Strugatski**, Started with an entirely superfluous childhood fairytale subplot. It could have been ditched without affecting the main story that much. It got rather better. There are a group of Earth people, political anthropologists set up on a medieval technology and politically structured world. They are supposed to be there to observe the Marxian progression from tyranny to enlightened political development. There is always the temptation to 'help' the people and give progress a nudge with their 'god-like' powers, which usually ends in high civilian casualties. The guy making a run for supreme executive power is a Stalin/Beria analogue and his brutality on the way up is destroying 'progress' and is completely against the historical science of the whole 'natural order' of political progress by evolution. What is an enlightened person to do, observing the above, continue to observe with detachment or to save one doctrine, breach the doctrine of non-involvement? At the time when this was written (in the Soviet Union) it was still very brave to put down on paper even disguised political comment like this. One wonders what sort of political SF might emerge from China as the CPC tightens or loosens its control of freedom of expression?

**Barnacle Bill the Spaceman and other stories**, by **Lucius Shepard** was a disappointing read. I had expected a lot more from this 'rising star' writer of some time ago, the name story was an overly drawn out, overly long and fairly obviously going to be 'an unsympathetic character achieves redemption'.

After reading **Chapter House**, by **Frank Herbert**, I have a greater appreciation for his Dune series of books. I was impressed at the mind play that added an additional level to the actions of characters and their dialogue. Chapterhouse, a sort of a Vatican planet for the Bene Gesserit sisterhood is threatened by the destructive forces of the Honoured Matres. The head of the Bene Gesserit's hatches a scheme to neutralize the Honoured Matres by an apparent unconditional capitulation.

I bought **Machinations**, Edited by **Chris Andrews**, a **CSFG Anthology**, at a recent Canberra convention more out of reflex than by the reputation of it's authors. The CSFG publishing juga naught has moved on since to other Anthologies and involvement with the six times a year ASIM magazine. So, was there talent to burn or are they scraping the bottom of the barrel yet? I found all the stories to be of an adequate standard, some Fantasy, some SF, but none that really stick in your mind as being memorable or brilliant.

**So Little Done**, by **Dr. Theodore Dalrymple**, is a fictionalized account of a 'benefactor' mass murderer. It draws from Cousin Theodore's work as a Prison Doctor and a GP to 'Working Class' or disadvantaged areas of the UK health service. Not a book to cheer you up much. Its fictional narrator says much that could be a good argument for the re-habilitation of Eugenics. This is the sort of book that Economic Rationalists should read before they open their traps to announce any more socially regressive policies, as the narrator / killer's logic and crimes are the application of the mathematics of their economic argument.

#### **Fortean Times No. 204 – December 2005.**

The main feature of this issue was 'Rendlesham 25 years on' a study of what we now know about the incident that has been described as the UK's Roswell. Major characters were re-interviewed, and some government documents have been released. It is a very interesting study of events that were in some degrees a hoax, a real effect miss described, a military cover-up/stuff-up and to some minor extent still a unexplained cause of 'real' observed phenomena. The Truth it seems is 'all of the above', as the story continues to evolve, with the 'facts' and the interpretations of the major characters change over 25 years. A better issue than I had expected.

**Voyage to the Red Planet**, could be seen as a very old style story, or a new one, a return to a 'First Men Land on ...' type of story. This story has a Hollywood producer organizing a flight to Mars using hardware laid up for twenty years by a Post USSR economic slump that

has seen all US government functions sold off to conglomerates, including NASA. They go to shoot a movie, having to negotiate the Hollywood legal snake pit taking more effort than the 'acquisition' of the Titanic sized 'Mary Poppins' Earth-to-Mars and return space ship. And in the Dark of inter planetary Space .... the Cliché's emerge! 'Convenient Tech' makes an appearance in the form of plot saving hibernation for the duration of the flight, life of a sort is discovered, evidence of Ancient Aliens are found (and kept secret) and as a near climax – a lack of fuel means that not everyone gets to make it home! Tolerable light SF reading, in no way a trend setting classic, but better than a fair few books I have read and reviewed recently.

#### **Asterix and Cleopatra**, and **Asterix and Caesar's Gift**, by **Gosciny and Uderzo**,

were both a short, light and enjoyable read, much less complex, analysable or realistic than say Herge's Tin Tin. Very Adequate sick bed reading! In the first, the indomitable cheese eating appeasement monkey's err ..... I mean Gauls, help out Cleopatra who has been bet by Julius Caesar that Egyptians can't build a decent palace in three months. They can't of course! The Gauls leave offering to come back and 'help' if the Egyptians ever need a canal dug. Bet that one didn't translate in the Arabic versions. In the Second one, Julius Caesar donates the 'title' to the Gaul's village to a 20 year veteran Legionary as a joke. The title gets traded to an innkeeper for the price of a drink and a meal. The fun starts when he goes to enforce his title, eventually running for as a village chief. I wonder given the rush to embrace Japanese style Anime whether there will be a future for this sort of European tradition story telling. It is the sort of stuff that I read before I discovered Science Fiction in book form.

#### **Year's Best Australian Science Fiction and Fantasy (Volume 1)** – I have yet to approach

a 'Best of....' Anthology with out a sense that at some point I am going to reach a story that makes me want to say, 'The Best of ... Mr Editor? Surely Not!' This book (only partly read at this point) is no exception. Although I must say that as the cover says '.... and Fantasy', then I was never going to be

completely satisfied by every story therein. Bill gives a very good editorial, clearly explaining what they view the genre to be and listing the places where they have sought 'Australian SF&F' at the back of the book there are also addresses. Well worth getting, as the format is annually repeatable and the next volumes will probably build up into a useful survey of the field.

## Who were the 2005 Sydney SF Fans?

In the aftermath of the death of Kevin Dillon who knew him well and who should have been contacted has been much on my mind. This section is an attempt to answer 'Who are the Sydney SF fans of 2005?' in the hope that this is useful guidance at some point in the future.

'Who are...' rather depends on your personal definition of 'fannishness'. The following are some of the Sydney SF fans that I have noticed at SF related gatherings during this past year, i.e. interested and participating and I think it is worth mentioning, as between SF conventions with receipted memberships, no-one else is keeping track of the 'tribe'. It would have added weight to these listing if I could have added those who attended / took part in the 2005 Magic Casements and the NSW members of Conflux.

I do not anticipate that listing these names in this fashion gives rise to 'privacy' issues, as stating that someone may have attended one or more meetings during 2005 gives no indication of likelihood that they will attend any future meeting.

### The 2005 Sydney Futurians @ UTS

(I attended most 2005 meetings)

**John August**  
**Stuart Barrow** – ACT  
**Zara Baxter**  
**David Bofinger**  
**Garry P Dalrymple**  
**Kevin Dillon** (Deceased)  
**Peter Eisler**  
**Diane Fox**  
**John Fox** - UTS  
**John Garrone**

**Bruce Gillespie** (*elected an Honorary Life Member at the March 15 meeting*)

**Kiril** - UTS

**Ross Mitchell**

**Elizabeth Pastor**

**Anthony J. Peacey** - WA

**Gillian Polack** – ACT

**Anne Rankins**

**Paulo Rech**

**Ted Scribner**

**Nicole Smith** - Nowra

**Ashley Tanna** - UTS

**Brian Walls**

**And Ian Woolf** – UTS

Typical turnout – 4 to 8 people

\* A list of the attendees of one or more 2005 Friday night meeting, excludes students who signed up at 2005 UTS Clubs day events.

**The 2005 Infinitas (Parramatta) Bookshop SF&F Discussion Group** (I was able to attend the meetings of June, September, October November and December 2005)

**Daryl Adams,**

**Leonard Chapple**

**Henry Chatroop,**

**Garry P Dalrymple**

**Kurt Frank,**

**Will Kennedy,**

**Mick Ousley**

**Mary Right**

**Charmain Spears**

**And Brian Walls**

Typical turnout – 6 to 8 people

**The 2005 Sydney Dr Who Tavern meeting**

(I was able to attend the meetings of March, September October November and December 2005)

**Sam Andrews**

**John August**

**Todd Bielby**

**David Bofinger**

**Nathan Bottomly**

**Karen (Ace) Carpenter**

**Tony Cooke**

**Garry Dalrymple**

**Carl Elsen**

**Peter Hart**

**Neil Hogan**

**Graham Hoskin**

**Brendan Jones**

**Christian Kent**

**Dave Kenyon**

**Michael Kilpatrick**

**Rupert McCallum**

**Paolo Rech** Plus the surname less 'Avon',

**Carl, James, Joel & John.**

Typical turnout – 4 to 10 people

**The 2005 Civic Hotel, Fans at the pub gathering** (from attending both 2005 meetings to date, October and November)

**John August**

**Chris Barnes**

**Zara Baxter**

**Garry Dalrymple**

**Mark Phillips**

**Poulo Rech**

**Ted Scribner**

**Alinda Thornton**

Typical turnout – 5 to 7 people

**The 2005 Mechanics School of Arts Library SF&F Book club / Discussion meeting**

These meetings started in August or September and rather eccentrically take place every third Saturday, i.e. two meetings some months, dates bounce around the month in a hard to keep track of manner.

**Winsome Allen** – SMSAI organizer?

**David Bofinger**

**Belinda Coombes** – SMSAI organizer?

**Garry P Dalrymple**

**Anne Deverell**

**Edwina Harvey**

**Ann Pritchard**

**Paolo Rech**

And **Sarah Williams**

(Aided by Belinda Coombes' recollections)

Typical turnout – 6 people

**The 2005 FSF Book interest group – Lidcombe** - Probably about twelve people during the year (from Rod McLeod's recollection) Typical turnout – 6 people

**The 2005 Southern SF & Fantasy Discussion Group** Best Guess, several people possibly John August, Brad Row, Ted Scribner and Graham Stone - Typical turnout – 4 people?

**The 2005 'Gang of Four' SF&F Group**

Not really a public SF&F meeting, the 'Gang of Four' are the residuum of the Galaxy Bookshop readers groups. They are several friends who meet at each other's homes several times each year. They are;

**Colleen, Geoff, Jen and Margaret** - Typical turnout – 3 to 4 people, from Margaret Nicholson's recollection

**The 2005 NSW ANZAPANS** (no formal meetings held, but occasional conversations and meals together at local and interstate SF&F events) They are; **Garry Dalrymple, Diane Fox, John Fox, Jack Herman, Gerald Smith & Karen Warnock** (deceased)

**Fannish Miscellanea**

On the way to the Chipp Foundation talk (see green pages) at the UTS I stopped for look through the Subway bargain basement bookshop. I noticed a five novel **Philip K. Dick** book for \$14 and a few interesting but obscure Science titles at not-quite bargain prices. While searching for any book, video or CD that would do as a suitable token gift for my brother's birthday (Aircraft / Religion?), I first saw **Nick Stathopoulos**, and then **Lewis Morley** and **Marilyn Pride** (a one time GUFF ensemble). They were grazing among the Art books (and admiring plastic farm animals?). I am recording this as a fannish event, as I have attended (and taken notes on smaller fannish gatherings in Sydney than this meeting of four fans. Marilyn thanked me for the TBSE and other communications about Kevin Dillon. Many years ago, Kevin had house sat for them when they had gone to Europe on an extended trip.

## Non-Prize Winning Original Fiction

### All Moroni's Children

By Garry P Dalrymple – 621 words 12 Feb 2005

Like everyone else at work, I used to scoff at the Mormon missionaries sweating out their three-month stint in Blue or Brown polyester at our local shopping Centre, enduring a six

week stint at Bankstown as part of their eighteen-month tour of missionary duty.

I've always had my doubts about ideas like Baptism by proxy and 'Spiritual Marriage' as a path leading to an Amway type structured Heaven and Earth set up, or any of the other really weird aspects of Mormonism that you can pick up from the many 'Alt Mormon' websites.

But now, I'm not so sure.

I've become a lot more sensitive to senselessly casual profanity, such as the occasional 'God, why did you have to bring him?' and 'Jesus, what idiot gave you this job'.

I've begun to take it more ..... personally.

It started, I think, shortly after I gave this Mormon missionary my business card.

To be fair to all involved, you have to understand the moment. This guy in dazzling polyester bailed me up just as I was leaving the supermarket carrying about a week's worth of grocery shopping. Persistent but unfailingly polite, he even offered to help me carry the stuff to my car. For all that, he was obviously homesick for Salt Lake City and he sounded like he hadn't scored a single 'talk to you about Jesus' all week.

In my defence, it was a very hot day, much too hot to stand around in a baking car park to talk about loaves and fishes. Besides I had ice cream on board that wasn't getting any colder. So I fished a business card out of my wallet and said he should call me instead. Call me anytime!

It was an old business card one, one from before last year's restructure, one with a phone number on it that won't ever ring through to where I now work and with an email that if tried returns to sender a message like god's reaction to an Atheists prayer. I.e. 'Host not found'.

It was a mongrel act, a dreadful thing to do, something that I'm not really proud of, but at the time you should have seen young Elder

Brown's face light up! It cheered him up something wonderful, and a happy Mormon missionary is truly a sight to behold, enough to warm you through a Utah winter!

Since then I've been having all sorts of big dreams, stories of new worlds, new gardens of Eden complete with new Adams and new Eves.

Are these dreams just some Science Fiction and Fantasy fuelled by a sense of guilt and a bad conscience following one low act, or are they really inspired visions?

I know the new 'Battlestar Galactica' is back on TV, but that doesn't cover the half of what I have been dreaming.

Also, I've noticed something really odd on the keyboard of my work computer, something that can't be Microsoft standard.

If I press F10, on any machine that I have logged onto, I get these unusual extra options displayed. No one else has them, options like 'Death of First born' and 'Plague of ...'

Well you get the idea. I haven't been game enough to try any of them yet, but then I don't need to have to have the patience of Job, do I?

For me, each day the commute from Kingsgrove to Bankstown is becoming more and more a road-to-Damascus type experience.

Proof, you want more proof?

Man you are nothing without faith.

Faith in your God, or faith in your Prophet.

And don't let me hear you take MY name in vain again, remember, my keyboard now has a 'smite' button, so don't provoke me beyond wrath!

**Obituary - Kevin John Dillon  
Bibliophile and collector,  
1932 – 2005 by John Masters-Brown**

By the time Kevin Dillon died he had amassed a collection that filled six garages and one apartment, floor to ceiling and wall to wall, a vast collection of Australiana. Much of it being memorabilia relating to the history of the Sydney Push, as well as world literature and his special love, Science Fiction.

All who spoke at his funeral paid tribute to the generosity of this extraordinary collector. Any friend only had to mention a gap in his own collection to have Kevin turn up on his doorstep a few days or weeks later with the desired item in hand. Kevin Dillon lived to support the interests of his friends.

Born during the great depression and brought up in the working class suburb of Campsie, Kevin was educated locally before dropping into the crucible of Sydney's bohemia, when, as a teenager he took evening classes at Fort Street Girls High School in an attempt to win a University scholarship. There he met Alison Norbery, better known as folk singer Kathleen McCormack; the urbane Milton Chambers; the poetess Mary Harvey and a sometime street urchin known as John Brown. These friendships in turn lead to a house on lower Fort Street where the playwright Ray Matthews lived, as did several other Sydney Push members.

Kevin's interests were developed further by his attending the first ever Australian Science Fiction convention in 1952, where he formed a close and pivotal friendship with Graham Stone, one of the founders and still the president of the Australian Science Fiction Association.

At this time, Australian Copyright law required that copies of all publications printed in Australia be lodged with the Public Library of NSW (now the State Library) and with the National Library in Canberra. John Metcalfe, the State Librarian was an enthusiastic supporter of the need to maintain collections of items of local popular culture, such as the Comics, Science Fiction and many other, frequently underground, publications that provided opportunities for young Australian Writers. However, nearly as fast as these were collected, they were dumped by some of the academics on the State Library staff.

The Public library was a second home to the Push, many of whom were on its staff,

including the Chess Master Alan Wilkes, Christopher Koch the poet and future famous novelist and Graham Stone among others. When Kevin heard of the junking of the collections he was incensed. This was the genesis of his lifelong obsession with collecting the ephemeral by-products of Australia's intellectual life.

The "Push is a term with a curious history. In nineteenth century Melbourne, it acquired a particularly Australian meaning when it was used to refer to a group of Larrikins; and later when it came to be applied to any group of non-conformists within a larger group - hence the "Uni Push" for those in favour of the avant-garde, and the "Sydney Push" for Sydney's bohemian groups in general.

That most unreliable of English Dictionaries, The Macquarie, defines the Sydney Push as a Libertarian group active after World War II. In fact the term pre-dates even Henry Lawson, moves from his circle, through his protégé W.J. Brown, to Lenny Lower, Harry Hooton and on through the nineteen thirties, forties and beyond. Harry Hooton who had been encouraged by Brownie, was in turn to give support to a young Germain Greer over thirty years later!

This was the world that Kevin Dillon inhabited. He formed friendships with many who achieved prominence and or notoriety - Vol Molesworth, an early Australian Science Fiction writer (whose father of the same name was secretary to the controversial Great Depression era NSW Premier Jack Lang) The Poets Harry Hooton, Francis Brabazon and Lex Banning; Actors and theatrical folk such as Peter Sainthill, Noni Rothsey, Roger Cox, Maggie Blinco (Nee Carroll) Don Lawson (now involved in film production) and Peter Hourihan who later became the President of the Teacher's Federation; Louis B. Herbst who became a respected motivational Psychologist and Cam Perry a Psychology Professor; Lillian Roxom and Paddy McGuinness of journalistic fame; John Cooper who gravitated to the Australia Council; and that consummate prankster and thorn in the side of Sydney's police force, Ashley Sellars. One should also perhaps mention, as a passing acquaintance, an obscure young gentleman named Clive James.

Kevin collected at book sales, Auctions and Council clean-ups. He walked everywhere, and all the while he inspected every garbage tip and all household throw-aways. Some of his finds were extra-ordinary, First Editions, especially of now highly prized Science Fiction, Theatre programs of extreme vintage, rare song sheets, including even a copy of the rare Lincoln Songbook, Antique toys etc. – all went into his rucksack and off to his storage garages and when one filled up, he would rent another.

Over the years he gave great service to his collector friends, rarely accepting money for his finds. He worked in turn for Morgans Bookshop – Colonel Shephard became one of his heroes – and the second-hand department of Angus and Robertson's, before finally landing a secure job as a proof reader with the NSW Government Printing Office. There he stayed until eyesight problems forced him out. Redundancy caused him hardship but gave him even more time to devote to collecting.

Towards the end of his life, his pension was barely sufficient to cover the rent of his storage garages. He ate every evening at the Sydney City Mission and had an arrangement with several city restaurants to retrieve throw-away food which sustained him during the next day. At one point he slept on the streets until rescued by the outreach service and awarded a council flat.

Throughout it all Kevin always managed to keep cheerful, to keep clean and to wear freshly washed, though second hand clothes. Eventually his heart failed and he died in his apartment surrounded by books and books and more books.

When people learned of Kevin's death, Constable Keiser of the Marrickville Police Station was inundated by calls from Kevin's many friends, all concerned that his legacy, his collections, be preserved. The cry was always the same: "do not place the collection in the hands of dealers – bring in experts in the various fields to sift through the junk in order that the gold will not be lost again". There were plenty of volunteers and offers of space for the sorting.

Consequently his effects were put into the hands of the Public Trustee with a recommendation that the archivist of the State library be consulted. It is ironic if Kevin's

collections should end up under the jurisdiction of the very institutions whose former irresponsible actions, in times past, first created his obsession.

**John Masters-Brown**

## A Basenji Tail Piece

This might more correctly belong under 'Quark Strangeness and charm, but as it is a recent installment of 'Adventures with Mystique' I'll put it here.

I was able to watch the opening scenes of the movie 'The African Queen'. It is perhaps the second most important Basenji featuring Movie (after 'Goodbye my Lady'). You should be able to see sitting in the Mission church an old African man with (two?) basenjis sitting on his lap. I failed to notice them this time round.

Why should this matter to the non-basenjis loving majority of TV viewers? Well it suggests to me that your televised movie experience is being adulterated. Either the basenji scene (and what else?) has been cut or, more probably, the screen format currently being broadcast is cropping off the 'unimportant' peripheral action of what were originally filmed as wide screen movies.

As Summer comes, so does the dropping of fur. Mystique is currently shedding the last of her winter coat and her 'red' summer coat emerges. This is always a time of enhanced basenji strangeness. Quantities of her fur she clears by a cat like fashion – licking, which results in hairball clearing coughing that is familiar to cat owners. I believe that the arrival of young Arthur (baby and visitor noises) next door and the post Ramadan increased in backyard activity from the Moroccan kids next door (Oldest Brother noisily stoning younger Sister against our common colourbond steel fence at 8 am on a Sunday morning), have made Mystique uneasy and consequently more companionable than usual. Basenji hearing makes for a larger and more populated definition of 'home life' than the strict boundaries of No.1 Eulabah Avenue. These nights it is more common to find her sitting outside the bathroom door when Mum or I are showering. These last few nights she has spent in between lounge chair corners of the lounge room, often in a position to watch us, rather than in the (dark) Sunroom where she usually spends between sunset and 'crate

time'. In the past I have referred to Mystique as an 'office hours' dog, i.e. when the sun goes down she shuts up shop, but this currently less valid.

## Very Late News

As I write, for only the second time in twenty years we have no dog in the house. The diagnosis for Mystique's recent behaviour is Pancreatitis (The Mark Latham Disease!). Her blood test results revealed an off the planet level of Pancreas enzymes in her blood. Pancreatitis is a common disease among older dogs and there is a slight chance she has pancreatic cancer (fatal within months). At the time of writing she is currently away from home at the Earlwood Animal Hospital (the vet place down the road) and intubated for fluids and antibiotics etc. By the time you read this Mysti will either be better or be terminally worse. Mother and I do expect her to come home shortly, to live out her remaining years (she was 13 in June this year), but she is distraught, her hopes of becoming a Federal Labor opposition Leader or Future Prime Minister are sadly at an end.

## 2005 / 2006 Sydney Futurian Discussion topics:

### Discussion topics for 2006 Sydney Futurian meetings:

As part of October's meeting we went through a very much longer list of topics to select the following as discussion topics for 2006. With this list there is a blend of a 'progressive' stream of topics (SF Stories from the sun outward) with several opportune unrelated topics between. I.e. we will talk our way through the all the Solar System in about two years. If talking about Planet featuring SF stories sucks, then just come every second month. We will also be trying a first UTS 'Science Fictional Science invite' night in April 2006. Hopefully this will provide a stimulating discussion of Science Fact as well as Science Fiction and at the same time aid our ongoing integration into the UTS community.





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Transcendental Sermons and Enlightenment  
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