

# Cat's Eye Weekly

alias *The Ferret*

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## THE DESERT COLUMN

ION IDRIESS

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Enchanted Beneath the  
Bluff

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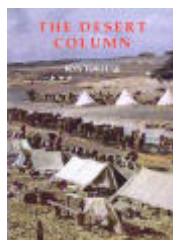
## *Any excuse for stirring up the universe*

*Edited by  
Graham Price*

*Once was weekly now highly irregular in more ways than one*

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## The editor's desk

Australia's much loved icon Barry Humphries, aka Dame Edna Everage, has been laid to rest, passing on unexpectedly though not without some controversy. That's normal. We thought he would live forever, but not to be. At least, numerous videos remain of this remarkable super-intelligent person, who it is said didn't give a rats for any praise from the elites of this nation. "Or give a toss, my darlings," as Dame Edna might say.

Ah, how there were those limpets who were jealous of his success, in particular those flat-faced people of the Comedy Festival, who wouldn't know a good laugh if it insinuated itself into the fluff of their belly buttons. These absurd, starkly humourless people had wiped Barry from their Festival because of their dislike of some of his words — or was that Dame Edna who mouthed about a bit? Now that he and she are gone, the sneaking members of the Comedy Festival wish to turn around and make him welcome with some sort of memorial. Dame Edna might well say "That's a teensy weensy slippery sleazy cop-out, darling possums, don't you think?"

**Would you trust the news media?** Whatever you may think about the recent furore of the Higgins/Lehrmann 'sexual misconduct' affair in Parliament House 'did happen/didn't happen' accusations, the fact is that the overblown media reports have damaged the cause of many a rape victim. This recent trial by media will prevent women who have clear and uncut evidence of sexual harassment, from coming forward. Many will think twice about reporting these issues. News media is often biased, numerous times with an agenda or viewpoint that bends the truth. And what is truth in media anyway? Truth is thrown to the four winds when political elections come along — each individual news outlet giving support for their perceived political champion, sometimes blatantly like a one-eyed football team supporter, but often somewhat slyly with reportage that is based on rumour.

The so-called official news media needs to be balanced by online journalism such as *The Conversation*, <https://theconversation.com/au>, *Crikey*, <https://www.crikey.com.au> and *Quillette Weekly*, <https://quillette.com>

**There is an article in this edition brought over from CEW 134 July 2020, pages 3 & 4** which requires repeating in this issue, because the ideas contained within it are expanding in our society. The fact is that social scientists are not always right and social media is somewhat worse. In addition, our political correspondent, Mercury O'Proud, writes concerning political correctness and the damage it is doing to our society.

**Apartheid and racial intolerance comes in all shapes and sizes.** SBS News Presenter, Janice Petersen, travelled to the land of her parents and found that in South Africa not all that much had changed. The criminal legacy left by white Britons and others was still there — they had gone away and left it to others to clean up. But there remained an apartheid of such between the Blacks and the Indians. Mixed race marriages occurred but they were still looked upon askance and with great suspicion. Racial intolerance — not between white and black, but between black and brown.

**It was one of the brightest moments during the 2019 Federal election**, when a Vietnamese refugee, Dai Le of Cabramatta, NSW — won as an independent by an overwhelming majority — the seat of Fowler against the fly-in Labor candidate from an elite suburb, Kristina

Continued page 2>>>>

**Feedback to Cat's Eye Weekly  
is always welcome.  
Click onto my purrfect nose!**







Keneally. There was a great feeling of joy to see Dai Le take the previously Labor seat by 14 percent from such a high profile Labor candidate, where it had been a safe Labor seat since 1984. Shock! Keneally had been a NSW premier who had failed in politics several times, but for some strange reason was poised to become a senior Labor cabinet minister in the new Albanese government, if she had won the seat. What were they thinking? Was it her good looks they wanted?

**Pro-transgender activists have broken windows and caused further damage, together with graffiti during the evening of June 22nd last at Melbourne University** in protest against feminist scholar and philosopher Holly Lawford-Smith. Lawford-Smith presents her views that biological sex is more important than gender identify. Chip le Grand wrote in *The Age* newspaper of June 2nd 2023, "Leading Australian philosophers have waded into the gender wars engulfing university campuses here and the United Kingdom, calling for stronger protection of academic freedom and robust debate of issues relating to sex, gender and gender identity . . . 20 academics from seven universities backed her right to teach from a gender critical perspective without harassment or interference." Lawford-Smith is an associate professor of political philosophy at Melbourne University, and the author of three books: *Global Justice* Routledge 2012, *Not In Their Name: Are Citizens Culpable For Their States' Actions?* Oxford University Press 2019, and *Gender-Critical Feminism* Oxford University Press 2022.

Claire Lehmann, of *Quillette Weekly* states: "Many leaders fail to see the value and importance of gender-critical views; others seek to join forces with a fanatical minority to silence those views. This is a disgrace." CEW understands that the vice-Chancellor of Melbourne University has called out the actions of the minority activists in the strongest possible terms, referring the incident to the Victoria Police for action ASAP.

**You always get your money's worth out of Nikki Gemmell, who writes for *The Australian Weekend Magazine*.** Her blog of June 17-18 2023 resonates loud and clear when she writes "Geoffrey Hinton is worried. So worried, that the British/Canadian computer scientist and cognitive psychologist has not been able to sleep for the past six months. He's known as the godfather of Artificial Intelligence and has just left Google so he can finally speak more freely. He's worked for decades at the cutting edge of AI and now believes that what we are creating here may wipe out humanity." It's all about robots, of course, becoming so intelligent that one day they may take over the planet. Well, some say that perhaps this is something necessary because humans, so far, haven't shown much intelligence in looking after the planet. Gemmell continues: "I'm of the belief that this wondrous Earth would be better off without its alpha species. In the several billion years of this planet's life, everything followed the natural course of evolution—until we came along. The master disruptors, the destroyers of so many of Earth's natural systems." So, Gemmell ponders what would Earth look like without us? Something that all of us — the predominant species — should be thinking!

**Almost a decade ago, it was the in thing** for CEW to insert political cartoons, based on some early 19th and 20th Century Punch cartoons. Perhaps it's time to re-insert these. e.g. This one was about Bill Shorten when he was attempting to overcome rivals in the Labor Party some years ago. From CEW 099, April 2014. Okay, so we are doing it, now, see page 2 with more on other pages. Cheers, Graham.



**Bill Shorten, left:** "G'day Gough, I'm following in your footsteps. Soon be prime minister."

**Gough Whitlam, ex prime minister:** "Don't do as I did, do as I say.... quit now before you are stabbed in the back."

**Bill Shorten:** "Gough, I know all about backstabbing. I get in first. Third time lucky, hey!"

## Political gobbledygook

"A decision's not made until it's made." **Victorian premier, Dan Andrews.**

"The sooner we get there, the sooner we get there." **PM Scott Morrison.**

"I don't oppose **Islam as a country**, but I do feel that their laws should not be welcome here in Australia." **Stephanie Banister, a candidate for Pauline Hanson's One Nation Party.**

"While we didn't win, we didn't lose either." **PM Gough Whitlam.**

"The concept of global warming was created by and for the Chinese in order to make U.S. manufacturing non-competitive . . . When was the last time anybody saw us beating, let's say, China, in a trade deal? They kill us. I beat China all the time. All the time." **US President Donald Trump.**

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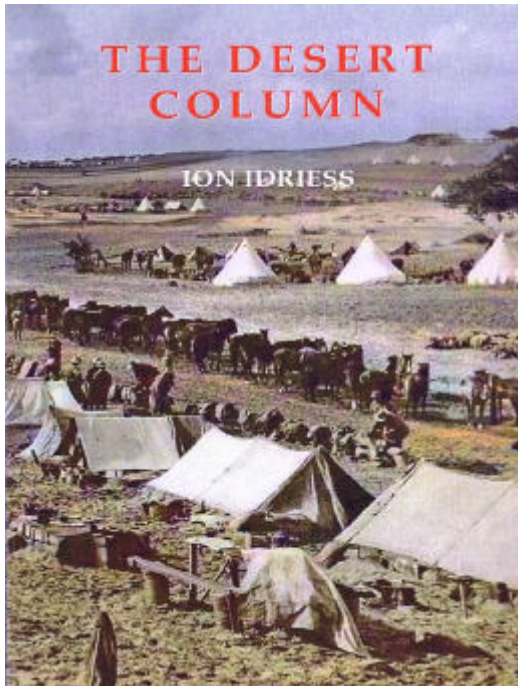
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# A Trooper's Diary from WWI

## With the guts to tell it all



**Wounded several times and eventually evacuated to Australia in early 1918, Ion Idriess of North Queensland, had joined the 5th Light horse Regiment in 1914 at Brisbane.**

Idriess's occupations had been various including a stockman and drover, opal and gold miner. He had travelled widely in the outback, lived with the Aborigines for a time; just the kind of horseman the recruiting centre urgently needed.

His diaries were immense — first published in Australia during 1932 as selections titled *The Desert Column*, when Idriess decided to retrieve his diaries from his old backpack. The writings were from Gallipoli 1915 to Kantara, Palestine 1918, while with the 2nd Lighthorse Brigade — the same brigade the editor's father was a member of from 1914 to 1919.

Idriess doesn't mess about with his words — he calls a spade a spade and reveals intimate realities of the war that other scribes have failed to note, or where censorship has curtailed the telling. As a result, *The Desert Column* reveals a deeper interpretation of the troopers' experiences on Gallipoli, the Sinai Peninsular, and throughout Palestine. My father, a light-horseman with the 6th LH Regiment, 2nd Brigade 1914-1919, never spoke of his trials in the desert until he was well into his 70s — so from a first-hand telling of his experiences your editor gained immense insight into those conflicting days.

pp143-144 *The Desert Column*: "Our horses . . . after an exceptionally rough thirty-mile trip had not had a drink for twenty hours, and must return another twenty-five miles before they got a drink . . . we met the convoy—the horses went mad—they rushed it—at sight of water we could not hold them—they swarmed like mad things, pawing, panting, jostling, straining. . . . immediately we got our buckets full all horses rushed us." On dress, compared to the British, p145 : 'October 1st — Romani. We rode from El Fatia at dawn yesterday — a lovely morning . . . A battalion of Tommy infantry tumbled out of their bush gunyahs [Aboriginal for hut] to gaze at us. They appeared thunderstruck by this 'ragtime army'; many stared suspiciously. Certainly we looked the newspaper idea of a Turk. Some were dressed in riding-breeches, some in shorts; most wore leggings others puttees. All were in sleeveless flannels, shirts, or singlets, few among the officers even possessed tunics. Some of us were shaven, others not. All wore dilapidated hats, most still flaunting a tuft of the once proud emu feather or wallaby fur [my father's emu feather is in my possession], and often ventilated by a bullet hole. A rough looking lot."

But they could outride almost anyone on their tough Australian *Waler* horses and they could also sing, drink, and fight with the best of them. Idriess goes deeper with his descriptions of the more horrific during that war — at the same time maintaining his spirit of curiosity and empathy. Idriess was a natural writer; what he sees he makes sure the reader sees. His sight is keen, his description never verbose — noting and scribbling down beauty while all around him a deadly war is fought. *The Desert Column* p192: ". . . others lay with hats over their eyes, watching the shrapnel bursting up among the 'planes. I watched a lark for quite a long time: he fluttered far up into the air, singing most joyously."

Comradeship was not limited to within their own troops. At El Katia during August 1916 a weary troop of English Yeomanry rode up and asked if the water was safe to drink. [Numerous water holes were salty, brackish, and horses would not drink from them]. *The Desert Column* p117: "We soon noticed that the Tommies were eating nothing. They sat on the sand or lay around in dejected groups. They had been riding over the desert since the night before. Of course we ransacked our haversacks and gave them all the bully and biscuits we had, and nearly all our dates and apricots . . . Between the lot of us we managed to scrape up a respectable meal. Of course, the Tommies were jolly grateful; they bucked up wonderfully as soon as they had a good meal inside them."

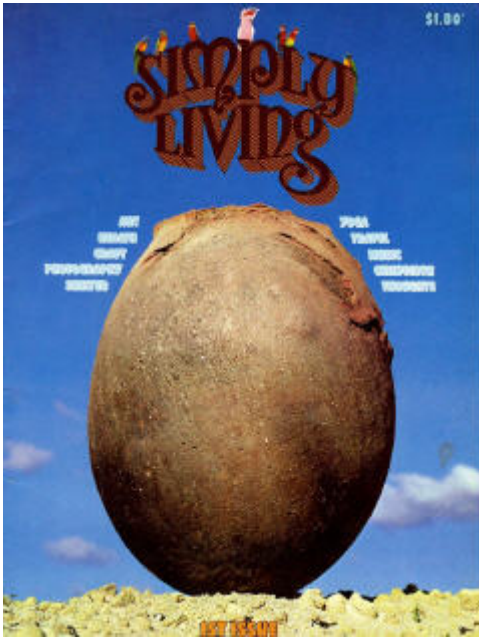
Near the end of the book it is a delight to read Idriess's version of the epic charge of Beersheeba by Australian troopers, which reveals that though my father didn't take part in the actual charge, he was part of the 2nd Brigade that had been in mopping up skirmishes prior to the Beersheeba action — they took no part in the charge, being held in reserve — but some did watch it from afar, mostly with field glasses.

*The Desert Column*  
 Ion Idriess  
 ET IMPRINT  
 Angus & Robertson  
 Booktopia  
 SAUD34.00 approx





# Those were the days



***Simply Living* published 1975-1983: Not a bad title for living along with the universe and producing a magazine with articles of care for the people and the planet. Activists these days seem to consider they're unique, but as history informs us, they're not.**

Elton John was the most popular artist of 1975, Olivia Newton-John recorded *I Honestly Love You* and the Suez Canal re-opened after eight years due to Israel simultaneously defeating three Arabic armies in the earlier 'Six-Day-War'. An incredible feat.

The 1970s were times of upheaval with the Cold War still in progress, but with the ending of the Vietnam war in April 1975 a certain peace reigned in the East. But amid the instability that remained a group of writers, photographers and illustrators with little funds, came together to produce a magazine of peace. Were we hippies in those days? Well, some of us were, some not. Most were simply caring individuals who wished to see a better and more humane planet. *Simply Living* edition No.1 was with it: articles including indigenous myths, healing, yoga, organic fruits and veggies, national parks, batik, music, sculpture, art, etc.

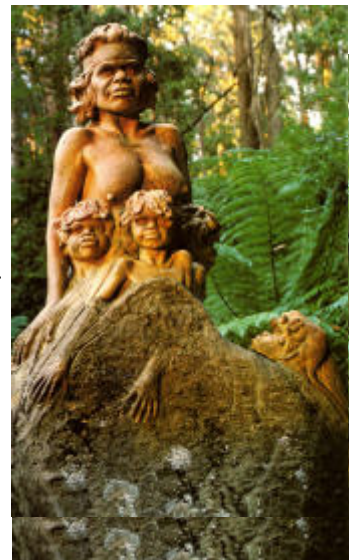
My copy and further editions sit on my bookshelves, well read, well thought upon, and numerous times acted upon. So, when you hear someone blaming previous generations about the state of the world, think again. Many of us did our best to implant a soft footprint.

The second edition of *Simply Living* (all editions were undated) included an article concerning the Dalai lama and the military annexation of Tibet by China in 1959. *Simply Living* states that 80,000 Tibetans followed the Dalai Lama into exile in less than one year, which seems a staggering number, but checks show that this number is accurate. The article takes up one full page and a quarter and would have been of great importance to Australian readers of the 1970s. There were some slight inaccuracies, such as 1959 being the uprising of the Tibetans against the Chinese dictatorial invaders, which was not the date of the military annexation — that came about shortly after China invaded Tibet 1950/1951. Another article of great use to impending travellers, was *Bali* by Patricia Thompson, honorary Secretary of the Asian Secretariat of the World Craft Council, who showed vast experience and understanding of the customs and culture of the Balinese. An article such as this would have been of immense value to travellers in those days. "The tourist with his souvenirs and slides goes home and plans next year's holiday somewhere else. The Bali Lover records everything with loving care and goes home and writes about it, publishes books, proselytises, and agonises. He or she is not content to see the recommended sights; no, they must penetrate deep into the forest and introduce their strange white self, camera at the ready, into village communities which the tourist never touches. He's a nuisance."

By the third edition *Simply Living* has become bolder with articles such as 'The Spiritual Nature of Music', a live story of an ascent onto Bali's highest volcano, Ganung Agung — hopefully not by a Bali Lover, and an intense article by a 'new-age' doctor, who astonishes with his amazing revelations about consciousness, sex, Eastern religions — a man who quotes St. Paul alongside Aristotle and ponders the complexities of modern psychiatry.

Naturally enough there are numerous articles about Yoga, connecting with the Earth, even an early article on 'The Computer Revolution', and in the eyes of someone 1970s/80s, the author writes "The reaction of most people outside the industry to this unbelievable growth is usually horror and pessimism for the future . . . It is obvious that the eventual advent of microprocessor-controlled industry, will considerably reduce the number of employees involved in any particular industrial activity.' Well, the author was correct concerning certain industries, but was also correct in ascertaining that it would mean more jobs for business.

All these volumes spell out a return to a more basic manner of living with more self-determination, ecological awareness, consciousness of land use and the reversing of pastoral decline, with the ability to change the way society lives. All free love hippy or socialist stuff? No. Simply a dedication to the values of the Earth and the Universe. A very beautiful article appears in *Simply Living* No. 8. Chris Canning, (with photos by Lyal Harris and John Stewart) has written a seven page article on the William Ricketts sanctuary in Mount Dandenong, Victoria. (See photo). Dedicated to indigenous culture, this splendid outdoor gallery is carved from trees and stone. No words can explain the spiritual simplicity of this magnificent work of love. •

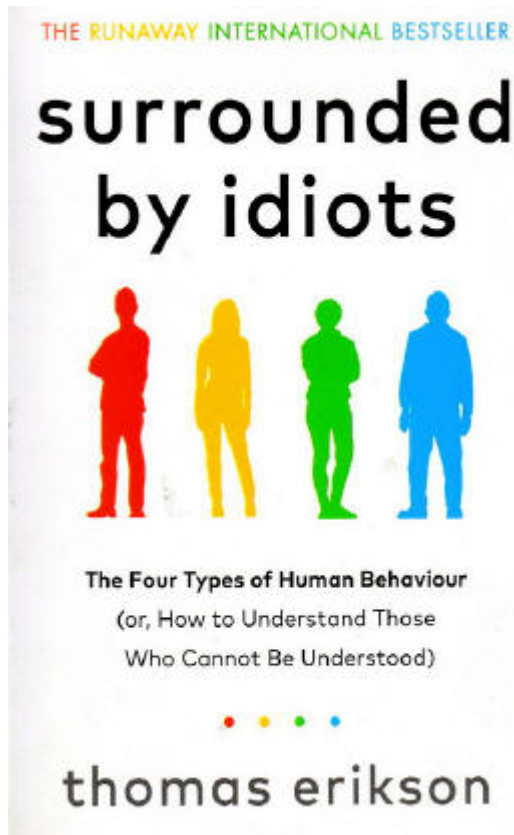


NB. The modern magazine *Simply Living* is a home furnishing magazine and has no connections to the earlier production of *Simply Living* which ceased publication in 1994.



# A social science book for the Wiggles

*This article first appeared in CEW134 and is repeated so that readers may understand that all is not well with social science*



**This is one of the silliest social science books we've ever read. As we have cautioned in previous issues of Cat's Eye Weekly, beware of social scientists.** Some of them are not what they appear to be. And if you are a social scientist reading this, then go back and overhaul your work; submit it to rigorous testing and criticism by others who are not of your immediate surroundings and who do not work within the universities of your choice.

Possibly, the author himself could be called an idiot for writing such untested theories. It's almost as if he has Karl Marx hidden somewhere in his head saying, 'categorise, that's what we have to do, categorise', so naturally, Erikson thinks this is a great idea. We can put people into classifications as if they are robots. You cannot categorise people! Humans are individuals, and to seek to place them into four distinct types is looking for trouble. You may as well believe in eugenics (judging groups of humans to be inferior or superior) or in phrenology (the psuedo-science of reading bumps on your lumpy pot-holed cranium).

This book is a runaway circus. And the wheels have fallen off the monkeys cage. *And yet, it is believed by hundreds of thousands of Swedish folk.* The author has also given training to employees at Microsoft, Coca Cola — probably informing the drink company to put back cocaine in the refreshment, or something else to help screw up the brain in the same fashion as he is doing with his book — and IKEA, to whom he could no

doubt give tips on how nuts and screws are categorised into four groups! Or which end you need to start screwing. Does the Philips head go in first, or perhaps you can insert the screw sideways. Oh yes, there might be four ways of doing it. Without doubt.

Now, here comes Monica Dux, a savvy journo with *The Age* newspaper, who writes a fairly decent column on Saturdays, whiling away her other time looking after her decent young family. She scribbles brilliantly about this book, stating "It's a bit like the Wiggles, where the purple one is always sleepy, while the blue one is most likely to be hit on by mums in the audience." She designates one of her sons as an example of this idiot categorisation. But we'll have to consolidate it 'cos it's rather long. We don't blame her! As a family person she's somewhat annoyed with this crap.

She quotes her boy's school which had initiated a body mass index or BMI test into the classes. The end result was that although her boy was fit, healthy, had a decent physique, he was troubled that he might be overweight. He wasn't, he was simply large-boned, but that was the perception he got when the school compared him with others. So, here we have a good example of categorisation running startlingly amok. And some readers will jump up and say "Yes, but we do have an obese problem with children in our schools!" Sure, but it's not the role of school teachers to be in the business of placing children into weight or figure groups.

No matter how Monica Dux talked to her son that he didn't have a problem, it was firmly implanted in his mind that he did. Which then led to anxiety. "What you're saying mum is fine, but . . . but it's not what everyone else is thinking." Oh dear, *what everyone one else is thinking*, social thinking, social media, social brainwashing and social categorisation. End of story.

Erikson's categorisation leads to writings such as "If a Yellow [person] is anything, it's a bad listener. They're really miserable at it, in point of fact." What point of fact has to do with anything, who would know, nevertheless he continues: "Many Yellows I have met say that they are very good listeners— and of course supplied entertaining examples of this undeniable fact—but maybe it could be their memory that was at fault." Maybe, eh?

When pointing out someone who had been waiting for him for some time and did not complain, he writes: "This is the second major dilemma of Green behaviour. They despise a squabble." How on earth can a social scientist — a pretend one, it seems — glean this as a fact simply from observing some people? He goes on: "This aversion to conflict



also causes many other challenges, such as stubbornness, ambiguity and resistance to change. Because Greens are pronounced relational people, nothing is more important to them than keeping a relationship together. The problem is that their method doesn't work." Watch out Greens Party members, he's got you tagged! However, we think that could be revised because some of the Greens squabble a lot among themselves.

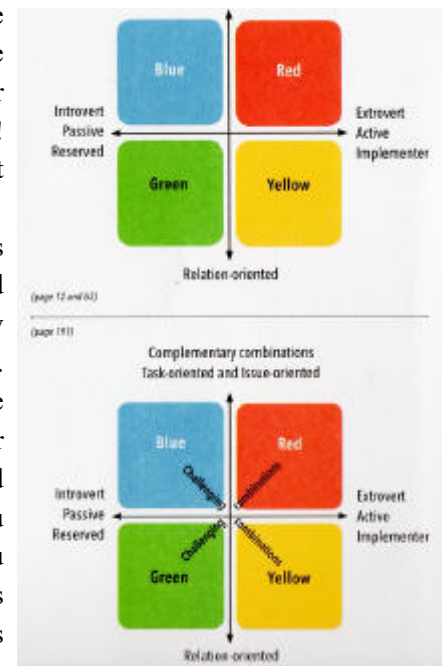
But we're not going to let him get away with just these two colours. What is he firing up about concerning the other two, Red and Blue? Would he be linking Red to the Communist Party? Oh, don't, that's just as silly. Red, in Erikson's rainbow dazzling mind is someone to steer clear of, like jump a fence if you see them coming. Bolt down the street like hell. Seriously, and he is deadly serious, Red is someone who talks the loudest. You're kidding? No, that's it, Red is bearing down on your delicate ear-drums every second of the day with a megaphone of fifty thousand decibels. Red is also the person who explains everything dramatically while you hardly get a word in. Now you're beginning to agree with him, aren't you? You know people like that, don't you. Of course you do, but where Erikson fails in his categorisation is deciding that all those people with exciting ear-belt symptoms such as that are the same as each other. Most people in the world have strong opinions about almost everything. This doesn't make them the same as half a billion other 'Reds'. Erikson goes on to label them as fearless. Oh come on, so everyone who talks loud and likes to explain everything in detail is fearless? Enough of this idiocy, let's go to Blue, which might or might not include the Blues Brothers.

Are you ready for Blue? We like the colour Blue, the Royal Air Force and the Royal Australian Air Force like it too. Even the Kiwis love it, though these days their Air Force blue has gone a little bit grey. But be impressed, here comes the Devil incarnate. The Blue guy always puts things back where they belong, and according to Erikson "He is also a pessimist, sorry: a realist. He sees errors, and he sees risks. He's the melancholic who closes the circle of behaviour. . . we all have a friend like that." Oh, do we now? Let's see. . . no, we certainly do not. Erikson's advice is to give up on this person, because Blue baby knows everything under the desert sun. Erikson gives an answer on what happens when Blue gets stressed and feels pressure. "He becomes excessively pessimistic. Oh yes. It actually gets worse than usual. Suddenly everything becomes pitch black, and he falls into a pit of despair." Yes, well, there's more and we don't really feel like quoting it. It is estimated that in Sweden alone, the book has brought in over ten million euros. Then there's the rest of the world. What a lovely Bank account he must have?

In January of this year, well known psychologist and psychotherapist in Sweden, Dr. Dan Katz, named Thomas Erikson the fraudster of the year 2018. He describes that some people after reading the book, came out with attitudes such as "I can't possibly live with a Yellow person." Or that they had been tested at a Human Resources department to be told "they needed to be moved to another team because their 'colour combination' was not working in their current team. This is how silly the influence of the book has become". In fact we should be using the word, dangerous — deadly dangerous.

In Sweden, school counselors have taken up the book and are using it to grade students into one or other of the four colours. Can you believe that! Erikson followed up his book with another: *Surrounded by Psychopaths*. As a result, the leading newspaper *Aftonbladet* gave him a weekly column for him to answer questions about psychology. Katz says psychologists were scratching their heads over the serious flaws in both books. Had the country gone mad, so enthused with works that were of dubious psychology?

Katz writes: "Erikson's description of his own results in the test are, at best, contradictory. He says "people can be many colours!". He later claims, without any evidence, that "80% have two colours!". And about himself he says, "I have three colours: red, blue and yellow!". Given the stated aim of the test to classify personalities such claims are bizarre. Indeed, by studying in more detail what the colours are meant to say about a person, my colleague Urban Fagerholm, found that Erikson must, based on his own claims, be both fast and slow in his reactions; both maximally and minimally interested in relations; and both careful and impulsive. Moreover, his lack of greenness implies that Erikson lacks patience, calm, stability, kindness and many other basic characteristics! Maybe the only positive thing that can be said about Erikson's theory is that it might help some people realise that not everyone thinks the same way they do. Psychologists call this "theory of mind", an ability to change perspective, which usually develops in early childhood. In other words, Erikson's book might help someone with the empathetic and intellectual level of a five-year-old".







Erikson describes himself as a behavioural expert, and his publishers *Penguin* seem to agree, for that is what they print on the rear cover. But, there are no answers forthcoming from Erikson as to how he got that 'qualification'. Virtually, almost none of Erikson's 'further reading matter' quoted at the rear of his book has anything to do with behavioural science. They are popular self-help books, such as Dale Carnegie's *How to Win Friends and Influence People*. And where is the extensive bibliography for his research, and the appendices of his numerous notes? **None. Nothing. Not one ounce.** Erikson is a fraud and unfortunately you will probably find his book in Australian schools, with possibly recommended reading. But that's democracy my dears. And that's fine as long as we don't have teachers shoving it in the faces of pupils.

Erikson reckons Bill Gates is a Blue, and so is Albert Einstein, and even Mr. Spock from *Star Trek*. CEW again warns, beware the soft social 'scientist'. Yep, the editors of *Penguin* should be stood up against a wall and fired at by kids armed with stinky Durian fruit guns. •

*Surrounded by Idiots*  
by Thomas Erikson  
Penguin Vermilion paperback  
Various prices \$AUD14.99-\$39.50

## Waiting for *The Cloud*

*This is the way the world ends  
This is the way the world ends  
This is the way the world ends  
Not with a bang but a whimper.*

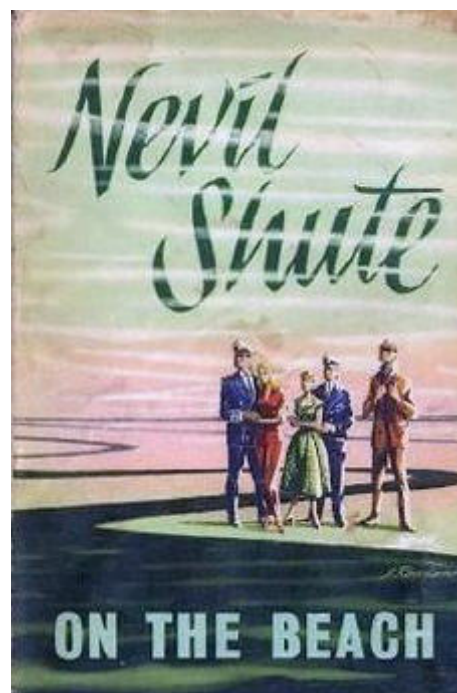
T.S. Eliot.

**That is the forward to *On the Beach*, First Australian Edition 1957, a novel by Neville Shute, which resides on my bookshelf these days.**

It was a look into the future where nuclear explosions had spread throughout the earth. The only habitable land left was around Melbourne, in Victoria, where the last of America's nuclear submarine's was berthed. It was the end of the world as we know it, not with a bang but with a whimper as nuclear clouds slowly crept down south. The novel was made into a film in 1959, starring Ava Gardner and Gregory Peck, with Fred Astaire.

A look into the future by the English/Australian writer, Neville Shute. Far fetched fiction of the times, but today! The Australian nuclear powered submarine debate has been going on for some time with a finalization by the Albanese government to purchase an estimated \$368 billion worth of submarines to shore up our regular but ageing fleet of Collins Class subs.

A controversial decision, but will it all have been for nothing? Will it be too late by the time these subs are commissioned? The *Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse* loom dangerously around us: Russia, North Korea, China and Iran. All have specific nuclear ambitions, held in reserve for future possibilities. As for Iran, nothing would give their religious leaders and revolutionary army more pleasure than to wipe Israel off the map with nuclear weapons, when — not if — Iran becomes a full blown nuclear power. Diplomacy negated the threat in Neville Shute's time — can diplomacy do the same again, or is it too late for that? Weak 'negotiating' leaders such as Britain's Neville Chamberlain was prior to WW2, are no match for authoritarian dictators. •



*Dust jacket of the 1957 edition*

***On The Beach* is a good read and can still  
be found online.**





# The Rising of the Far Right in Australia

**Ideology is a dangerous tool, whether if be left or right, but when it is far-right it becomes more than dangerous, it becomes a festering sore that without treatment, leads to dictatorship — a wish to rule without opposition.**

Sometimes seen as a backlash against left-wing socialism, often without due cause, right-wing fascism embraces a dedication of strong-arm tactics instead of utilising debating skills. In Melbourne up to 1993, there existed an outlet by the name of The International Bookshop. It began in 1933 as a Communist Party of Australia retail outlet (bear with me), and continued to carry Soviet literature into modern years; the writer of *Power without Glory*, Frank Hardy, being a regular visitor. The title of his famous novel — though written about the life of the shady bookmaker and businessman, John Wren — could well have been associated with Joseph Stalin and the Soviet Union.

During the 1960s and 70s, the politicisation of the bookshop gradually changed, with a focus on new age living; women's liberation movement, gay libs, then the ending of the Vietnam war. The Communist Party of Australia disbanded during the 1990s and the bookshop became a kind of radical centre for numerous causes. In 1994 The New International Bookshop opened at the Trades Hall in Carlton, carrying on a similar tradition with a cafe added.

**But there was another diametrically-opposed bookshop in Melbourne** at the Presgrave Building 273 Little Collins Street during the 1960s — The Heritage Bookshop, where literature of a far-right matter was displayed. The bookshop owner was Eric Butler, accused by K.D. Gott, a journalist with contributions to *The Bulletin*, *Dissent*, *The Straits Times* (Malaysia), of being an anti-semitite. Butler was the director of the now defunct League of Rights, a far-right organisation associated with a newsletter *The New Times*. The newsletter came into being at the same time as the Nazis in Germany were coming to power in 1934. In *Voices of Hate*, Gott writes under the heading of THE 'SOFT-SELL' ANTISEMITITE: "Mr. Eric D. Butler is a man with several faces. In Victoria he has been known as a lecturer and pamphleteer, and to his neighbours in Eltham he is remembered as a former president of the Shire. Fellow Anglicans know him as a one-time member of the Melbourne Synod of their Church . . . In 1962 he accompanied Mr. D.J. Killen MHR to London on a two-man crusade to oppose Britain's entry into the Common Market. In 1964 Mr. Butler made another overseas trip, taking in Britain, Canada, Rhodesia and South Africa. In each country he was feted by right-wing groups which arranged audiences to listen to Mr. Butler expound his racist theories and his conspiratorial view of world affairs. In South Africa he was looked after by Mr S.E.D. Brown, editor of the extreme right-wing journal S.A. Observer."

Gott writes concerning Butler's numerous ultra right-wing friends, including Melbourne's Radio and TV commentator Norman Banks, who refers to Butler as his 'dear friend', who introduces Butler to his audiences. Gott was correct in labelling Butler as a man with two faces. During World War II government ministers warned that Butler's narratives were dangerous to the financial support of Australia's war effort. Under the guise of writing articles for the Melbourne newspaper *The Argus* in 1949, about international and national affairs, what Butler was actually doing was slipping in ideas from The League of Rights. When editors realised this, the articles were stopped. Of Butler's Heritage Bookshop, Gott writes: "Mr. Butler's bookshop is a relic of Hitler's Germany and more particular of Streicher's filth-sheet *Der Sturmer*\*. Reminded of these facts, Mr. Butler will ingenuously evade the charge of anti-semitism, convincingly to many. But anti-semitic he remains."

Interestingly, Eric Butler lived to the age of 90, dying in 2006, but still active with his far right-wing ideas. According to Wikipedia, he chaired an address by the Holocaust denier, David Irving, in 1999. (Though no citation is given).

Today, there are several far right-wing groups espousing much the same, or worse, ideas that Butler talked and wrote about, all of which have come to the notice of Australia's security watchdog ASIO. The watchdog names at least six major far right-wing groups which pose a danger to Australian democracy, and several minor groups — mostly anti-semitic, anti-government, and racially intolerant. In November 2021, the Morrison government gazetted as a terrorist organization, The Base, an American white-separatist neo-Nazi hate group that had been actively seeking members in Australia from right-wing groups, mainly in Queensland and South Australia.

In summing up Eric Butler, Gott writes: "It must be admitted, too, that he is plausible and charming, and outwardly a model citizen with an air of dedication to community welfare." And that, also, was what numerous people thought of Hitler during the 1930s. •

\*Der Sturmer. A German tabloid newspaper, published from 1923 to the end of World War II, approved by the Nazi party for its heavy anti-semitic viewpoint.



Picture: Courtesy *The Guardian* 20 March 2023

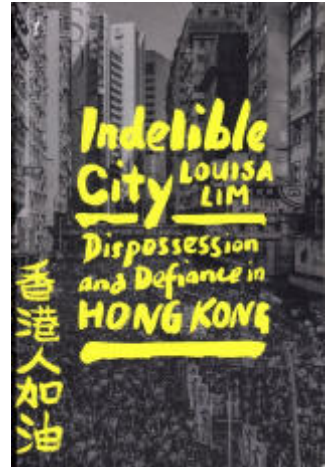


## Hong Kong: beneath the surface

A most welcome addition to the recent history of Hong Kong, Louisa Lim's book describes the ex-British colony from the point of view of one who spent their childhood there. But since that time Hong Kong has changed, and not for the better. So writes Lim, who now lives in Melbourne but returns to the land time and again to interview HK residents.

Lim has to change the names of her many interviewees because of the uncertainty of Hong Kong's new laws, put in place by the Communist Party of China in 2020, which gives police the right to haul people off to mainland China for trial, and perhaps not be seen again.

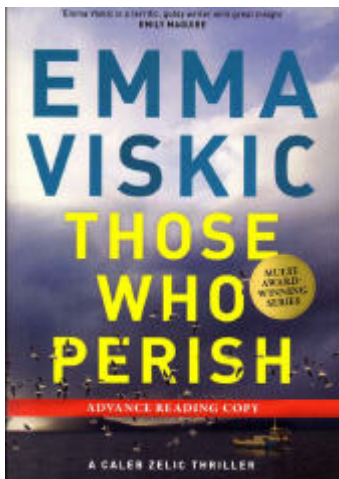
A recurring theme throughout the book is the story of The King of Kowloon — whose street art enlivened and amazed Hong Kong's public, but whose work has mainly disappeared from view. A disappearance, Lim states, similar to Hong Kong's future. "Indelible City p33: "Yet even in his disappearance is the King symbolic. For disappearance is the ultimate fear of Hong Kongers. The island, only seven miles from end to end, is destined to be subsumed into Greater China . . . a borrowed place on borrowed time."



*Indelible City: Dispossession and Defiance in Hong Kong*  
Text Publishing

Various prices: \$AUD28.50-34.99  
\$AUD28.50 from Booktopia

## A Koorie thriller



A magnificent 2023 thriller by Australian author Emma Viskic which is part of a series. Viskic draws the reader into a believable Australian setting by the sea. Her descriptions of the land are truly sensitive and visually illuminating. As also are her characterisations of the people who populate a small country town with its connected island, far from — but with two hours driving distance — of Melbourne.

This novel will enlighten those who know little about Koorie country culture and the sometimes uncertain mix with white Australians. Viskic is incredibly gifted in the manner in which she writes local dialogue, with surprising twists and turns: *I didn't see that coming!*

There's a killer on the loose in this small community and it's in the interest of partially deaf Koorie private detective Caleb to track that person down. You won't regret picking up this great novel. Viskic is a gutsy and intuitive writer. Recommended reading.

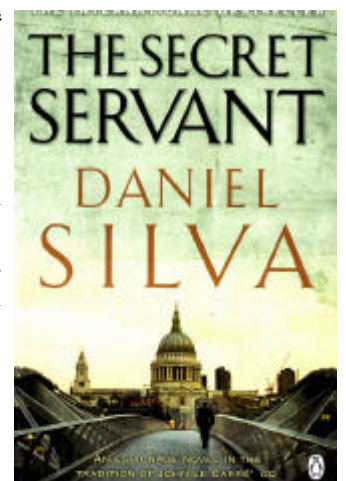
*Those Who Perish*  
Penguin/Random House  
Dymocks \$AUD29.99

## Time is running out

Seventh in the Gabriel Allon spy series of nineteen books, *The Secret Servant* delves deep into ongoing terrorist activities by Islamist groups. Based on factual historical bombings/assassinations, Silva draws deeply on knowledge associated with the FBI, MI5, MI6, the Egyptian Security Service, and other spy groups and ambassadors. His research, with that of his Israeli-born wife, reaches keenly into the halls of secret services and Islamist groups. Although his novels are labelled as fiction, Silva draws heavily upon historical activities of the terrorist organisations of the East and the Middle East.

In the frontispiece a quote by the Director-General of MI5 2002-2007, Dame Eliza Manningham-Buller, reads: "The threat is serious, is growing and will, I believe, be with us for a generation. It is a sustained campaign, not a series of isolated incidents. It aims to wear down our will to resist." A must read.

*The Secret Servant*  
Penguin fiction  
Dymocks \$AUD16.99-25.99







# A Labour of Love

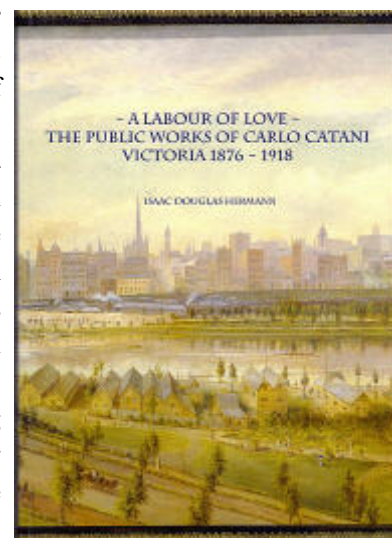
## The Public Works of Carlo Catani

**Local Port Phillip historian, Isaac Hermann, has himself written a labour of love.** His extensive research into the life and works of Port Phillip engineer, Carlo Catani, has resulted in a magnificent book which depicts the life and works of one of Victoria's greatest public works engineers.

Born 1852 in Florence, Italy, Catani came to Melbourne in 1876. He was a graduate of the Technical Institute of Florence where he received a diploma of civil engineering. Catani set about stamping his originality upon public works throughout the State of Victoria including the building of bridges and swamp drainage. No other Victorian public works person has done so much and with such passion as has Carlo Catani. His enthusiasm and dedication knew no bounds. Hermann records that at one time Catani employed 400 out-of-work painters to re-do state government offices.

Victoria is in great debt to Catani for his artistic vision in planning and finalising many public gardens, including the St. Kilda foreshore. In 1912 Catani made a world study tour which included the Riviera and Monte Carlo. According to Hermann, Catani came back to Australia with notebooks crammed with drawings.

Former president of the Royal Historical Society of Victoria, Prof. Bill Russell, FRHAV, writes in a forward to a *Labour of Love* "In this long-awaited book, Isaac Hermann brings Catani to life, and ushers us through Catani's achievements with period photos and exhibits that expose the transformative effect of Catani's life. Isaac Hermann has been at the forefront of celebrating and memorialising Catani's unique contributions to Melbourne and Victoria, and this book amply demonstrates the justification for Isaac's efforts."



*A labour of Love*

Printed by MVP Print, Seaford

Privately published

Limited copies remain

If interested, contact the editor of CEW  
at [genetree@tpg.com.au](mailto:genetree@tpg.com.au)

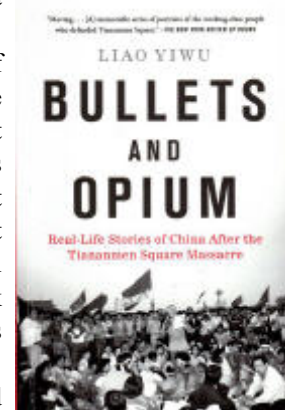
## Sorrows of yesteryear

**"Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it." — George Santayana 1902.**

First published 2012 and still flying off the shelves is Liao Yiwu's *Bullets and Opium*, the incredible life stories of many who lived in fear after the Tiananmen Square massacre of June 3-4, 1989. Eighteen and nineteen-year-old students attended with numerous working-class Chinese folk from across the country arriving to give support, looking for a more open and decent future.

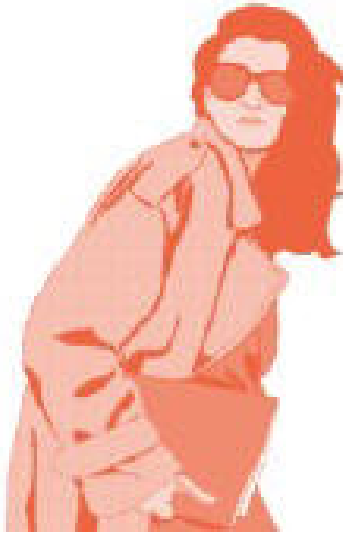
Unfortunately, many were not aware of what the Communist Party of China was capable of — they had misjudged the leaders' fear of change, and the heavy hand of misguided authority came down like a thunder cloud. Liao courageously traveled throughout China, seeking survivors of that massacre, thus *Bullets and Opium* is the result of his intensive search. The book reveals numerous stories of escape, imprisonment and suffering, such as pp 98-100 (edited) "The urban management officials kept coming to check up on my shop, and every time they came I would kneel down in front of the leader and call him whatever made him happy, even 'Daddy', so long as he allowed me that small space to survive in." "The police set a trap for me when I was going to the Xijiao food market to ask for the repayment of a debt, to arrest me — they framed me for burglary and sentenced me to four years in prison."

Liao's secret research into survivors of the killing fields is exhausting in its breadth and scope. According to the introduction, hundreds of thousands were arrested in 1989, and many paid for their patriotism by enduring 'destroyed marriages, lost careers, or a lifetime of sexual dysfunction brought on by torture'. Liao eventually escaped from China in 2011 through to Vietnam with his backpack full of notes. •



**Bullets and Opium**  
Atria—Simon & Schuster  
\$AUD29.99





*An edited version in the light of January 2023. Originally published in CEW143 July 2020*

## Mercury O'Proud Political correspondent

**It is said that the ex-Greens senator, Lidia Thorpe and some of her ilk, wish to change the name of Victoria and Queensland, as they regard these names to be associated with colonialism and unfitting for this country.**

Well if that is true, you cannot simply stop there with this attempt to change history, you will need to change the name of Melbourne because it was named after Lord Melbourne, another colonial. Then, you will need to change the majority of Melbourne's street names because at least 90% of them are 19th century British, including those of them that are from Scots, Welsh and Irish of colonial times. Then there are town names associated with Dutch and German colonial days. For instance, in Victoria there is Steiglitz, a town out of Geelong, and Elsternwick, a suburb of Melbourne, was named after Charles Hotson Ebdens' house "Elster", the German word for "magpie" with adding "Wick", the Scandinavian word for "village". Where does one draw the line?

Fortunately, that is not exactly what Lydia said, though others of ilk have those very same thoughts. The *Herald-Sun* newspaper of the time simply decided to make a beat-up of her ideas about colonial Australia. Shame on their editors. Will they apologise? Ha ha, come off it. But Lidia Thorpe is one of a number of political want-a-bees who have little knowledge of European history, and one wonders about their grasp of Australian history at that.

But it was inevitable that discussion would centre upon the sudden surge in destroying statues throughout the democratic world. You can't do that in Russia, China, or North Korea, or many others under the firm boot of dictatorship. Wonder why? So, this recent world-wide movement against anything that seems to offend must be tumbled down. The statues are not alive, they cannot speak for themselves, they simply have to rely upon other humans to ask 'Hey, is this mob rule at it again?' So, some statues appear to represent slavery, colonialism, repression, but why would you wish to tumble down or deface (as has happened) a statue of Winston Churchill whose strength was a vital ingredient in saving the British and European people from rule by German Nazis? At times, Churchill showed that he may well have been racist or biased in some of his thinking, but that is no excuse to tumble down or deface his statue. And who shall throw the first stone? Wording could be added to show he was not without his faults. Now, red paint has been splattered upon the statue of Abraham Lincoln, to whom the black folk of America owe their freedom from colonial slavery.

Numerous progressives have taken up a war against history and say statues must go. Even dizzy Lidia Thorpe during a strange flash of insight, doesn't quite wish to see that. "I am worried about more statues coming down because people are angry, people are hurt, people don't feel like they're being heard — I don't want to see that."

So, what's to be done? If during a democratic process, a majority agree that certain statues ought to be taken down, then fine — put them somewhere else, preferably in a museum, with appropriate wording attached giving the full history of the statue in the light of modern times. Destruction is like a rolling stone, it builds up in people's minds and leads them to further destruction. which becomes a group destroyer of humanity's creative art. The mob who call themselves *Extinction Rebellion* have 'sanctified' the splashing of paint upon valuable historical paintings in The Louvre (which fortunately were covered by glass). Difficult to create art, but so easy to destroy it. •

# MS Australia

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# Political correctness

**Why would you bother writing about political correctness or identity politics — everyone knows what it's all about these days. Or do they? Gemma Tognini, executive director of GT Communications recently stated “Identity politics is born from a poorness of spirit, one that only sees what it doesn't have.” Really! Well, that's something to ponder upon.**

Is it a continual search for a Utopia that does not, cannot, possibly exist? It's great to have dreams and ambitions, but reaching out for a world Utopia where many problems will vanish in the wind, is not only unrealistic, but can also be dangerous.

What does Gemma mean by ‘a poorness of spirit’? What she is alluding to is that numerous folk who simply live and breathe identity politics are somewhat estranged from society's firmly based and time tested ethics. Something has occurred in their lives and perhaps in the lives of their parents to continually ask ‘Who am I?’ without ever finding a satisfactory answer. It could be a generational problem. But it is a question more or less embedded in narcissism. If society has been wise enough in its upbringing of you and you have learnt the basics of morals and ethics in earlier years why is there a need to ask ‘Who am I? Unless, of course, you have inherited as Gemma Tognine states ‘a poorness of spirit’.

The Orange prize-winning writer Lionel Shriver copped a serve from the narcissistic politically correct when she addressed the Brisbane writer's festival in 2019, which included the Sudanese-Australian Yassmin Abdel-Magied, who said Shirver's words were ‘a poisoned package.’ Shriver had been raising the point that why should it be wrong for writers to create characters from religious, racial, sexual or gender groups to which one does not belong? But the politically correct were having none of that and became abusive. That seems to be what they do when they cannot get their way, or agree with what they see, hear, or read.

Shriver stated that it was not just fiction writers who are now being told to pull their heads in, so to speak, it was spreading across the arts everywhere and that anyone in the public eye is watching their back. Later, she told journalist Rosemary Neill “White writers, in particular, are being told they either have to ask permission to use minority characters . . . or you're just not allowed to. That's a loss for everyone.” The fact is that this is occurring across publishing houses the world over with staff threatening to strike or ban certain writer's work according to their own particular version of political correctness.

Political correctness, or identity politics, spreads its ugliness everywhere, but more so in some of the world's ‘prestigious’ universities, where it feeds within an eager breeding ground of yet unformed minds. Neurologist and brain surgeon, Rahul Jandial, whose recent book *Life Lessons from a Brain Surgeon*, made headlines, states “My brain when I was 20 years was really under the dominion of my emotions and hormones,” which, as much science now informs us, leads to decisions made that perhaps ought not to have been made at the time and that the human brain does not fully develop until around the age of 26. Under the influence of emotions, young university students are well primed to accept a prevailing mind set. Jandial's advice to parents is to give your children the widest range of experiences possible — even more than you yourself had as a child. Open them to everything you can get your hands on, for in that capacity will come a broadening of their mind to help them through the emotional years. At the same time allowing them to find their own paths. In time only considerable experience with life will help them to parry the insidious thought forms of political correctness that they will come across in ‘education’ facilities.

The jury is still out on whether much political correctness comes from neo-Marxism these days. There is some evidence that certain sections of this movement are entrenched not only in universities, but also in political life. The case of Roz Ward of La Trobe university, the co-author Safe Schools is one such example, where after the program was licensed by the Victorian Labor government to be taught in schools, Ward came out in a video (which is still obtainable) stating very clearly that Safe Schools was **not** about safety but was about gender and sexuality. Ward proclaims herself as a modern day Marxist and several years ago stated “Now we just need to get rid of the racist australian [sic] flag on top of state parliament and get a red one up there then my work is done”.

Ward also writes for the Socialist Alternative magazine *Red Flag* and has some unusual views in which she once described Protective Service Officers as thugs. A valid reason why the Victorian government and LaTrobe university had not seen this coming at them in earlier days, is undoubtedly because they were — and still remain — too close to accepting certain far left socialist tenets themselves. Ward further embarrassed the Victorian government by stating that up to half the children in Australia were likely to be attracted to their own sex. CEW understands that in later years the program Safe Schools was



modified to appease objections by parents. The NSW government, after reviewing the program, killed it. Unfortunately, sections of the far left are continuing to push identity politics into all avenues of life. It is no secret that the current Victorian State Labor government encourages and attempts to implement laws in that direction. But as there is no viable political opposition for them to worry about, they can do as they like.

According to PC rules, if you dare to criticise Safe Schools which is what trans woman and ex-military captain Catherine McGregor did, by stating that the program that teaches kids about sexuality and gender fluidity could lead young 'uns down a "blind alley", you are inviting trouble. Because of that, she was given the boot by Kaleidoscope, a gay-rights movement. And McGregor is not the only one who has been given the heave-to shove out of organisations that previously welcomed them.

Another form of political correctness reared its ugly head with objections — only by one or two people (and in this instant encouraged by others with an agenda) — was to certain cartoons displayed in *The Australian* newspaper by cartoonist Bill Leak. It seems that it wasn't correct to portray certain indigenous Australians in a light that showed up a) their criminality, or b) their lack of interest and/or abuse of their children. The then Human Rights Commission under the leadership of Professor Gillian Triggs, sought to bring to book the cartoonist Bill Leak, after complaints of racial discrimination under Section 18C of the Human Rights Act were made. This came under senate scrutiny as did other instances that Triggs had been involved in, including a report about children in immigration detention, which she held back from presenting to the previous Labor government, only to hit the then incoming Coalition government with it, long after completion. Triggs was found to have misled parliament on several occasions. Triggs is lauded as a hero by many in the human rights movement and ultra left-wing sympathisers, and no doubt she was almost crucified by right-wing critics during the troubling times of her commission 2015-2017. Slings and barbs came at her with a ferocious rate, enough to cripple the strong. At the time a former human rights commissioner, Sev Ozdowski — not willing to inflame the situation, but concerned about freedom of speech — considered Triggs should resign. "Because of the politicisation of the commission, there will be an enormous job for a new president to re-establish its reputation." Ozdowski was chairman of the Australian Multicultural Council and president of the Australian Council for Human Rights Education.

It is reported that Triggs also misled the public when she said that Leak's lawyers had never contacted her, but then made a startling turn around and admitted that they had. Then Triggs recommended that compensation of \$350,000 be paid to Indonesian refugee, John Basikbasik for seven years detention. Basikbasik had been detained after serving jail time for the **murder** of his pregnant wife with a children's bicycle. There were several other recommendations that were seen as vexatious and frivolous. In all, Triggs had recommended compensation of \$6 million within the short space of three years. So, where was Liberties Victoria leader Spencer Zifcak while all this was going on — hiding on the moon?

Jeremy Sammut of *The Centre for Independent Studies* reckons that modern culture has a propensity to look askance upon those who dare to disagree. He states Bill Leak's 'indigenous cartoon' that hit the spotlight, to a call for Woolsworths to sack an employee because he supported traditional marriage. Sammut stated "We now have at least one generation of tertiary-educated Australians who have been politicised, and who are deeply invested in the identity politics notion that certain groups in society remain the perpetual victims of bigotry and prejudice at the hands of the dominant culture — despite the enormous social changes that make a nonsense of this theory . . . Because of its intolerance towards so-called 'intolerants', identity politics risks becoming a disastrously self-fulfilling prophesy, which will end up fostering ever deeper political and social divisions over issues of race, gender and sexuality".

Political correctness or identity politics is no joke. Within the bowels of the PC movement there is a very grave risk of a return to extreme far left socialism. We have only to look at the near escape Britain recently had with the possibility that Jeremy Corbyn of the British Labour Party, may have taken over the leadership of the country. The bookmakers had him as favourite to be the next prime minister. His words should send a chill through the guts of all, that we are "a modern progressive socialist party that has rediscovered its roots and its purpose," while at the same time denigrating among others, the Jewish population. His anti-semitic remarks are indelibly engraved on the tombstone of the Labour Party for an exceedingly long time to come. It took the UK Equality and Human Rights Commission almost five years to advise Labour to face up to the insidious anti-semitism within their ranks.

Can left-wing folk be Fascists? The answer to that, as history past and current has concluded, is a resounding YES. If their interests are at risk, far left wing socialists have shown that they can be as cruel and as damaging as those from the far right. The swing from far left-wing socialism to fascism is only a matter of degrees. Many past far left socialist leaders have shown how simple a turning point that can be, much to the regret of history. The ideology always comes first, the person comes second — whether far left-wing or far right-wing, cultural and political blindness affects all and everyone.





That universities are scared witless about not offending groups of students who shout out and condemn visiting speakers, and in some instances, their own lecturers — which has been the case with certain NSW and Queensland campuses. Universities have always existed as a platform for free speech, and restrictions or warnings about certain subjects should not be necessary in an open democratic nation, unless they impinge upon the critical security of that nation.

Bradley Campbell & Jason Manning in *The Rise of Victimhood Culture*, Palgrave McMillan paperback, and *Cynical Critical Theories*, Swift paperback by Helen Pluckrose & James Lindsay have railed against political correctness; both books reviewed in CEW137 19 March 2001. Campbell & Manning's words on social justice are worth repeating: "Sociology and social justice each have potential only when operating within their limits. The promise that a science of social life could aid social justice efforts was reasonable, but when social justice becomes an ideology unmoored from empirical reality, it needs no science. And when sociology becomes nothing more than the pursuit of social justice, it is no longer science anyway; it no longer has any knowledge to provide reformers. The line between sociology and social justice has long blurred, so as social justice has become identified with victimhood culture, so has sociology." •

## A Day in the Life of Victoria's Big Build



**1st construction worker:** (Drinking water) "Struth Wally, our premier Dan Andrews is callin' a halt to this Big Build project 'ere. The State's runnin' outa money 'e reckons."

**2nd construction worker:** (Sitting) "No worries, Smithy — see the boss 'ere, 'e's already diggin' down thru t' China for more help. President Xi is very sympathetic to our Dan the Man, so darn't you worry now. There'll be a ton of *yuan* comin' our way if we plays our cards right."

With apologies to *Punch*.

## The Council to Homeless Persons

Established in 1972, the Council to Homeless Persons is the peak Victorian body representing individuals and organisations with a stake or interest in homelessness. Our mission is to work towards ending homelessness through leadership in policy, advocacy and sector development.

<http://www.chp.org.au/>

See our Consumer Participation Resource Kit at:

[http://www.chp.org.au/public\\_library/cpkit/index.shtml](http://www.chp.org.au/public_library/cpkit/index.shtml)



# Pet medical crisis

from Jennifer Hunt

## FARA, THE PLAYFUL FAILED GUIDE DOG IS A HUGE SUCCESS AS A COMPANION PET.

Fara' is a gorgeous girl. The black lab who is now 7 was trained to be a guide dog but didn't succeed because she loves to play way too much. 'Fara' is now a companion dog for Monique suffers from some mental health issues and 'Fara' has been an amazing help to her.

Monique has lost both of her parents recently and it's been extra hard on her as her father was her primary carer. "Fara is my companion dog, she means everything to me. Fara is all I have." Monique said to PMC.

Fara' suffers from arthritis and also has very long hairs in her ears that have caused infection in the past, but it is the urgent dental problems that sent Monique to the local vets in need of help. The Warby Veterinary Practice was an amazing help to 'Fara' and took on the case that Pet Medical Crisis had been asked to manage.

Thankfully the adorable Lab had the procedure to help her dental situation and she is now back with her very relieved mum Monique.

Pet Medical Crisis is here to be a service that does more than pay vet bills, we help the owners manage to get through these times. Owners in necessitous circumstances truly need our help, and in order to help we need your support. ■



## 'MAX'- HELPS MUM'S MENTAL HEALTH EVERY DAY

Martine adopted her cat 'Max' from the Lort Smith when he was 7 months old. 'Max' has been great support for Martine who is on a disability pension. He keeps her mental health, feeling loved and comforted. 'Max' got hurt managing to injure his neck and underneath his jaw. The nasty wound needed attention.

Being on a very limited income Martine was very concerned about what needed to be done to help 'Max'. During the cat's check up however, it was discovered he had a terrible dental issues and would need some serious teeth extractions to help him going forward. Once PMC were contacted we managed to get the second opinion at our amazing friends from Southern Animal Health, who as always gave our case a very generous discount.

"Max very much helps me with my mental health, he gives me a reason, a responsibility, he's my flat mate, my best friend, he's funny, and sometimes moody old man hah... He's independent and a mummy's boy. Without out any children, yes he is everything to me. He is my world." 'Max' needed to have four teeth extracted and strong antibiotics for the neck injury. The feline boy can now get back to his mum and hopefully stay out trouble. Thanks to the team at SAH once again your work is so greatly appreciated in supporting our cause. •



## Pet Medical Crisis

A not for profit fund to save pets whose owners cannot afford their emergency care.

[www.petmedicalcrisis.com.au](http://www.petmedicalcrisis.com.au)

Email: [petmedicalcrisis@gmail.com](mailto:petmedicalcrisis@gmail.com)

PMC is now on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/PetMedicalCrisis/>

Also, a walking harness — 'Dog-A-Long' — is available to assist your dog to become more mobile — supports dogs with hind leg problems associated with ageing, arthritis, hip & spinal problems. For suitability check with your Vet.



## The Animal Rehoming Service

Catch us on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/TheAnimalRehomingService/>

For further information, please log onto <http://www.tars.org.au/>  
The Animal Rehoming Service Inc. is a registered charity.  
Donations over \$2 are tax deductible. (ABN: 51 275 837 567)



### I'm still looking for a loving home!

**Pip is a 2.5 year old desexed, vaccinated, wormed and microchipped 15kg female Border Collie x Australian Koolie**, who's looking for a loving home.

She's a very active, affectionate and cuddly girl who would love nothing more than to

be a treasured member of the family, going on adventures with them, as well as having her daily walks (she's great on lead).

She can be food reactive and occasionally reactive towards certain men, so someone with dog experience is necessary, either in an all-adult home or one with dog savvy children, aged 12 and over.

Pip has happily lived with two cats. She would also suit a home with another compatible dog for company. She unfortunately wouldn't suit a home with other small animals. She enjoys an indoor/outdoor lifestyle, sleeping indoors. She also enjoys trips in the car.

Pip's adoption fee is \$350. Microchip Number: 953010004915366 Pet Exchange Register Source Number: RE100709 If interested, please call Michaela on 0409213131 (Lilydale based, but we go to you).

**Tofu is a 1 year old desexed, vaccinated, wormed and microchipped 12kg male Japanese Spitz** who's looking for a loving home.

He's a loving, cuddly and quite active boy who would suit a calm and experienced family, happy to walk him daily and treat him as a treasure member of the family. Someone with Spitz experience would be great! An all adult home or one with gentle children over about ten would also suit.

Tofu would enjoy having a compatible dog for company or someone who's home during the day, as he loves company.

He enjoys an indoor/outdoor lifestyle, sleeping indoors. Regular grooming would also be required.

Tofu's adoption fee is \$900. Microchip Number: 953010100448128 Pet Exchange Register Source Number: RE100709 If interested, please call Michaela on 0409213131 (Carnegie based, but we go to you).



### I'm still looking for a loving home!

Dominic is a 16 month old desexed, vaccinated, wormed and microchipped 30kg male Border Collie x Rhodesian Ridgeback, who's looking for a loving home.

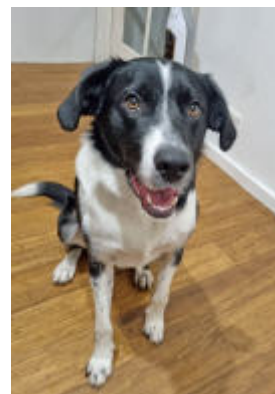
He's a very sweet, loving and loyal boy who would suit an experienced family, happy to treat him as a treasured member of the family. An all-adult home or one with dog savvy teenagers would suit.

Dominic's an active boy who would suit an active family, happy to exercise him daily, be it walks or trips to the dog park (he especially loves playing fetch and is great with other dogs). He's had basic training and loves to please. He also sleeps soundly in his crate.

Dominic would suit a home with another active, medium to large dog for company as he loves other dogs. He's not been tested with cats.

He enjoys an indoor/ outdoor lifestyle, sleeping indoors. Dominic's adoption fee is \$450. Microchip Number: 956000014810639 Pet Exchange Register Source Number: RE100709

If interested, please call Michaela on 0409213131 (Cheltenham based, but we go to you).



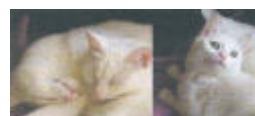
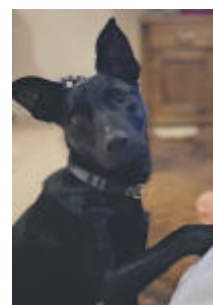
### I'm still looking for a loving home!

**Coconut is a 2 year old desexed, vaccinated, wormed and microchipped 15kg male Kelpie**, who's looking for a loving home.

He's a typical kelpie — very active, playful, cheeky and affectionate. He'd love to be part of an active family, going on adventures, spending time at the park and enjoying his daily walks. He would suit an all-adult home or one with older, dog savvy children.

Coconut's great with other dogs and would suit a home with another active and playful dog for company. He's not been tested with cats.

He enjoys an indoor/outdoor lifestyle, sleeping indoors. Coconut's adoption fee is \$450 Microchip Number: 941000025598871 Pet Exchange Register Source Number:

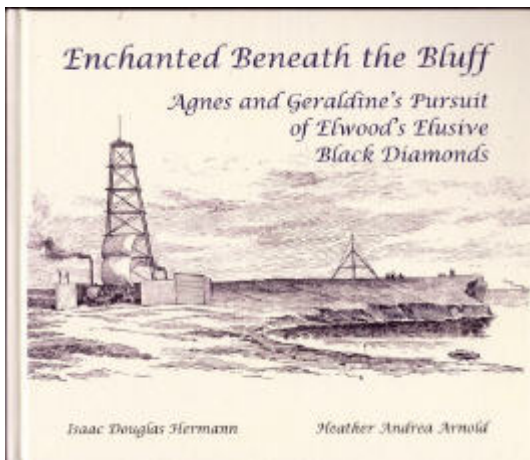


**We are now much loved in our new home and very grateful to TARS Inc.**





# Enchanted journey



**An amazing travel through time searching for the elusive black diamonds in Elwood, Victoria.** This elegant hard-back book by co-writers Isaac Hermann and Heather Arnold, tells of the Victorian era search by St. Kilda suffragette Agnes Simmons, Geraldine Minet and others, for what was thought to be a coal vein below Red Bluff in the Elwood/St. Kilda district.

Hermann and Arnold's research into the lives of Agnes and Geraldine reveals two idealistic and determined women, who used their wealth pursuing a dream, supporting worthy charitable causes, and becoming members of the Victorian Association of Spiritualists. Their shared interest of Theosophy led them to believe there was a good chance there was coal beneath Red Bluff and they set up a drilling rig that eventually reached a depth of almost 4,000 feet. *The Argus* newspaper of 1895 stated: "... the bore was deeper than any rock bore in Australasia, and it was claimed to be the deepest coal mine in the world!"

At the time Spiritualism was quite in fashion throughout the world. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, the author of Sherlock Holmes, was an avid devotee, as was the second prime minister of Australia, Alfred Deakin. Geraldine was a founding member of the Melbourne Theosophical Society and in 1892 when Geraldine was living at 45 Fitzgerald Street, Prahran, a Theosophical lodge was formed there named Maybank Lodge, with Alfred Deakin during his late thirties, as secretary. Maybank's living room contains the still perfectly intact carved blackwood mantelpiece and timbered fire surrounds with Theosophical motifs of the 1890s.

Hermann and Arnold's book is divided into three parts: One: The Women, Two: Their Faith, Three: The Mining, with an Appendix, numerous pages of references and an index — an historical work well prepared. *Enchanted* includes the backgrounds of all those involved in the Victorian Coal Mining Company. In The Introduction the authors write (p. xvi): "Set in the late Victorian era, this is a tale of two English women's Antipodean venture across the seas that would breach the boundaries of convention in industry and dress, by gender, and in matters of faith.

Agnes Simmons and Geraldine Helena Minet were well read and well educated women, and arrived upon our bustling shores with means, drive and ambition. Agnes and Geraldine held lofty ideals, both spiritually and socially, and lived their lives with purpose and generosity exemplified by their support for worthy causes. Both English women were born and lived in Kent, were perhaps unknown to each other in their former lives and possibly share lodgings for some time. Bound together in their political ideals and in matters of faith, they delved into farming and coal mining as partners, and sought the guidance of the spirit world in their endeavours." •



*Agnes Simmons delivering mail in Monbulk to Miss Siddle of the Post Office 1808-1815*



*Victorian Coal Mining Company Diamond Drill & the Helena steam portable boiler at the Red Bluff exploration site 1893-1897*



*Old Red Bluff, St. Kilda., watercolour postcard*

**"The authors, with extraordinary research, have delved into Elwood's folklore proving truth is stranger than fiction. More Herstory than History, this is an amazing yet true tale of spirits, suffragettes, swimmers, shafts and social heritage."**

*Meyer Eidelson, Historian and Author*

Melbourne bookstores that still have limited have supplies are: Dymocks, Collins St. Melbourne. Readings St. Kilda and Malvern. The Grumpy Swimmer, Elwood. Thesaurus Bookshop, Brighton.



## The right support at the right time sees Kai flourish



Kai\* entered foster care in January 2020 aged 14. When he arrived, he had been diagnosed with moderate depression, social anxiety and moderate OCD and he had been refusing to take his medication for some time.

He was shy and withdrawn and would often spend all his time in his bedroom, only speaking when asked questions, and even then, his answers were just one-worded responses.

Kai's foster carers knew there was a lovely young man busting to shine through so they were determined not to give up on him. So they worked hard to get him to understand the importance of taking his medication while making sure he felt welcome, comfortable and safe.

And the perseverance has certainly paid off. Kai is taking his medication daily, his participation at school has improved significantly and his confidence has grown. Kai's overall mental health and motivation have shifted, he is enjoying school, opening up at home and interacting with members of the household

It's obvious Kai is now feeling like part of the family, feeling safe and beginning to thrive.

With a new outlook on life, Kai now talks about his future and plans for his life beyond 18. He is keen to obtain his learner's permit so his carers can teach him to drive.

Recently Kai celebrated his 16th birthday and, this once shy, self-secluding young man was showered with gifts, cards, and birthday well wishes. He got to enjoy a birthday pizza night, thanks to the OzChild Thriving Families fund. A party with gifts and a cake was something Kai had not experienced before.

The smile on Kai's face said it all, this young man was finally coming alive!

It really is incredible to witness such a difference as a young person begins to trust, learns to share, and starts to look forward to a life they once could only ever have imagined.

Stories like this remind us of the incredible difference **OzChild** carers make and the commitment they have to see children and young people thrive, they really are superheroes!

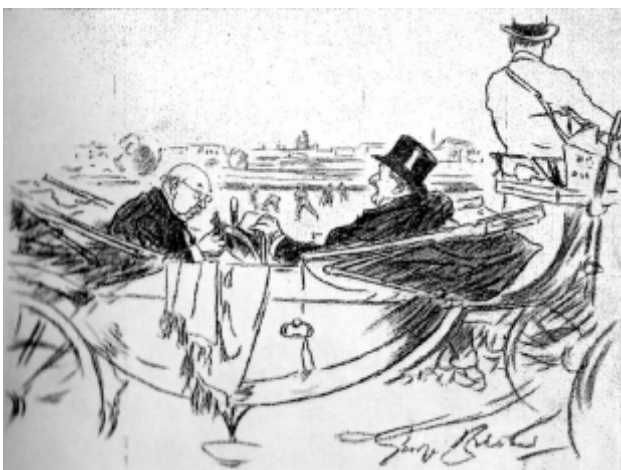
\*Names have been changed to protect identities

**Could you care? Why not take the first step today, join us at an information session and find out more about becoming a foster carer.**

**Phone: +613 9695 2200 Email: [hello@ozchild.org.au](mailto:hello@ozchild.org.au)  
Foster Care Enquiries: 1800 954 550**

## A Day in the Life of the Victorian Liberal Party

With apologies to Punch



**First shadow minister:** We must move with the times, you know."

**Second shadow minister:** Yairs, but the wheels of progress move oh so slow, as you can see."



# Saigon Sunset

A saga in several episodes by Graham Price

## Chapter 9

Earlier chapters are available on:

<https://catseyewatch.com>

**Cuc, now known as Nhan Lien, stepped out of the elevator onto level four of the AVRN building in Saigon. This was to be her first day as secretary to General Dao, having been instructed by Colonel Khuu Anh the previous day.**

Compared to Colonel Khuu's office on the third floor, this was a wonderland of furnishings — the stark furniture of the floor below was inferior to what was before her. The corridors were wide and bright, festooned with brass and light beige wall lamps and French opaline ceiling domes. At the end of the corridor was a frosted double glass door with bamboo and green fern sketchings, that appeared to lead out to a balcony. Her first thought was 'luxury, a General's domain — I may enjoy my time here'. She felt the maroon carpet sink beneath her flat heels, it smelt and looked new. Close to the end of the corridor was a small desk, and sitting behind it — much the same as in Colonel Khuu Anh's office — was a young Lieutenant. Upon seeing her he lifted his chin as if to say 'come here'.

Perspiration broke out on her forehead and she could feel her hands becoming sweaty. Well, this was it, then. Time to perk up and do what has to be done. She stepped forward, her legs feeling somewhat like jelly. She cursed under her breath — it was easier out there in the jungle with her AK47 beside her. She had killed and there was no reaction like this. Surely, this was the harder task; well, she would soldier up to it no matter how hard it was or how long it took.

The Lieutenant stood, right hand on pistol butt and left hand reaching for her identity card. "Name?"

"Nhan Lien, General Dao's new secretary."

He flipped the card with his left hand and eased his right hand away from his pistol. "Go in," he said, barely looking at her as he handed her card back. Lien took her card and replaced it in her handbag. The Lieutenant neither smiled at her or opened the door. She grasped the knob of the frosted windowed door and turned it. There was her work station before her with a polished desk, chair, filing cabinets and a small bookshelf with fat files on it. The smell of whisky combined with lavender greeted her as she knocked on the inner door.

"di vào . . . entar!"

Trying to give the impression that she was demure, she opened the door slowly, but her legs seemed somewhat even slower to follow. Her heart was beating faster as she gazed upon the short General who was sitting relaxed behind his formidable blackwood desk. There were large maps of North and South Viet Nam and many of the provinces on the walls with a blackboard near the entrance door. A tall bookshelf sat behind the General and another door behind the General's desk appeared to lead to the balcony. But it was the elegant dragon-headed mahogany and velvet couch alongside the far wall that attracted her attention. A place where three or four people could sit while in consultation with the General, or perhaps to be used for something else?

He lifted his head slightly and smiled, and then it all fell into place — her nervousness gone — she was now the secretary who would be superior to any he may have had in the past. The General raised his eyebrows and pointed to a cane-backed chair in front of the desk. "Please be seated, Miss Nhan". He leaned on the desk and clasped his hands. He was dressed much the same as Colonel Khuu had been, with a light khaki uniform of impeccable linen or silk. She could feel that her beauty preparations earlier seemed to be having an effect, and her choice of a tight fitting *ao dai* was attracting General Dao's deep brown eyes.

"I am not one for strict formalities," he said, leaning further across the desk so he could peer at the firmness of her breasts, "So, from now on I shall be calling you Nein, though . . ." he coughed, "for appearance sake you will continue to call me General or Sir at all times when there are others about. Now, I am sure we shall get on famously. I have read your CV, and am finding it more or less unbelievable that you have all of these virtues!" He laughed. "But of course you have . . . of course you have!"

"I can assure you, General Dao, that I am exactly as those papers state, perhaps even more so."

He was smiling again and his eyes were sparkling. "More so, yes . . . more so *indeed!*"

Later, when she had settled herself at her desk, she broke out into a grin. It was going better than expected. She had thought that there would have been a few stumbling blocks, but everything had gone smoothly — General Dao had caught





the bait, laid out there by her perfume, a little foundation to the face, and the daring *ao dai* she was wearing. The new and now composed Nein pondered her security clearance by Colonel Khuu — he must be in very deep trouble to have arranged that for her. But how long would it be before his troubles were discovered? She would have to move fast, but not so fast that General Dao would become suspicious. She knew that she would not have weeks, but only days to carry out her mission. She looked again at the stamps on her papers, such a high security clearance . . . was the Colonel playing with fire by covering her as such? And what would happen if he left Vietnam faster than he had planned to do? Her cover could be blown and the Colonel then in France under an assumed name would win both ways. But even under an assumed name, together with his family, there were secret individuals who could discover and reach out to silence traitors. It would not be her comrades of the north, it would be secret groups within the south, or even — she shivered at the thought — the French Sûreté which had eyes everywhere. The image of the Inspector of police, Monsieur Bastein, came up before her and she could feel her skin prickling. She pondered . . . perhaps she could kill two birds with the same stone, so to speak, or perhaps even three . . . !

On Saturday afternoon Claude Bastein was into the semi-circular driveway of the McKinnon household as fast as his green Peugeot 203 would take him — he'd almost side-swiped several pedicabs and a car during his speeding haste to see Charmaine. She had cancelled their meeting at the Cathedral for a run-through of their wedding details with the Bishop — Claude receiving the telephone message with utter disbelief. How could this be? She loved him . . . there was no doubt about that, but it seemed that the McKinnon children had become her main concern. She could not leave them. He slammed on the brakes at the gravelled driveway, sending dust into the air and causing James McKinnon at the front door to cough and brush away the fine particles from his face.

“Good lord, Claude, do you have to . . . ?”

Claude stepped from the car, perspiring profusely. “Sorry about that, James. Where is she?”

“I don't know. She left a quarter of an hour ago after the Bishop telephoned me with the cancellation news. There was no point Phuong and me attending if your marriage wasn't to go ahead. Lacroix said he would counsel her if it was necessary, but where she has gone, heaven only knows. Come inside out of the heat.”

Claude kicked at the gravel and stepped onto the paving slabs at the entrance. “Could do with a beer or two — something to settle my nerves. You too, no doubt!”

“A very wise idea.” James ushered Claude in through the door and closed it. In the hall the slight drop in temperature was apparent. They moved into the drawing room that looked out over the semi-circular driveway, to which Claude immediately turned as if searching through the windows for an arriving taxi or pedicab. “You don't suppose she's gone to Phuong's?”

“I've left a message for Phuong to telephone if she turns up. She may, they are very close, Claude.”

“Yes, but the problem seems to be that she is even closer to your children, James — especially Samantha. *Mon Dieu*, I cannot compete with that! They have taken her heart, which I thought was mine. Oh, *pour l'amour de Dieu*, what am I to do, *mon ami*?” He sat, with his hands pressed to his face, several light tears dropping from his eyes. “James, she is my life . . . what is it without her? Without her it is nothing . . . nothing!”

Ngan came in with a silver tray containing two large glasses of cold Malayan *Tiger* beer together with a bottle on the side. “Now I know why I import this glorious stuff,” said James, just for occasions such as this.”

“*Oui*, it's the beer for dramatic situations and the champagne for the happy ones, eh?” said Claude, reaching for a glass, “If you don't mind, this situation calls for a long draught.” He downed half the glass in one swift movement.

“I don't mind at all, Claude. In fact, I'll be needing this as well!”

Claude downed another mouthful. “Do you think we should motor over to Phuong's?”

James shook his head. “No, better to stay close to the telephone in case Phuong rings with news. Then we can go over if necessary.”

Samantha appeared in the doorway, clutching a doll. She wandered forward and sat on James's knee. “Papa, where's Charmaine? She went out before and she was crying.”

James patted her back. “We don't know, my little dove, but I'm sure she will be back before long.”

“Is that why uncle Claude is here?”

Claude, sitting with James on the brocade-covered sofa moved closer and touched her hand. “Charmaine will be back to see you soon . . . we are sure that she has gone to visit someone, that's all *mon chérie*. It's just like you wish to leave your doll and go and talk to others at times, isn't it?”

“I suppose. Do you like my doll, uncle Claude? Charmaine bought her for me . . . her name is Colette, that's French you know and look at how beautiful she is, just like Charmaine.”

“*Mon Dieu, Mon Dieu* . . . how is all of this to end? Oh *chérie*, sorry, but yes, you have a beautiful Colette whom you love as much as you love Charmaine. But, one day there will be others for you to love . . . many others, and perhaps there will be more dolls like Colette for you to love as well. That's what you would like, isn't it?”



“Oh yes, a sister and a brother for Colette. We could start a family, couldn't we uncle Claude?”

Claude turned away and James could see that he was silently weeping.

“Well, hop down now, Sam, and go and play with Colette. Uncle Claude and I have some men talk to do. Okay?”

“Okay, Colette is feeling sleepy now, so I must put her to bed. Goodbye uncle Claude.”

Claude snuffled a small “Bye bye, *mon cherie*.”

Charmaine stepped out of the blue and cream Renault taxi giving the driver more *dong* than she needed to. She had considered going straight to Phuong's residence, but thought that would be embarrassing for the young teacher. Her mind settled upon Trinh, General Dao's wife, and she re-directed the taxi. The Dao's lived in an apartment block off the old Rue Paul Blanchy, now known as Trung nu Vuong. She was unsettled in mind, knowing that she had just made the biggest decision of her life, torn between two destinies, torn between two of the dearest loves of her life. But she needed consultation, she needed solace — she needed someone to tell her that she had made the correct decision. The heat clung to her like a closet, humidity sinking into the pores of her skin, and suddenly she felt weary, as if she were old and wrinkled. She knew she was close to breaking point — she could feel it in her bones. The elevator was out of action, so she slowly climbed the stairs up to the Dao apartment situated on the fourth level, stopping at each level to catch her breath. A young Vietnamese girl came down the stairs and saw her leaning against the wall.

“Are you alright? You don't look well.”

Charmaine nodded twice and raised her hands. “I'm fine . . . I'm fine, just a little puffed, that's all . . . the stairs, you know.” The girl passed on by. “Okay.”

When she finally came to the door of the Dao's apartment, she rested for a moment against the wall, looking out through the grilled opening of the passage over the tin and terracotta tiled rooftops of Saigon. She'd spent many fond years in Vietnam, first with her father in Hue and recently with the McKinnon family in Saigon. The country had become her home, she loved it so, but there was change and perhaps even more than that coming. Nothing can ever be the same, she thought. It's all about burning one's bridges and moving on no matter how much it hurts. She pressed the buzzer . . . silence . . . she pressed it again . . . no sound from within. She leant back against the chill of the concrete wall, feeling a scream arising from within . . . nothing she could do about it . . . nothing . . . but instead, there came a low sobbing as she crumpled to the concrete passage floor.

Cuc, now known as Nhan Lien, was whistling as she entered the house. She could smell something cooking in the kitchen and gravitated there. The elderly cook, Hwa, turned to look at her as she almost danced into the room.

“So, what makes you happy, eh? Did you kill someone today — maybe put poison into someone's lunch, eh? I know what you're about, Missy Lien, but maybe it is better for my health that I do not. What you think?”

Lien laughed. “Oh cookie, you are too smart for me. But you need to keep your trap shut, you know, otherwise some of my people may come and take you away.”

Hwa shrugged her shoulders.

“So what? I am old. I have seen everything come and go so there is nothing that can surprise me now. As I told you yesterday, I have lived through the Japanese and Chinese incursions into this land, so I am not afraid of your people who come from the North. What can they do to me, eh? You do what you have to do and I will do mine. It pleases me to cook for this house. I do not have family anymore, so whoever comes into this home becomes my family. You see, the proper preparation of food is the most important work anyone can do in this life. Any true Vietnamese person knows that, though some have forgotten along the way in their quest for power.”

Lien laughed. “You talk about power? It is something you know little of, Hwa. Yes, you have a domain of sorts here in this home where it seems you rule, or rather, pretend you rule.”

“You have big mouth Nhan Lien, if that is what your name really is. I know you are here for some grave purpose, but perhaps it is you who should shut their mouth, not I?”

Lien was silent. She had been moving toward a conversation that was forbidden and she needed to retreat before she said things that she would regret. The day had been successful and there was no sense in destroying the joy that she felt, knowing that she held the key towards bringing down one of the most senior Generals of the AVRN. She forced a smile at Hwa, shrugged her shoulders, and said. “Perhaps you know best, Auntie Hwa, after all you have had decades of experience not only living under the Japanese but the imperial French also. Well, we are both pleased that the French soldiers have gone back to their country, though they do seem to have left some civilian remnants behind. These must also go, do you not think? We must wipe Vietnam from their influence.”

“Except,” said Hwa, “From some of their most delicious recipes to which I must admit, I treasure.”

They both laughed.



Lien had relaxed in her room after the evening meal, which indeed had some delightful French cuisine flavours added to it, when there was a soft knock on her door. She had been reading a manifesto from Hanoi and quickly hid it underneath the mattress of her bed. Just in case, she thought, as she slowly opened the door.

Tai's brother, Giang, stood there with a bottle of red wine and two small plastic cups. He smiled. "Just thought you might like to celebrate after your day of victory. Tai has told me of your success with the General, which can only lead to his destruction. May I come in?"

Again, Lien was struck with his incredible resemblance to her murdered fiancée, Kim. So, what harm would it do? Invite him in, because tomorrow who knows, we could all be dead.

"Come, there's a small table here near the bed."

He moved as if he was walking on silk. Before she knew it, he was sitting on the bed beside her and placing the bottle with the two cups on the small metallic folding table. She smelt his body scent. Curiously, it was much the same as Kim's had been. She felt herself remembering the days prior to his death, when they were cozily wrapped up together in the field on that final moonlit night. And now, here he was back with her again with a change of name, same as she. We are travelling this road together, she thought. Kim is here with me again and destiny is to be fulfilled.

Giang had extracted the cork from the bottle of wine and poured into the two cups.

"Thanks, Kim,"

He didn't seem fazed by the mention of her deceased fiancée's name. "To you, Nhan Lien, and our success in the destruction of the Southern Generals, and Ngo Dinh Diem, and a blessing to our comrades from the North who are now surging toward Saigon as we speak. Success!"

Lien picked up her cup, touched it with Giang's and drank deeply. It had been a wonderful day. She had accomplished something that few could only dream of and now, here she was, almost in the arms of her beloved Kim again, drinking a toast to success and the future destruction of the South. Giang smiled at her, placed his cup on the table, and leant towards her.

"You're very beautiful, Lien. But I know that your real name is Cuc, and I should like to call you that if that is alright with you."

Her lips were so close to his. She closed her eyes. Kim, my darling, she thought. Yes, Cuc she was born, and Cuc she would remain till the day of her death, regardless of the new names she had been given for political purposes. Kim had always loved her name. He would hold his head on one side, smile at her and softly speak her name. "Cuc, my lovely Cuc."

And she heard Giang, so close beside her, softly whispering her name "Cuc, my beautiful Cuc."

Their lips met and she dissolved into a warm and cozy feeling of heightened sexuality.

Bishop Jean-Baptiste Lacroix made sure that his red zucchetto was firm on his head as the black Packard swung through the gates of the Presidential Palace into the circular drive. It wouldn't do for the President's sister-in-law, Madame Nhu, to comment that it might need straightening — speaking as she often did about petty things as was her want. He didn't like her, had little time for her picking — especially her sarcasm directed to her brother-in-law, Ngo Dinh Diem. Even so, Jean-Baptiste enjoyed these presidential meetings and felt honoured to be invited by his old friend. And the president listened to his advice, which was more than some of his generals did. In fact, thought Jean-Baptiste, some of them were simply waiting for the opportunity to remove the president and install themselves into the palace.

His chauffeur, Duy, opened the passenger door for him to alight. The Bishop patted him on the shoulder: "Return to the Presbytery, Duy. I shall have someone telephone when I am ready to return. This meeting may take some hours."

"Yes, my Lord. Will you be wanting to visit the McKinnon household this evening? You did mention something about it earlier."

Jean-Baptiste turned. "Ah, I am unsure about that. There are some disturbing incidences that may require me to remain at the Presbytery. I will advise further. Now, you have a few hours to yourself, but stay at the Presbytery where I may reach you by phone."

The chauffeur touched his cap. "Thank you, my Lord."

The Bishop was thinking, why doesn't he get himself married? He's been with me for several years and I see no sign of anyone in his life, except his parents and sister. He's a good Catholic, very attentive to my needs and always punctual. I'm sure he would make a dedicated husband for someone. I must have a look through my congregation for someone suitable.

He was early — none of the generals had arrived. Ngo Dinh Diem sat behind his large desk, shuffling some papers. He looked up as Jean-Baptiste entered the room and smiled.

"Well, my Lord Bishop, welcome again to my humble establishment."

Jean-Baptiste laughed. "Not so humble, Mr. President, eh?" He seated himself in one of the the lavish brocade-backed chairs in front of the desk. He looked around the room. "No changes since our last meeting? I thought your glamorous sister-in-law may have been fiddling with the furniture again?"





“She tires me somewhat, with her orders to the staff. But, what can I do? She has a brilliant mind and she is useful in consulting with foreign leaders.”

The Bishop nodded. “Yes, I give you that, and she is a good Catholic, though some of her earlier Buddhist ideology shows through at times.”

Diem screwed up his nose. “Yes, I am aware of that.”

“Do you think she has too much sympathy for the Buddhists here in Saigon?”

“I wouldn’t go that far, my friend. Anyway, what news have you for me about the British?”

Jean-Baptiste accepted the cognac that was poured for him, tasted it and placed the glass on the edge of the desk in front of him.

“His Holiness put forward your proposal to Whitehall and the good news is that although nothing is set in concrete, the indication is that the British are looking on this favourably and may send a number of troops to help train our men. Of course, they are still engaged in mopping up the communists in Malaya, but they hinted that they could free up a regiment of men any time soon. They’ve had great success in combating the insurgents. I am told that the troopship HMT Oxfordshire sails regularly to Singapore and Hong Kong and can carry one thousand men at a time. She could take on board a full regiment of battle experienced troops from Malaya and soon be here in Saigon. That would give an immense boost to our cause.”

“Yes, I was hoping for a little more than that. I need something definite, but it may give the Americans a little push to be more active than they are at present. Nothing like a little jealousy let loose, is there, my Bishop? Ah, but you have done well, my friend, done well. I was talking on the phone to president Eisenhower yesterday, and he seemed to be far too cautious for my liking, but he had great success in Korea pushing the communists back. Well, some perceived opposition by the British may see him doing a little more than pushing here.” He chuckled. “We can do this — with our allies, we can easily subdue the North.”

Jean-Baptiste took another sip of his cognac. “There is talk of Ho Chi Minh looking somewhat frail. My sources are usually accurate enough. Do you suppose he might be dying?”

“Oh, I fervently hope so. Forgive me, but though it would change the chain of command very little, the psychological effect among NVA troops would be significant. Another win for us.”

An aide knocked and opened the door. “General Dao, your Excellency.”

Dao took his cap off and strode across the room. “Ah Bishop, good to see you here. Any of my young officers confessing things to you that I should know about?” he chuckled. “And good morning, Excellency. Air Vice Marshall Pho cannot make it, down with a fever I’m told.”

Ngo Dinh Diem sucked his teeth. “Another excuse . . . I’m becoming very tired of his excuses. When the Americans are fully with us, he will find himself in a backwater, cleaning toilets. Ah, Lacroix has some news for us . . . the British are looking favourable to sending us troops. It’s just a matter of time; they are having great triumphs in Malaya against the communists. Soon, they will be able to free up a regiment or two of their crack soldiers to assist us.”

Jean-Baptiste looked concerned. “There is nothing certain as yet. They are pursuing all possibilities, so we shall simply have to wait and see.”

General Dao sat next to the bishop, looked directly at the president and made some clicking noises with his tongue. “Well, Mr. President, would you like me to travel to London to shake things up somewhat? After all, the British with the Americans and Australians were very successful in Korea. And there’s a thought . . . we should invite the prime minister of Australia here with view to helping out. Those Diggers of his can fight like tigers. And then there’s the Canadians, they were there as well.”

“Yes, but that was under the United Nations umbrella,” said Jean-Baptiste, more than fifteen nations helped out. I suppose we could lobby some of them, but I think most will have had enough of fighting for now. It’s too close in time.”

Ngo Dinh Diem drummed his fingers on the desk. “I need more men and more arms. It’s as simple as that. I shall be phoning Harold MacMillan in London this evening. We need to push things along fast, very fast. We are so close to victory and I do not wish to lose the edge.”

The uniformed aide at the door announced. “General Tran Huy Lam, General Nguyen Thanh Minh and General Hoang Tan Linh.”

Two other aides hurried to arrange chairs for the three, then departed. The president’s eyes roamed the faces of the latecomers. His lips firmed. “How do you think we are to win this war if you men keep turning up late for appointments? I should sack all of you. If I handed you over to my chief advisor, Ngo Dinh Nhu, you would be gone this very day.”

Commissar Chu Lam Long of the newly established National Liberation Front, or Viet Cong, led his men and his female second-in-command, Du Truong Linh, into the village of Binh Chai. The cadre had been there numerous times, raiding the hamlet of food, in particular the rice the farmers had gleaned from their fields. But on their last visit, Long had relented, and much to his team’s astonishment, had handed some rations to the more elderly of the place. All the men in the village were



old, or ill of health, and so no use for recruiting. Some had even disappeared to join the AVRN, the army of the south. Long had been angry about that and had decimated several huts where the young men had lived, taking anything of value and setting the huts on fire. The women and children had no choice but to find accommodation with others in the village or leave for the south.

Linh walked beside him, her AK47 slung over her right shoulder. “There’s the old man that your brother knocked down . . . Doesn’t look any worse from it.”

Long stared at the peasant, sitting and smoking outside his rough hut with its sagging bamboo walls. “Yes, I wasn’t happy about that. He was rude, but that was no reason for Hung to go off like that. Anyway, old people like him aren’t much use to anyone these days. They can’t work in the rice fields anymore, so his hut should be given to a family that needs it.”

“Where would he go?”

“That’s not our problem. When Ho Chi Minh is victorious there will be a separate old people’s village for him to die in. At present he is living a capitalist life going nowhere fast.”

“But that could be some time. He does have a daughter who works in the fields and who supports him. These people are no trouble to us. They have nothing.”

“Except for their bad attitude and playing both sides against each other, north and south. How old is this woman? She should be fighting with us, not lazing away her time here in this place, and I want to know if she has brothers who have gone over to the pigs of the south. Find her and bring her to me.” •

To be continued.

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## A Day in the Life of Adam Bandt, Leader of the Greens Party

With apologies to Punch



**Member of the public (standing):** “Hey Adam, wot’s with the donkey and cart? Where’s your electric car?”

**Adam Bandt:** “It’s really weird, you know. The wind’s stopped blowing and the sun’s been blocked out with cloud for a fortnight, and a great storm of hailstones has knocked out an entire field of major solar panels. We’re low on power.”

**Member of the public:** “Wa’ll, looks like you made the right choice with puttin’ yer money where yer mouth is. Keep it that way; save energy, mate.”





# Motoring Memoirs

## 1913 Ford T Model Tourer



The current owner, Scott Staples of East Melbourne, stated that this car would never be restored. Quote: “When purchased by the current owner, the only work undertaken was to drain all fluids and repair various items or replaced them with new-old stock parts to achieve a pass on safety inspection.”

This ‘Tin Lizzy’ came from the California Gold Rush days — a popular model since 1908 when Henry Ford revolutionised the car industry. The T Model rolled off the production lines for 19 years, selling over 15 million units. •

